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HH Amir condolences Saudi King Salman over prince demise

KUWAIT CITY, July 20, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable of condolences to Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud over the demise of Prince Al-Waleed bin Khaled bin Talal bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir expressed his sincere condolences and heartfelt sympathy, and prayed to the Al-mighty Allah to bestow mercy on Prince Al-Waleed, and lodge him in paradise, and grant solace and patience to the honorable Royal Family.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable of condolences to Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud over the demise of

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Kuwait Amir receives Crown Prince, PM, KNG Chief, 1st Deputy PM



Left: His Highness the Amir receives His Highness the Crown Prince. Right: His Highness the Amir receives His Highness the Prime Minister.

KUWAIT CITY, July 20, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Al-Seif Palace on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Sabah and First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

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

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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

“BETTER late than never.” This saying applies to the recent initiative of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef to launch and immediately implement the Visa Platform, which aims to ease the process of obtaining various types of visas.

Congratulations ... ‘Visa Platform’

Make it easy, do not make it difficult, to comfort the people

This is a blessed step, as Kuwait is an open society and treats its visitors in an affable manner. This was not realized by the former MPs and influential figures who used to control the decisions of successive governments, while the latter used to fear their loud voices.

The former MPs and influential figures insisted on closing the country to the public, under the illusion that those coming to Kuwait would change the demography of society or deduct a portion from the citizen’s share.

For more than 25 years, we have been waiting for Kuwait to return to its former glory. We have long

been calling for Kuwait to open its doors and ignore flimsy excuses, such as preventing women from visiting their families in Kuwait unless they provide a certificate that they are not pregnant. This condition is a unique Kuwaiti invention.

Family visits serve commercial activity, while business or tourist visits stimulate the hotel and restaurant market and boost commercial activity in general. In numerous occasions, we have seen how markets are crowded with visitors and the economy flourished.

Your Highness the Prime Minister, the mission of any government is to boost the gross domestic

product (GDP) and provide initiatives that encourage people. Your Highness, you are an expert in this field.

Unfortunately, this has not happened in Kuwait for the past three decades. This situation forced

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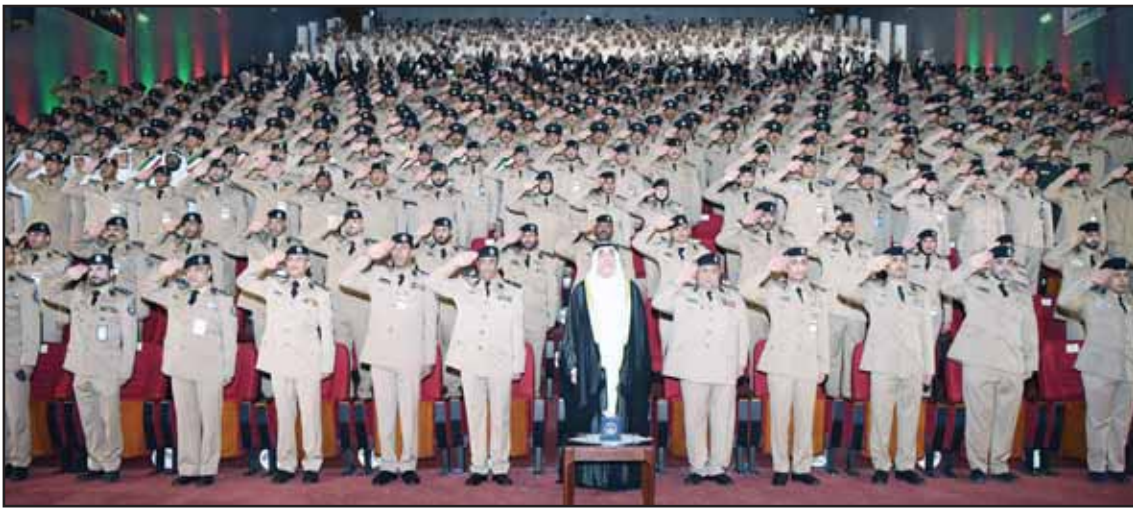
Ahmed aljarallah

ahmed@aljarallah.com



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Ministry of Interior photo

Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah attends the graduation of the 32nd batch of officers of Saad Al-Abdullah Academy of Security Sciences.

212 cadets join Kuwait's ranks

1st Deputy PM hails new security graduates

KUWAIT CITY, July 20, (KUNA): Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah witnessed on Saturday the graduation of the 32nd batch of of-

ficers of Saad Al-Abdullah Academy of Security Sciences totaling 212.

A ceremony was held at retired Maj. Gen. Abdulatif Al-Thuwaini's theater, in the presence of Acting Undersecre-

tary of the Ministry of Interior Major General Ali Al-Adwani and other senior officers.

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‘Comply with salary transfers’

PAM targets erring delivery firms

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: The delivery business remains subject to temporary file suspension pending verification of the companies' commitment to transfer the salaries of their employees through banks, say sources from the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM).

Sources confirmed to the newspaper that non-compliant companies will face an immediate suspension of their files.

Sources said the authority set the deadline for the settlement of the status of other companies; indicating that

among the proposals currently being studied is starting with small companies in terms of the number of workers to quickly settle their files; and then gradually applying the procedures to larger companies not committed to the salary bank transfer directive.

Sources hinted that certain activities may be initiated and divided into phases to avoid the negative impact of a mass suspension of all erring companies. They urged the concerned companies to be committed to transferring salaries through banks in order to protect the rights of the workers and avoid regulatory procedures.

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Ministry of Interior announced that the General Department for Combating Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the General Administration of Customs (GAC) to enhance joint cooperation and information exchange in combating financial crimes, in accordance with the international standards set by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ministry explained in a statement that the MoU was signed in the presence of senior leaders and officials from both sides. It aims to strengthen coordination among relevant authorities, increase data exchange, and reinforce regulatory measures, thereby supporting the national framework for combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

Both sides affirmed the importance of this cooperation in achieving the state's strategic objectives and promoting institutional integration between regulatory and executive bodies to combat financial crimes, further solidifying Kuwait's commitment to international standards in this field.

TEHRAN: Iran and the European troika - the UK, France and Germany - have agreed to resume nuclear negotiations, Iran's Tasnim News Agency reported on Sunday.

“The agreement was reached in principle on the resumption of talks, but consultations are still going on regarding the time and place of talks,” the agency said, citing an informed source. Iran-European troika nuclear talks are scheduled to be held at the level of the foreign ministers of Iran and the three European countries, it added. (KUNA)

Searing 52°C heat set to grip Kuwait

Dust-laden winds to reduce visibility

KUWAIT CITY, July 20, (KUNA): Acting Director of the Meteorological Department Dhirar Al-Ali announced that Kuwait is currently experiencing hot, dry weather with strong northwesterly winds stirring up dust and reducing horizontal visibility – conditions expected to persist until Wednesday.

Speaking to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Al-Ali attributed the current weather pattern to the extension of the Indian monsoon low-pressure system, accompanied by a hot, dry air mass and brisk northwesterly

winds. He noted that sea waves are rising to more than six feet at times.

On Monday, wind speeds are forecast to range between 15 and 60 kilometers per hour, generating dust and lowering visibility in open areas, with sea waves occasionally exceeding six feet.

Al-Ali warned that wind activity will intensify on Tuesday and Wednesday, with gusts becoming strong to very strong. This will cause visibility to drop to less than 1,000 meters in some areas and lead to rough seas.

Daytime temperatures are expected to soar between 49°C and 52°C, while nighttime lows will range from 32°C to 35°C. Al-Ali confirmed that the intense heat is likely to persist through the end of the week.

Kuwait, Saudi praise joint oil ops progress

KUWAIT CITY, July 20, (KUNA): The 118th meeting of the Kuwait-Saudi permanent joint committee was held on Sunday at the headquarters of Al-Khafji Joint Operations Area, chaired by Undersecretary of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Oil Sheikh Dr. Nimer Fahad Al-Sabah and Saudi Assistant Minister of Energy Mohammad Al-Ibrahim.

According to a statement by the Kuwaiti Ministry of Oil, the meeting reviewed operational reports from the

onshore and offshore divided zones, covering strategic plans, current and future projects, challenges, and the use of advanced technologies in oil operations.

The committee expressed pride in the recent discovery of a new oil reserve at the North Wafra-Wara-Burgan field in May, calling it a reflection of the strong strategic cooperation between the two countries in managing shared natural resources.

The well (Wara Burgan-1) is producing over 500 barrels per day, showcasing the technical capabilities and collaboration of both nations' national workforces.

Discussions also addressed emergency response plans, operational procedures, and ongoing efforts to improve capabilities and performance.

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Local produce sales surge

Improper storage, labeling land Kuwait cooperatives in trouble

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: The committee tasked to follow up the implementation of Ministerial Resolution No. 31/2025 conducted a field inspection tour with the participation of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

In a press statement, Committee Chairman and Cooperative Supervisor Yousef Al-Jafour revealed that the inspection of cooperatives in Farwaniya and Hawally governorates resulted in the issuance of several judicial seizure orders against cooperatives proven to have violated the resolution, particularly Article Eight, which is related to cleanliness and quality. He said the violations include poor storage of agricultural products that led to spoilage and formation of molds, in addition to improper display methods and the fail-

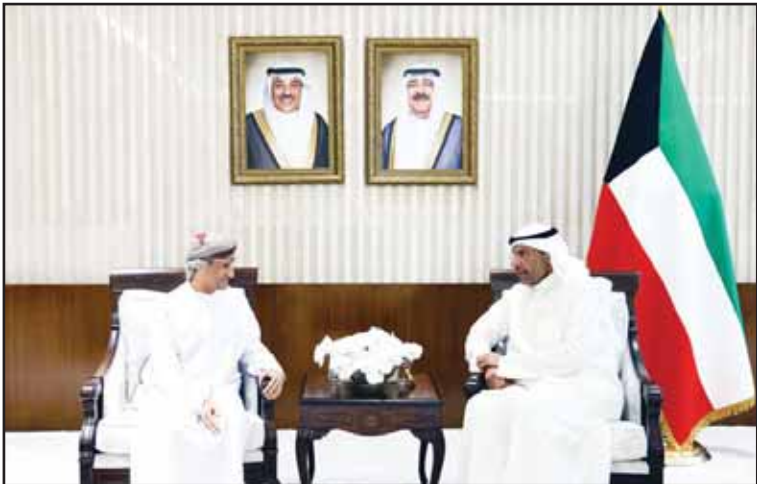
ure to replenish goods regularly.

He affirmed that the confiscated items will be referred to the Investigations Department at the Ministry of Interior, and then to the Misdemeanor Judge; indicating the fine may reach KD500. He stressed the need to put labels showing the country of origin, weight and price to avoid violations.

He explained that Law No. 24/1979, amended by Law No. 118/2013, grants the Ministry of Social Affairs the authority to monitor the work of cooperatives. He stated that “Ministerial Resolution No. 46T/2021 stipulates gradual progression of penalties, ranging from a warning to the suspension of transactions and the labor file at the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM).”

He also disclosed that intensive monitoring, since the issuance of Administrative Resolution No. 1650/2025

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KUNA photo

Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya receives Sunday the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the UN in Iraq and Head of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Ambassador Dr. Mohammad bin Awadh Al-Hassan, on the occasion of his visit to the country.



8 Gulf Bank, Basta launch ‘Banker for the Day’ youth financial literacy program



8 Warba Bank sponsors ‘Wellness at the Heart of the Capital’ initiative

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:29	Asr	15:29
Sunrise ..	05:01	Maghrib ..	18:47
Zohr	11:54	Isha	20:16

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Very hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 15-50 km/h causing rising dust and some scattered clouds will appear.
By Night: Hot to rather hot with

Weather					
light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-38 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.		Abdaly	49	32	
		Jahra	50	35	
		Salmiyah	45	35	
		Ahmadi	43	34	
		Nuwaisib	49	34	
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	Wafra	48	35
Kuwait City	49	37	Salmiyah	49	31
Kuwait Airport	49	37	Managish	50	34

MoH works on ‘Muazzaz’ initiative

Are shopping malls healthy? 3 in Kuwait seek nod

KUWAIT CITY, July 20, (KUNA): The Ministry of Health, represented by the Healthy Cities Office, has organized a GCC gathering as part of the final assessment of health-enhancing shopping malls engaged in the “Muazzaz” initiative.

The meeting was held as a prelude to declaring names of the malls, designated as healthy for visitors in the GCC member countries.

Dr. Amal Al-Yahya, the office director, said in a statement on Sunday that the gathering was organized and supervised by the Joint Gulf Committee for Healthy Cities, under auspices of the Riyadh-headquartered Gulf Health Council.

Up to six shopping malls had been designated as healthy since the initiative was launched in Kuwait in 2023, Dr. Al-Yahya said, indicating that at present, jurists

from Kuwait and the other GCC countries would assess three commercial complexes that accepted to be enrolled in the “Muazzaz” designation -- Promenade, the Avenues and 360 Mall.

Meanwhile, Ameera Al-Uraimi, representing Oman in the activity during her third visit to Kuwait for the task, noted that Kuwait had worked out guidelines for the initiative.

“Muazzaz” has been adopted by the World Health Organization (WHO), Al-Uraimi added.

Meanwhile, the director of Al-Othman

Dar, Abdullah Al-Thaman said the Promenade, the largest of the late Abdullah Abdulatif Al-Othman’s inheritance properties, is a one of the most attractive mecca for shopping and leisure in Kuwait.

He indicated that the Promenade had been accorded the “golden accreditation” in the first edition of the initiative when four malls had earned the designation for a three-year term starting in June 2024.

The Promenade had been selected for safety, visitors’ comfort, availability of healthy food, walking lanes, a skating hall in addition to facilities for babies, children, the elderly and special challenges cases.

Moreover, the shopping complex hosts throughout the year campaigns for blood donations and promoting awareness against disease such as cancer and a first aid section.



Dr Al-Yahya

‘File complaint if employer delaying your exit permit’

‘Over 100,000 exit permits issued for private sector’

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: In accordance with Circular No. 2/2025 issued recently by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf requiring expatriate workers in the private sector to obtain exit permits from their registered employers before leaving the country (effective from the beginning of this month), more than 100,000 exit permits have been issued to private sector expatriate workers since the implementation of the decision, reports Al-Jarida daily quoting sources from the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM).

Sources said the exit permits are processed through the automated systems of PAM, Ashal platform and Sahel app indicating the total number of issued permits is expected to

double in the coming days as the travel season gains momentum.

Sources disclosed that in order to streamline the process and ensure faster completion of travel procedures, the authority completed an automated link with the Ports Directorate General at the Ministry of Interior; thereby, ensuring the immediate sharing of exit permit data.

Sources added PAM recommends that workers print a hard copy of the permit before traveling, in case it is requested by the airlines. Sources also affirmed that only a small number of complaints regarding permit issuance have been received so far -- mostly concerning employer delays or refusal, which were promptly addressed and resolved.

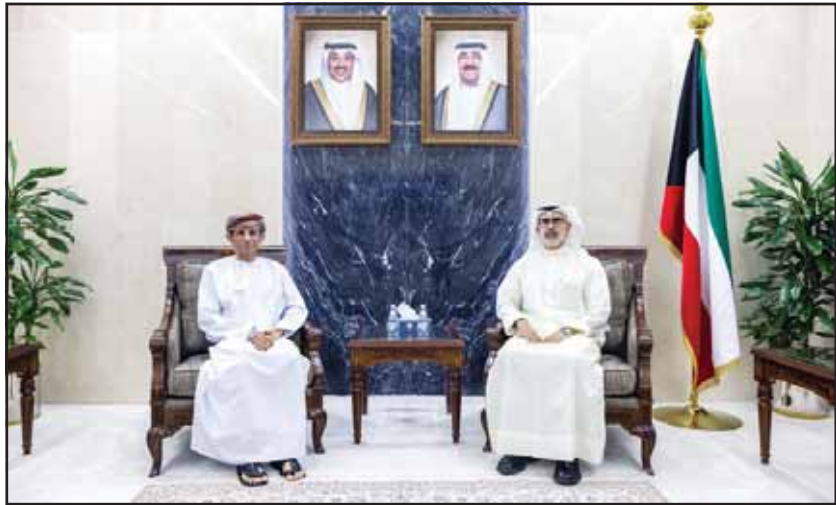
Sources clarified that in cases where an employer is unreasonably withholding or delaying approval, the affected worker is advised to visit the Labor Relations Unit corresponding to their company’s file in order to lodge a formal complaint, in accordance with legal procedures. They reiterated that approval from the

employer remains a requirement for the permit to be issued.

Sources also quoted PAM as saying there is no limit to the number of exit permits that can be issued annually per worker, as long as the employer approves, adding that the system remains open and unrestricted in this regard.

Sources explained the time needed to obtain a permit -- especially in emergencies -- depends primarily on the speed of employer approval. “Therefore, workers are advised to submit their requests well in advance of their travel dates and to coordinate directly with their employers in urgent situations to expedite the process,” sources elaborated.

Sources pointed out that workers can either print the approved permit or present it through the Sahel Individuals app to port authorities. They said the Sahel Individuals app enables workers to submit electronic exit permit requests, while the Sahel Business app allows employers to review and approve these requests quickly and conveniently.



KUNA photo
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receives Ambassador Dr. Mohammad bin Awadh Al-Hassan.

Deputy FM receives UN Chief Rep.

Kuwait Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Sunday the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the UN in

Iraq and Head of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Ambassador Dr. Mohammad bin Awadh Al-Hassan, on the occasion of his visit to the country. (KUNA)

Other Voices

Decline ... point to ponder!

By Ahmad alsarraf

Intellectuals, thinkers, and philosophers - Arabs, Muslims, and foreigners alike - have long looked into the causes of our backwardness. After centuries during which we were a beacon of enlightenment to the world, we have become, in many respects, a symbol of injustice and stagnation.

Some argue that our current low standing is due to our abandonment of religion. Yet this overlooks the fact that during the golden age of Islamic civilization, religious observance was often at its weakest. Despite that, scholars flourished in dozens of fields such as science, philosophy, medicine, mathematics, without being constrained by religious, racial, or sectarian restrictions.

Others trace the decline to the exodus of Muslims from Andalusia. Still others go further back, citing the breakdown of the rightful caliphate, or more recently, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Some blame colonialism of the British, French, and Italian occupations for leaving us in disarray. But our decline predates colonialism by centuries. Many countries were colonized, yet managed to rebuild and progress. Our stagnation, however, continued.

Most observers believe the reasons are many, such as the Balfour Declaration, the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and Percy Cox’s partitions, the military coups that followed, and the rise of religious fundamentalism that reshaped our educational systems. Add to this the absence of scientific and cultural thinking, and a bigger picture of regression emerges. Others believe that these factors are the results of backwardness, not necessarily the causes.

A person begins life young and unknowing, gradually learning, gaining experience, and becoming more intelligent. Typically, one starts out with little, then works to earn a living and build a better life. Those who fail to evolve, and who remain in ignorance and poverty without seeking knowledge or experience, tend to stay stuck, or worse, see their mental, physical, social, and economic conditions decline. This makes them easier to control. Even if such individuals happen to acquire wealth or health at some point, they are likely to lose it due to a lack of understanding. This pattern has repeated throughout the history of individuals, societies, and nations.

Arab Muslims inherited a rich and influential legacy, but they failed to develop it or keep pace with the changing world, except for a brief period, lasting little more than two centuries. After that, stagnation returned as the forces of rigid textualism overtook the advocates of reason and progress.

Muslims, unlike followers of other

faiths, particularly Judaism and Christianity, believe that what they possess was revealed directly and literally from God, without any human interference. In contrast, followers of other religions acknowledge that their holy books were inspired by, transmitted through, or attributed to prophets, rabbis, or priests.

As a result, it was less difficult for them, even after long periods of time, to revise or reinterpret their religious concepts to keep pace with changing times. They managed to free themselves from many restrictive constraints and evolved their doctrinal understanding in ways that served their communities, enabling them to achieve progress time and again.

There is no clear or universally agreed-upon Islamic text that explicitly contradicts development, change, or keeping pace with the times. In fact, Islamic jurisprudence includes a foundational principle - “Necessity permits the prohibited”. This was a principle often applied by caliphs throughout history, who adapted rulings to fit the circumstances of their time, prohibiting certain actions or permitting others as needed.

There are many historical examples of this flexibility, such as suspending the punishment of hand amputation for theft during the Year of the Great Famine, and halting the distribution of a portion of zakat to those “whose hearts were to be reconciled.” Over time, many issues once considered central to the faith have faded into obscurity.

We have dozens, if not hundreds, of rituals practiced by followers of various Islamic schools of thought, including the Shafi’is, Hanbalis, Malikis, Hanafis, Shiites, and others. Each group performs these rituals differently, yet all consider themselves Muslim and righteous in their beliefs and practices.

These rituals include areas such as marriage, dowry, alimony, inheritance, prayer, zakat, and countless other debated matters. So how is it that we have accepted these differences over time and managed to coexist with them, yet continue to resist change or development in matters that are far less significant?

Our problem lies in our insistence on clinging to stagnation, remaining, for over a thousand years, trapped in the same mold, with the same mindset, the same interpretations, and the same attitudes, without the slightest willingness to change. We have contented ourselves with the arguments of Al-Ghazali and Al-Shafi’i, favoring them over the views and intellectual legacy of thinkers like Al-Farabi and Ibn Rushd, refusing to grant reason its rightful place.

By preventing Muslims from renewing and evolving their understanding of life, we have fallen behind, both individually and collectively, becoming weak and easily dominated by others. Stagnation inevitably leads to backwardness. Perhaps what is needed is a Muslim equivalent of Martin Luther, or a reformer like Mustafa Kemal, to help bring us back into the fold of advanced nations, just as Türkiye managed to do.

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email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

‘30% hazardous materials recycled’

Waste in Gulf countries tops 260 mln tons: report

MUSCAT, July 20, (KUNA): Volume of collected waste in the GCC member states in the end of 2023 amounted to some 262.7 million tons, rising by 153.7 percent compared to 2019, said a report by the Oman-headquartered GCC Statistical Center.

Total treated waste reached, in the same period, 192 million tons, climbing by 128.5 percent, while the per capita residential garbage dropped by 17.4 percent, estimated at 1.4 kilograms per person a day, the report said.

Proportion of accumulated non-hazardous waste reached 99.2 percent, percentage of dangerous waste, exported for treatment or recycling abroad, was estimated at 95.8 percent.

The GCC states have succeeded in attaining Goal-12, one of the sustainable development objectives related to recycling of hazardous waste, at a 30 percent rate in 2023.

The report added that volume of the accumulated waste in the health sector, in the post COVID-19 period, reached 11.4 percent in 2023, in contrast to 2022, affirming that the GCC countries made headways in treating medical waste, with the number of medical incinerators hitting 23 in 2023, rising by 27.8 percent compared to 2022.

Accommodation space of these incinerators, during the same duration, increased by 123.9 percent reaching 127.5 thousands metric tons while the volume of the assembled dangerous waste in the industrial sector, after the COVID crisis, climbed by 23.8 percent in 2023, also in contrast to the previous year.

As to municipal waste, household junk dropped over the past three years after peaking in 2020 with 35.5 million tons in records, while in the end of 2023, the record showed 30.8 million tons.

Accumulated agricultural waste rose by 44 percent in 2023 reaching 2.5 million tons, compared to 2.0 million tons in 2022, 1.7 million tons in 2019, while the municipal waste from other economic sectors climbed from 11.9 million tons in 2019 to 14.3 million tons in 2023.



KUNA photo
The Oman-headquartered GCC Statistical Center.

Moreover, a report released by the Intelligence Mordor agency showed that the value of the trash management in the GCC countries stood at USD 68.3 billion in 2025, forecast to soar to USD 97.4 billion by 2030, with a projected annual growth estimated at 7.4 percent during the 2025-2030 period.

The Oman-headquartered center is the official authority for publishing information and statistics about the planning departments in the GCC countries.

The GCC is a regional bloc founded in the early 80s of the past century to cement cooperation among the regional Arabian countries in various sectors. It comprises Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, the UAE, Qatar and Bahrain.

CMA, KFIU ink MoU to fight money-wash, terror cash

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: The Capital Markets Authority (CMA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Kuwait Financial Intelligence Unit (KFIU) on the collaboration and information exchange in combating anti-money laundering, related predicate offenses and terrorism financing.

This is in line with the commitment of CMA to strengthen institutional cooperation and foster a secure environment for capital market development.

The MoU aims to establish a clear framework for cooperation and coordination between the two entities.

The signatories include Chairman of the Board of Commissioners and Executive Director of CMA Emad Ahmed Tifuni and KFIU Head Hamad Khaled Al-Mekrad.

Also present at the signing ceremony were Deputy Chairman of the CMA Board of Commissioners Rayan Mohammad Al-Zaid and Deputy Head of KFIU Yousef Ali Al-Omar.

The memorandum outlines the scope of information to be shared between the parties, along with the mechanisms and protocols governing this exchange. It emphasizes the importance of strict confidentiality in handling shared data and specifies how the information should be used by each party.

It also covers the main areas of cooperation as follows: holding regular meetings to strengthen bilateral coordination; collaborating on preventive and supervisory measures; sharing relevant data, expertise and best practices; developing and implementing joint training and capacity-building programs; and participating in training sessions hosted by either party, particularly in the fields of anti-money laundering and terrorist financing.

CMA reaffirmed its commitment to effectively play its regulatory role in fighting money laundering and terrorist financing, while supporting the integrity and stability of Kuwait’s financial market in line with international best practices.

It is worth mentioning that CMA was established pursuant to Law No. 7/2010 on Establishing the Capital Markets Authority and Regulating Securities Activities, as amended, which was approved by the National Assembly in February 2010. Under the law, the authority regulates and monitors securities activities; ensures transparency, fairness and efficiency; obligates listed companies to implement corporate governance principles; and protects investors from unfair practices that violate this law.

In addition, the law calls for the supervision of mergers, acquisitions and disclosures; and the authority also aims to provide awareness programs on securities activities.



Chairman of the Board of Commissioners and Executive Director of CMA Emad Ahmed Tifuni and KFIU Head Hamad Khaled Al-Mekrad after signing the memorandum of understanding.

diwaniya

ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Will the ‘Khor’ accord go back to Security Council?

“WOULDN’T it have been wiser for Iraq’s two presidencies — the Republic and the Government — during the preparatory phase for the upcoming parliamentary elections scheduled for next February, and amid an already tense electoral atmosphere, to request the Iraqi Federal Supreme Court — the highest judicial authority — to re-vote on the controversial Khor Abdullah Agreement? That move triggered the resignation of a majority of the court’s members and brought its operations to a halt.” Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Al-Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.



Hassan Ali Karam

“In my view, this was a tactical misstep, if not a political mistake. Regardless, the decision by the two presidencies mobilized the political blocs and parties, whether serious or opportunistic, and fueled movements on the streets as they gear up for the approaching elections.

“Did the two presidencies fully understand that the court would be unlikely to deal with such a sensitive issue in the midst of a stormy and uncertain political climate, and yet still moved forward, resulting in the court’s paralysis through mass or near-mass resignations?

“Will Parliament take up a vote on the agreement once the election results are announced?

“It is important to understand that Parliament will require several months, possibly longer, to form the new administration. The process begins with selecting the president, vice presidents, and parliamentary committees, followed by the election of the president, prime minister, and cabinet ministers.

“It is a long road that could stretch through the remainder of the year. Given the history of previous and current parliaments, and the frequent disputes surrounding agreements and approvals, there is also the risk, in a worst-case scenario, that Parliament could be dissolved and the country sent back to the polls.

“Iraqi parliaments, from the first to the most recent, have consistently struggled with preparation, consensus, and reaching agreement. In any case, returning the Khor Abdullah Agreement to Parliament for a vote offers no guarantees. Such a move is unlikely to produce a positive outcome or serve Kuwait’s interests unless a conciliatory and neutral political environment is established, one free from fanaticism and hostility toward Kuwait by opposition blocs or parties.

“There is a high risk of incitement, and calls to revoke recognition of Kuwait could erupt within the parliamentary hall. We should not expect any constructive or fraternal decision from factions aligned with Ba’athist or religious parties. For this reason, the most probable path may be a return to the Security Council. This is a route some Iraqis may choose to pursue, arguing that the current international and regional context is not the same as that of 1990, a distant history, at least for some current members of the Council.

“With Iraq, the issue of Khor Abdullah often resembles a modern-day version of the Hundred Years’ War. The crisis over Khor Abdullah has become a political tool, revived on special occasions to serve specific agendas.

“While the topic is complex and lengthy, a review of historical correspondence regarding Kuwait’s borders, particularly between the British and the Ottoman Turks, clearly shows that Kuwait’s original borders were not the same as today’s. The area currently under dispute, Khor Abdullah, was included within Kuwait’s recognized territory, along with the islands of Boubyan, Warba, Failaka, and the rest of what are now known as Kuwaiti islands.

“For those unfamiliar with the geography, Khor Abdullah lies adjacent to Kuwait’s Boubyan Island. Old manuscripts indicate that Kuwait’s borders historically began at Safwan and Umm Qasr, encompassing the islands and parts of what is now considered southern Iraq.

“The British had promised Sheikh Mubarak territories including Al-Faw and other areas that now lie within Iraqi borders. While disputes are likely to persist, it is important for Iraqis to understand that Kuwait was never a part of Iraqi territory. In fact, it is historically well established that certain Kuwaiti lands were seized by the Iraqi government through force. If anyone insists on making claims to those areas, then Kuwait, too, has the right to assert its own claims over them.

“We hope that Iraqi politicians and intellectuals will revisit historical records with objectivity, without fanaticism or resentment, and acknowledge Kuwait’s rightful borders, its sovereignty, and the bonds of good neighborliness and fraternity. This is what Kuwaitis genuinely hope for.”

Also:

“In 1962, Kuwait marked a major milestone in its healthcare journey with the inauguration of the largest and most advanced medical facility in the region at the time – the Maternity Hospital,” columnist **Ghani Jumaa** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“The hospital symbolized a medical renaissance in Kuwait during the 1960s, putting an end to the suffering of many women who had previously endured home births and relied on traditional practices that often did more harm than good. Through what many considered divine intervention, the hospital played a major role in saving countless lives.

“As Kuwait embraced a new era of development in 1962, preparations began to establish what would become the most advanced healthcare facility in the Gulf region. It was among the largest projects undertaken by the Ministry of Health at the time. Construction and outfitting of

the hospital took two full years, culminating in its official opening on June 20, 1962, under the patronage of the late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, in the presence of ambassadors and diplomats. This marked the beginning of a new chapter in Kuwait’s healthcare sector.

“This was followed by the official launch of the Maternity Hospital in 1968, which paved the way for the construction of more government and private hospitals in the country.

“We have now reached the year 2024, which witnessed the inauguration of the new hospital, a major healthcare project with a total value of KD 220.689 million. The facility has three towers — the tallest with 17 floors, another with 15 floors, and a third with 13 floors.

“The outpatient clinic building is separate from the main hospital but is connected to it by a bridge. The project includes four bridges linking the main building to the surrounding structures, including a bridge to the original hospital building.

“I personally visited the facility before its official opening and was impressed by what I saw. This hospital is considered the largest of its kind in the Middle East. I saw rooms and medical equipment that may not be available in many other countries. The hospital is fully managed by Kuwaitis, including the director and department heads, a fact that is of great pride for all of us.”

□ □ □

“This proposal to introduce an independent course on “Occupational and Administrative Grievances” in the Department of Public Law is based on extensive experience in the areas of fatwa and legislation accumulated over many years in the Technical Office, as well as the Fatwa and Grievances sectors. The department was recently established at our suggestion, following its earlier merger with the Fatwa Sector”, legal advisor **Dr. Kazem Bou Abbas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“It has become evident that many law graduates who later take up administrative roles lack adequate knowledge in drafting and reviewing grievances against administrative decisions, particularly in terms of form, language, and compliance with deadlines as stipulated in the decree issued on October 5, 1981, which regulates the procedures for filing and adjudicating such grievances.

“This gap in knowledge appears to stem from the absence of a dedicated course on occupational grievances, which this proposal seeks to address. It is also worth noting that in recent years, there has been a noticeable and unusual increase in the number of grievances filed against administrative decisions, often citing legal violations or abuse of authority.

“Under Decree-Law No. 20/1981 on establishing the Administrative Department, as amended by Law No. 61/1982, the legislature requires that a grievance be filed within 60 days before initiating a lawsuit, if the grievance is deemed mandatory. The grievance must be submitted, following specific procedures, to the original decision-maker or the relevant administrative authority.

“It is then referred to the Civil Service Commission, which issues its opinion. The grievance is then forwarded to the Fatwa and Legislation Department, which acts as the final decision-making body. After reviewing the documents, the department may reject the grievance, withdraw the decision, or declare lack of jurisdiction, in accordance with the procedures outlined in the aforementioned decree.

“To our knowledge, no independent book has previously been written on this subject. In collaboration with an advisor in Fatwa and Legislation Department Dr.



Dr. Bou Abbas

Islam Ihsan on secondment from the Administrative Prosecution Authority for Fatwa and Legislation in the State of Kuwait, we had the honor of publishing a specialized and comprehensive book titled “The Mediator in Employment Grievances, Administrative Investigations, and Disciplinary Trials.”

“The book was introduced by the current President of the Court of Cassation Counselor Dr. Adel Bouresli, and Professor of Public Law at the Faculty of Law Dr. Mohammad Al-Feeli.

“This publication has proven valuable to many government employees who have been subjected to administrative decisions involving disciplinary penalties.

“It is also worth mentioning that the Fatwa and Legislation Department, under our supervision, published a separate volume compiling official fatwa responses to employment grievances. This book consolidated the core principles developed by the department in the field of public service and has been widely recognized by government employees, becoming a trusted reference for civil servants.

“On this occasion, we recommend that the Head of the Fatwa and Legislation Department submit a semi-annual report to the Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs detailing the number of grievances reviewed by the department that resulted in the withdrawal of administrative decisions. This report should then be presented to the Cabinet, in coordination with the relevant authorities, for appropriate action based on its findings.

“Similarly, the Chief Justice of the Court of Cassation should submit a report to the Minister of Justice on the number of final court rulings in which the challenged administrative decisions were overturned. This report should also be referred to the Cabinet for review and necessary measures.”

— Compiled by Mahmoud Attiyeh/Simi K. Kutty



Al-Seyassah photo

Chief of the General Fire Force, Major General Talal Mohammad Al-Roumi, paid a visit to Lieutenant General Engineer Hashem Abdul Razzaq Al-Rifai, Undersecretary of the National Guard.

‘Al-Rifai tenure will remain lasting part of our legacy’

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: As part of the strong ties and mutual respect between the country’s military institutions, Major General Talal Mohammad Al-Roumi, Chief of the General Fire Force, paid a visit to Lieutenant General Engineer Hashem Abdul Razzaq Al-Rifai, Undersecretary of the National Guard, in recognition of his upcoming retirement, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

During the visit, Major General Al-Roumi presented a commemorative gift to Lieutenant General Al-Rifai, expressing deep appreciation for his distinguished service and significant contributions to the advancement and support of the National Guard. He emphasized that Al-Rifai’s efforts would remain a lasting part of the nation’s proud legacy.

The meeting was attended by senior officials from both institutions and took place in a warm and cordial atmosphere, highlighting the strong cooperation and mutual respect between the General Fire Force and the National Guard. It also underscored the shared appreciation for individuals who have served the nation with unwavering dedication.

At the conclusion of the visit, Major General Al-Roumi extended his heartfelt wishes to Lieutenant General Al-Rifai for continued good health and success in the next chapter of his life, praising his exemplary leadership, discipline, and commitment throughout his career.

Ex-MP to stay in jail for two years

Exam cheats jail-terms upheld

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: The Court of Cassation Sunday rejected the appeal filed by former MP Majed Al-Mutairi and upheld the Court of Appeals’ ruling, which sentenced him to two years in prison with hard labor.

Al-Mutairi was convicted in a vote-buying case during previous parliamentary elections. The Criminal Court had sentenced him to prison after he was found guilty of paying money to a number of voters to secure votes in his favor.

The ruling stated that the defendant’s actions constituted a serious electoral crime, aimed at unlawfully influencing voters’ free will, warranting a deterrent punishment to protect the public interest and preserve the integrity of the elections.

□ □ □



KFF photo

KFF boat to the rescue.

KFF rescue squad picks trio from sinking boat

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: Shuwaikh Fire and Marine Rescue Center responded to information it received about a sinking boat near Shuwaikh Port, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

All three individuals on board were rescued and confirmed to be in good health.

Article 8 woman to get full pension, all rights

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: The Court of Cassation (Civil Division) upheld the right of a woman, whose Kuwaiti citizenship was revoked, to receive full pension affirming her legal entitlement as per Article 42 of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law No. 8/2010, reports **Al-Qabas** daily.

Case files indicate that the woman submitted an early retirement request to the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) in order to take care of her son with disabilities. However, her request was rejected, prompting her to seek legal recourse.

In its final ruling, the Court of Cassation affirmed that the revocation of the plaintiff’s citizenship does not nullify her legal standing or her right to retirement benefits. The court emphasized that the citizenship revocation decision is still subject to appeal, so it is not final yet. It also pointed out that the plaintiff submitted her civil identification card during the final hearing, proving she continues to be treated as a Kuwaiti citizen.

The court’s decision confirmed the legal protection granted to caregivers of persons with disabilities, regardless of administrative decisions affecting their citizenship status. It reflects the commitment of the State to protect the rights of individuals covered by the abovementioned law, as well as the welfare of Kuwaiti families.

Drunk Kuwaiti resists arrest, insults officer

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: A 40-year-old Kuwaiti was detained at Hawally Police Station on multiple charges, including driving under the influence of alcohol and insulting a public official on duty, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

Authorities referred the suspect to the Forensic Medicine Department to determine whether his abnormal condition was due solely to alcohol consumption or if drugs were involved.

According to official case details, two officers from Hawally Police Station reported that while on patrol, they noticed a vehicle moving erratically, raising concern for public safety. The officers activated their patrol lights and signaled for the driver to pull over. After initially evading the directive to stop, the driver eventually complied.

Upon approaching the vehicle, the officers requested the driver’s identification. Instead of cooperating, the suspect mocked one of the officers, reportedly shouting, “Come on, come on, I’ll step on your head.” He refused to exit the vehicle, and officers noted the strong smell of alcohol on his breath. When taken out of the car, the suspect resisted arrest -- pushing both officers and striking one of them, escalating the incident to violent resistance.

In light of the charges, the suspect now faces potential prosecution under newly amended traffic law provisions concerning driving under the influence. The law was revised to introduce stricter penalties based on the severity of the offense as follows:

■ **First category:** Attempting to drive under the influence -- a fine of KD1,000 to KD2,000 or imprisonment of one to two years

■ **Second category:** Driving under the influence and causing property damage -- a fine of KD2,000 to KD3,000 or imprisonment of 18 months to two years

■ **Third category:** Driving under the influence and causing injury or death -- a fine of KD2,000 to KD5,000 or imprisonment of two to three years.

Authorities continue to investigate the case to determine the full extent of the charges.



KUNA photo

Asphalt laying underway.

Omariya & Rabya roads maintenance underway

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan affirmed that the ministry is continuing to implement its comprehensive plan to develop and enhance Kuwait’s road infrastructure according to set timelines, with the goal of improving road efficiency, mobility, and traffic safety.

Engineer Fawaz Al-Mutairi stated that ministry’s teams are closely monitoring road maintenance works in Omariya Block 1, where the second layer of asphalt is currently being laid as part of the Farwaniya Governorate road maintenance project, adding that work is also underway to remove the old asphalt in Rabya.

He affirmed the ministry’s commitment to the highest standards of quality and safety in all phases of implementation, and to minimize disruptions to traffic as much as possible.

Eng. Al-Mutairi noted that these efforts fall within the ministry’s commitment to infrastructure efficiency and improving the overall quality of life for both citizens and residents.

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KPC scales back tenders, pushes strategic growth

Corporation eyes petrochemical expansion

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) has asked its subsidiaries to rationalize spending as much as possible and to defer tendering, allowing those only with significant potential to achieve sustainability and development; since it is also focusing on rationalizing all forms of waste in its subsidiaries, so that this will positively impact the profits of oil companies in the future.

Sources revealed KPC also requested its subsidiaries to present proposals and studies to stimulate private sector contribution to accelerate the achievement of its 2040 strategy; especially since the private sector is one of the arms of State-owned oil companies in the fields of

exploration, production, marketing, refining, transportation, and providing the necessary materials for the oil industry through tenders.

Sources affirmed that KPC welcomes the entry of the local private sector into the petrochemical industry; considering the approach of KPC Chief Executive Officer (CSO) Sheikh Nawaf Al-Saud Al-Sabah who recently called for the expansion of the petrochemical industry domestically and internationally in order to diversify the sources of revenue for the corporation and its subsidiaries, in light of the active global demand for petrochemical products, which have become a major player in enhancing returns.

Sources disclosed there are already existing companies operating in the Kuwaiti oil sector, through the Petrochemical Industries Company, and a number of local and international companies, with varying percentages. Sources explained that the KPC's approach focuses on achieving the highest returns for the sector, citing the experience of Kuwait Petrochemical Industries Company's ac-

quisition two months ago of a 25 percent stake in the Chinese Wanhua Chemical Group, which operates in the petrochemical plants located in Yintai region in the People's Republic of China. Sources said this ensures the supply of Kuwaiti feedstock to these projects, which guarantees profitability on one hand and increases Kuwaiti supplies on the other hand.

Regarding the existing and successful projects between KPC and the local and international companies in the field of petrochemicals; sources stated that in terms of local participation, KPC owns 80 percent stake in Kuwait Paraxylene Production Company, 46 percent in Kuwait Styrene Company, 24.5 percent in Equate Petrochemical Company, and 42.5 percent in Kuwait Olefins Company.

On the most important shares of KPC outside Kuwait, sources said Kuwait Petrochemical Industries Company owns a 33.3 percent stake in the Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (GPIC), 25 percent in the SK Advance Company in South Korea and 49 percent in the SK PIC Global Company in South Korea.

Commitment to high public service standards

Public Works launches ethics survey

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: The Ministry of Public Works conducted an internal survey to assess its employees' awareness and understanding of the Code of Conduct, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources told the daily that this step is included in the development strategy of the ministry to improve the work environment by promoting professional and ethical values. Sources said the survey seeks to evaluate employees' familiarity with the Code of Conduct and to identify the realities of the current work climate, including the challenges that employees encounter in their daily responsibilities and adherence to public service values.

According to the sources, the assessment also aims to

generate key indicators related to transparency, integrity and ethical behavior in various departments. Sources said the results of the survey will be used as a guide in the development of training programs that respond to actual needs, as well boost institutional performance and employees' confidence.

The ministry stressed that the Code of Conduct is a standardized reference for all government entities. It outlines the principles and behaviors expected of public employees in their interactions with colleagues, superiors and the public; and it is accessible through governmental offices and websites. This is a manifestation of the commitment of the ministry to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and integrity in public service.



Calligrapher Humoud Al-Jafra explains the art of Arabic calligraphy.



Practical training.



Practical application.

KUNA photos

NCCAL launches Arabic calligraphy workshop at Modern Art Museum

KUWAIT CITY, July 20, (KUNA): The National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature (NCCAL) organized on Saturday an Arabic calligraphy workshop at Modern Art Museum, as part of the 17th Summer Cultural Festival.

During the workshop, calligrapher Humoud Al-Jafra offered basics of Arabic calligraphy, its history and types, as

well as how to train participants on tools, ink and techniques used while writing.

The three-day event aims to educate trainers on the fine types of writing through practices and dealing with mistakes while portraying, he told KUNA. The workshop seeks to enrich artistic and cultural arena in Kuwait during summer.

KAPP extends Dabdaba, Shagaya bids

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: The Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) announced today that the deadline for purchasing prequalification documents and submitting applications for companies interested in bidding to design,

finance, build, operate, maintain, and transfer the Dabdaba Power Plant and the Shagaya Renewable Energy Project (Phase III - Project Zone) has been extended to August 21.

Through the official gazette "Kuwait Al-youm" on May 18, KAPP, in cooperation with the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, had invited interested companies to apply within the original deadline.

Training adapts to global energy trends

38,000-strong MEW workforce sees renewed focus on skills and reform

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: Abdullah Al-Khashem -- Director of the Administrative Development and Training Department in the Planning, Training and Information Systems Sector at the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy -- confirmed that the workforce at the ministry has reached about 38,000 in the technical and administrative sectors.

In an interview with the newspaper, Al-Kashem disclosed that the department trained 2,500 trainees in the past fiscal year through programs that meet the needs of the sector.

He affirmed that the department is committed to keeping pace with developments in the sector whenever it sets annual training plans, focusing on preparing national employees to deal with developments in the field of renewable energy.

He said number of employees in the Renewable Energy Department have undergone training in and outside the country, enabling them to assume their responsibilities and support the ministry's efforts to achieve the Kuwait 2035 vision that calls for producing 15 percent of electricity from renewable energy sources.

He also revealed that the organizational structure of the department consists of three divisions -- Training, Organization and Job Descriptions, and Work Development Methods. He said the organizational structure of the ministry was prepared in accordance with Civil Service Law No. 253/2004 -- 22 years ago.

He added that in recent years, the ministry contracted with the Center of Excellence at the College of Administrative Sciences in Kuwait University to prepare an organizational structure two years ago. "The structure was submitted to the undersecretary and minister at the time, but it was never implemented," he stated.

He went on to say that the Methods Development Division aims to modernize work methods, away from routine and bureaucracy and in line with the digital transformation; while the Training Division is closely linked with the Organization and Job Description Department. He explained that "job descriptions are linked with job level."

When we design a training program, we include courses for entry-level engineers to supervisory employees, meaning that the level of courses increases according to job level."

He disclosed that budget allocated for training before the COVID-19 pandemic exceeded KD750,000 annually, and then decreased to KD720,000; then KD500,000 and finally KD420,000; enabling the department to conduct a variety of training courses. He said that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the budget was zero. "After the pandemic, the budget was KD25,000; then it increased to KD50,000 and then KD165,000 -- current budget."

"Despite the decrease in the current budget allocated for training compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic, the department is implementing comprehensive external training programs. These include courses designed in coordination with various sectors; focusing on electricity, water and renewable energy, through leading specialized external entities like Jubail Foundation in Saudi Arabia, Gulf Laboratory Company, Siemens in Germany and Toshiba in Japan, South Korea, Germany and France. A total of 107 trainees were trained externally in fiscal 2024/2025."

He clarified that training plans vary from year to year, with a change of about 30 percent annually.

He pointed out the procedure taken before contracting for any program -- five bids must be received to ensure competitiveness between entities in terms of quality and cost.

Abdullah Al-Salem University concludes Admissions Fair for academic yr '25/'26

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: Abdullah Al-Salem University concluded its University Admissions Fair for the academic year 2025/2026, coinciding with the start of on-line admission applications.

A large number of students, parents and those interested in academic affairs attended the fair.

The university confirmed in a statement that the fair was organized as part of its commitment to support students during the university application process, and provide them with the necessary information about available academic programs

and career paths. It stated that this helps them make informed decisions that align with their interests and aspirations. It also provides an interactive platform for meetings between visitors and representatives of various colleges and departments, with the participation of entities from the public and private sectors, including the Civil Service Commission (CSC), with the aim of raising awareness on in demand specializations in the labor market and linking them with national priorities.

It explained that the fair is an extension of efforts to provide an integrated educational environment that supports the aspirations of young people and contributes to achieving Kuwait Vision 2035.

4th Ring Road to Jahra closed for 33 days

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: The Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) has announced the closure of the Fourth Ring Road in the direction of Jahra, opposite Khaldiya, starting at dawn on Saturday, reports Al-Anba daily.

The closure will extend from King Faisal Road to facilitate extensive maintenance

work on the asphalt layers, as part of the plan of PART to repair the expressways in the country.

The closure is expected to last for 33 consecutive days; hence, the authority urged motorists to use alternative routes during this period and to follow traffic signs to ensure public safety and minimize congestion.



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Four months to prove residency regularization

Grace period for revoked citizenship opens

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: From Saturday, July 19, the four-month grace period granted by the Ministry of Interior began for individuals whose Kuwaiti citizenships were revoked under the “Outstanding Services” clause. During this period, they are permitted to travel using their Kuwaiti passports in preparation for initiating the process of regularizing their legal status, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to regulations announced by the ministry on July 10, individuals affected by the revocation, including those who acquired citizenship through dependency, must coordinate with the embassies of their countries of origin, (prior to obtaining Kuwaiti citizenship)

to secure passports or official travel documents. These documents will enable them to obtain legal residency in Kuwait.

The regulations require affected individuals to provide proof that they have initiated the process of regularizing their legal status. The four-month grace period, which begins from the date the citizenship revocation decrees are published in the official gazette, allows them to legalize their residency. During this period, they will continue to benefit from certain privileges, such as the right to work, access to university education, and housing.

Meanwhile, informed sources expect the official gazette Kuwait Al-Youm to begin publishing the names of a large number of individuals whose citizenships have been revoked, starting with the edition on Saturday and continuing in the coming issues. This comes as hundreds of files are currently pending a final decision by the Cabinet.

The sources explained that the list of revoked citizenships under the “Outstanding Services” clause includes hundreds of individuals whose files were reviewed by the Citizenship Investigation Committee. It also includes numerous cases involving forgery and those who acquired citizenship through dependency. The latter group is not eligible to rectify their status and will be subject to legal procedures.

Crown Prince, PM extend wishes

Amir congratulates President of Colombia on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, July 20, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable to President of Colombia Gustavo Petro, congratulating him on his country’s Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished the President of Colombia wellbeing, and the Republic of Colombia and its friendly people continued progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable

to President of Colombia Gustavo Petro, congratulating him on his country’s Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished the President of Colombia wellbeing, and the Republic of Colombia and its friendly people continued progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable to President of Colombia Gustavo Petro, congratulating him on his country’s Independence Day.

‘Cornerstone of cooperation’

Kuwait celebrates 64 years as pillar of unity in Arab League

By Mohammad Al-Mutairi

CAIRO, July 20, (KUNA): Kuwait marks its 64th anniversary of joining the Arab League, an important step as an effective player in regional Arab and international arenas.

Kuwait joined the League through the directive of the late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, when the country gained its independence in 1961, turning its sights outward to shoulder Arab concerns and interests.

On this occasion, Arab League officials recounted the historic moment in separate statements to KUNA that Kuwait has always been a fundamental pillar for the Arab League and a contributor to enhancing Arab cooperation.

Assistant Secretary General and International Political Affairs Head Ambassador Khaled Al-Manzawlani praised the vision and policy pursued by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah that focused on Arab unity and presence on the regional and international sectors.

Assistant Secretary-General for Arab Affairs and National Security Ambassador Khalil Al-Thawadi recalled how the late Amir Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah supported humanitarian and economic efforts in several Arab countries, especially by establishing the Arab Economic Summit in 2009.

Regarding the Palestinian Cause, Assistant Secretary General

for Administrative and Financial Affairs Ambassador Mohammad Al-Ajeri noted that Kuwait has always supported the rights of Palestinians and provided them with humanitarian aid, and brought international attention to the matter to find a comprehensive and just solution.

He recalled Kuwait’s efforts to support regional cooperation and communication, in particular the Arab-African relations, wherein Kuwait sponsored the construction of a hospital at the African Union (AU) headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 2016, with funding amounting to five million dollars.

Al-Ajeri said that even through the brutal Iraqi invasion in 1990, Kuwait adhered to the principles of diplomacy and sought to resolve disputes and differences with its neighbors as a voice of reason, particularly in Arab and international forums.

Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs Dr. Ali Al-Maliki pointed out that Kuwait signed in 1981 an agreement to develop and facilitate trade among Arab countries, which became a frame of reference for the Greater Arab Free Trade Area.

He added that Kuwait plays an important role in supporting development efforts in Arab countries, as it was the first to propose an Arab Economic and Social Development summit in 2007, which Kuwait then later on became host of in 2009.

Information Ministry, PAAET, KJA to launch Digital Media Diploma

Program designed to train youth in digital content

KUWAIT CITY, July 20, (KUNA): Ministry of Information, the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), and the Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA) have agreed to introduce a Digital Media diploma at PAAET.

Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi met with PAAET Director General Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam and KJA Chairman Adnan Al-Rashed to advance the plan, the Information Ministry said in a press statement on Sunday.

The diploma will build media literacy among Kuwaiti youth and train them in fast evolving digital fields—visual and interactive content, modern social platforms, and tourism media—to support Kuwait’s push to grow its tourism sector and establish itself as a cultural and media hub, it explained.

The program will produce gradu-



KUNA photo
The Minister of Information during his meeting with the Director General of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training and the Chairman of the Kuwait Journalists Association.

ates who can create high quality, nationally reflective content, boost the local media scene, and spur youth entrepreneurship, it said.

The initiative fits the ministry’s strategy of strengthening government civil society partnerships toward a creative, knowledge driven “New Kuwait,” it pointed out.

Also attending were KJA Treasurer Dhahiran Aba Al-Khail and PAAET Deputy Director General for Applied Education and Research Dr. Mohammad Al-Hayyan.

PAFN lifts ban on Brazilian poultry imports

KUWAIT CITY, July 20, (KUNA): The Supreme Committee for Food and Water Safety at the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) recommended in its meeting Sunday, lifting the ban on all poultry imports from Brazil due to the end

of the avian influenza virus (Bird Flu).

The ban had applied on all imports of fresh, chilled, frozen, and processed poultry meat, and its derivatives and products.

PAFN posted on its X platform that the committee recommended

banning the import of all fresh, chilled, processed, and frozen poultry meat of all types, and its derivatives and products, except those pasteurized at 70 degrees Celsius, due to the avian influenza outbreak in several regions of the US.

SAB reviews KD3.8 million DGCA tenders

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: The State Audit Bureau (SAB) is currently reviewing four requests submitted by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) related to tenders and contracts for the operation, maintenance and development of services at Kuwait International Airport; with an estimated total value of KD3.819 million.

Sources told the newspaper that SAB received these requests for review and study to decide on them in the coming period. They indicated that some of the requests are related to extensions, while others are about the new operation and maintenance

contracts. They said one of the requests is on the extension of the contract for project management services to implement the 2012 Master Plan projects at Kuwait International Airport; indicating the DGCA has requested approval for the second extension of the contract, valued at KD1.3 million.

Sources added the tenders include the following:

- Operation of engineering control rooms and maintenance of their associated devices and equipment valued at KD1.338 million;
- Maintenance of the automated baggage inspection system for weight areas One and Four in Terminal One (T1) valued at KD589,000;

Congratulations ...

young entrepreneurs and the owners of small and medium enterprises to migrate to neighboring countries; where they found better facilities than what their own country provides. This is just one of many crystal clear examples.

In some Gulf countries, entry visas are issued online within a few minutes. This is why other Gulf countries receive millions of people annually. Last year, Dubai Airport received 92.3 million passengers. In just a few months, the duty-free market generated revenues of approximately AED 8 billion. Qatar’s Hamad International Airport received 52 million passengers. Saudi airports received more than 128 million passengers, while Kuwait International Airport catered to only seven million passengers. This is another example of what Kuwait loses annually due to its closures.

These developments would not have happened in other Gulf states without opening their countries and cities to the tourists, visitors and transit passengers. In Kuwait, some officials – inspired by some former MPs – attempted to close Kuwait International Airport to transit passengers; claiming that a female passenger might be dressed indecently or that another passenger might not adhere to Islamic law.

As a result of these backward decisions, Kuwait lost a lot, as shown in comparative statistics. Last year, the UAE’s GDP exceeded \$482 billion, compared to \$134 billion for Kuwait. This is one of the consequences of limited non-oil trade activity; which has not allowed financial inflows from abroad and encouraged capital to fly out of Kuwait.

When expatriates are unable to reunite with their families, they go to their families and spend their money there. When a citizen cannot find any entertainment destination in his homeland, he looks for it in a country that offers such destination with more facilities.

For everything mentioned above, the ‘Visa Platform’ is a step for which the government, especially First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah, should be commended.

We hope there are no obstacles that could disrupt this platform, as well as restrictions or exaggerated requirements that could bring Kuwait back to closure.

Continued from Page 1

I would like to emphasize that the Council of Ministers and His Highness the Prime Minister must open the way for everything that enables Kuwait to restore its open era, to focus on what pleases the people, and to ensure the continuity of activities in all sectors.

Kuwait deserves a great deal of goodness. I hope that officials will realize this fact.

To conclude, I would like to say to His Highness the Prime Minister that the customers in markets include visitors, not just the expatriates.

Improper storage,

on supporting the promotion of local products, resulted in a decline in violations and an increase in the percentage of local vegetable purchases from 46 percent in June 2024 to more than 70 percent at present.

He added the ministry is studying a new mechanism to enhance the prioritization of local products in cooperatives, as per the directive of Assistant Undersecretary for Financial, Administrative and Cooperative Affairs Dr. Sayed Issa.

HH Amir

Prince Al-Waleed bin Khaled bin Talal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

His Highness the Crown Prince prayed to the Almighty Allah to bestow mercy on Prince Al-Waleed, and lodge him in paradise, and offer the Saudi honorable royal family patience and solace.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a similar cable of condolences to Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, expressing his sincere condolences and heartfelt sympathy over the demise of Prince Al-Waleed bin Khaled bin Talal bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud.

1st Deputy

In a speech, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef congratulated these cadets on joining the security institution, lauding their commitment and discipline.

Upon the instructions of the wise political leadership, the Ministry of Interior has been paying much attention to

rehabilitate humans and upgrading the efficiency of security cadres, out of its belief that security is achieved by well-trained national personnel able to cope up with challenges, the minister said.

He prayed to Allah the Almighty to maintain security and stability to Kuwait, under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al – the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Kuwait Amir

His Highness also received Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Sabah and First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

Kuwait, Saudi

The committee praised the dedication of the Kuwaiti and Saudi teams in achieving joint goals and crafting a unified strategy that aligns with both nations’ energy interests.

Sheikh Nimer stressed the importance of holding regular committee meetings to assess operations, explore development plans, train local talent, and apply cutting-edge technologies throughout oil production phases.

He also thanked his Saudi counterpart for the positive and cooperative spirit shown, emphasizing the value of continued coordination between both ministries to facilitate joint oil projects in Al-Khafji and Wafra.

Established under the 1965 agreement to divide the Neutral Zone, this committee reports directly to the oil ministers of both countries and oversees matters such as workforce facilitation, resource management, and licensing in the divided zone.

The committee meets biannually under normal circumstances and submits its findings and recommendations to the ministers.

The agreement on the division of the submerged area near the divided zone was signed with the Saudi side in 2000, in addition to the signing of the memorandum of understanding on the re-production of the divided zone in December 2019, all of which are considered attached to the 1965 agreement on the division of the neutral zone.

عمليات الخفجي المشتركة

الشركة الكويتية لنفط الخليج

KUWAIT GULF OIL COMPANY (K.S.C.)

ارامكو لأعمال الخليج

ARAMCO GULF OPERATIONS

TENDER ADVERTISEMENT

Aramco Gulf Operations Company Limited (“AGOC”) and Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (K.S.C) (“KGOC”), (Al Khafji Joint Operations) invite intending bidders to participate for **Tender No.: GT885PC24 - Construction of TMD Chemical Storage Room.**

Each intending bidder may purchase the tender documents upon payment of **Saudi Riyals Six Hundred (SR 600) or Kuwaiti Dinars Forty-Eight (KD 48) only**, which is non-refundable, by visiting our Contracts Department at Al Khafji, Saudi Arabia, or KGOC's Kuwait Office located in Al Ahmadi, Tender & Contracts Section. The bidder may visit our KJO website: www.kjo.com.sa and follow the path; E-Services □ Tendering □ Contractors □ Ongoing Tenders to review part of the tender documents, before purchasing.

The sale of Tender Documents will be effective from **July 21, 2025, until 10:00 AM, August 4, 2025.**

A pre-tender meeting will be held at **Auditorium Hall, Office Park Building, at Al-Khafji Joint Operations, Al-Khafji, Saudi Arabia, at 10:00 AM local time on August 11, 2025. Attending the pre-tender meeting is mandatory.**

The experience required of the bidder himself shall be such as being active for at least the last five (5) years **in the field of construction (as per the relevant scope of the tender) or similar** to the service/work as contemplated under SCHEDULE B, having completed at least one (1) project valued at United States Dollars 0.3 Million (US\$ 300,000). (The experience shall be as a main contractor and not as a sub-contractor.).

The bid proposal shall be delivered by hand-delivery or through courier service to the Contracts Department in Al-Khafji Joint Operations, Al-Khafji, Saudi Arabia on or before the closing date **14:00 Hours, Monday, September 15, 2025**, of the time stipulated in the tender document.

For more Information please cntact

Tel. No.: +966 (13) 765 5147

E- Mail: ctdadmin@kjo.com.sa

Website: www.kjo.com.sa

We're lawmakers, we should be legislating: Sen Murkowski

With gavel in hand, Trump chisels away at power of compliant US Congress

WASHINGTON, July 20, (AP): “Mr President, this is the gavel used to enact the ‘big, beautiful bill,’” House Speaker Mike Johnson said at a White House signing ceremony on the Fourth of July.

“I want you to have it,” he said.

Handing over the gavel delighted President Donald Trump who, seated behind a desk outdoors, immediately tested it out with a few quick thumps.

The moment left a memorable mark on a historic day. The gesture reflected a traditional nod of honor, from one leader to another, a milestone of the Republican Party’s priority legislation becoming law. But the imagery also underscored a symbolic transfer of political power, from Capitol Hill to the White House as a compliant Congress is ceding more and more of its prerogative to the presidency.

Since Trump’s return to the White House in January, and particularly in the past few weeks, Republicans in control of the House and Senate have shown an unusual willingness to give

the president of their party what he wants, regardless of the potential risk to themselves, their constituents and Congress itself.

Republicans raced to put the big package of tax breaks and spending cuts on Trump’s desk by his Independence Day deadline. Senators had quickly confirmed almost all of Trump’s outsider Cabinet nominees despite grave reservations over Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as health secretary, Pete Hegseth as the Pentagon chief and others. House Republicans pursued Trump’s interest in investigating his perceived foes, including investigating Democratic President Joe Biden’s use of the autopen.

But at the same time, Congress hit the brakes on one of its own priorities, legislation imposing steep sanctions on Russia over its war on Ukraine, after Trump announced he was allowing President Vladimir Putin an additional 50 days to negotiate a peace deal, dashing hopes for a swifter end to the conflict.



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

This past week, Congress was tested anew, delivering on Trump’s request to rescind some \$9 billion that lawmakers

overseas aid. It was a rare presidential request, a challenge to the legislative branch’s power of the purse, that has not been used in decades.

“We’re lawmakers. We should be legislating,” said a defiant Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, as she refused to support the White House’s demand to rescind money for National Public Radio and others.

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

Congress, the branch of government the Founding Fathers placed first in the Constitution, is at a familiar crossroads. During the first Trump administration, Republicans frightened by Trump’s angry tweets of disapproval would keep their criticisms private. Those who did speak up - Liz Cheney of Wyoming in the House and Mitt Romney of Utah in the Senate, among others - are gone from Capitol Hill.

One former GOP senator, Jeff Flake of Arizona, who announced in 2017 during Trump’s first term that he would not seek reelection the next year, is imploring Republicans to find a better way.

“The fever still hasn’t broken,” he wrote recently in The New York Times. “In today’s Republican Party, voting your conscience is essentially disqualifying.”

But this time, the halls of Congress are filled with many Republicans who came of political age with Trump’s “Make America Great Again” movement and owe their ascent to the president himself. Many are emulating his brand and style as they shape their own.

A new generation of GOP leaders, Johnson in the House and Senate Majority Leader John Thune, have pulled closer to Trump. They are utilizing the power of the presidency in ways large and small - to broker deals, encourage wayward lawmakers to fall in line, even to set schedules.

America

Florida Rep Casello dies while in office: Florida Democratic lawmaker **Joe Casello** has died while in office following a heart attack, according to state House officials. He was 73.

Casello, who was first elected to the Florida House in 2018 from a district in Boynton Beach, was surrounded by his girlfriend and family when he died Friday, the Florida House Democratic Caucus said in a social media post.

“The family extends their heartfelt gratitude to all who have offered their love and support during this difficult time,” the caucus said in a statement.

Casello was a firefighter in Worcester, Massachusetts, for three decades before entering politics in Florida. He served as a Boynton Beach city commissioner before becoming a state lawmaker. He had announced plans to run for a seat on the Palm Beach County Commission in 2026.

Under Florida law, Gov Ron DeSantis is required to call a special election or special primary election when a vacancy occurs for a legislative seat because of a death. (AP)



Casello

3 still missing from Texas floods: Officials in a Texas hill country community pummeled by deadly flooding July 4 said Saturday that just three people remain missing, down from nearly 100, after people who had previously been reported missing have since been accounted for.

The reduction in the number of people on the missing list came as the search for victims entered its third week. It was a significant drop from the more than 160 people officials previously said were unaccounted for in Kerr County alone.

“This remarkable progress reflects countless hours of coordinated search and rescue operations, careful investigative work, and an unwavering commitment to bringing clarity and hope to families during an unimaginably difficult time,” Kerrville City Manager Dalton Rice in a statement.

The death toll in Kerr County, 107, held steady for much of this week even as the intensive search continued.

The Flash floods killed at least 135 people in Texas over the holiday weekend, with most deaths along the Guadalupe River in Kerr County, about 60 miles (100 kilometers) northwest of San Antonio.

Just before daybreak on July 4, the destructive, fast-moving waters rose 26 feet (8 meters) on the Guadalupe, washing away homes and vehicles.

The floods laid waste to the Hill Country, a popular tourist destination where campers seek out spots along the river amid the rolling landscape. It is naturally prone to flash flooding because its dry, dirt-packed soil cannot soak up heavy rain. (AP)

Britain to strengthen relations with Germany, France amid post-Brexit pivot

LONDON, July 20, (Xinhua): Standing in the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), draped in the national flags of both nations, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz on signed a wide-ranging bilateral agreement covering areas such as defense and migration.

The summit followed on the heels of French President Emmanuel Macron’s state visit last week. Together, these developments mark a quiet but significant revival of the trilateral group known as the E3 -- comprising the United Kingdom, France, and Germany -- amid mounting global turbulence.

Originally formed as an ad hoc coalition focused on Iran’s nuclear program, the E3 is now re-emerging as a core pillar of European security diplomacy. As British think tank Chatham House noted on Friday, the group is “back at the heart of European security.”

To many observers, this shift signals a new strategic direction under the Labour government, as Starmer seeks to stabilise and rebuild once-fractured ties between Britain and the European Union (EU) in the aftermath of Brexit.

As Iain Begg, professor of the London School of Economics observed, the sequence of events -- beginning with the “reset” with the EU in May, followed by Macron’s state visit in early July, and culminating in the UK-Germany “Kensington Treaty” -- augur well for better relations overall between the UK and the bloc after the divisions precipitated by Brexit.



Britain’s Prime Minister Keir Starmer speaks at a civil society summit in London on July 17. (AP)

“The E3, a flexible diplomatic forum between the UK, France, and Germany, has regained significance in the wake of Brexit,” said the Chatham House article.

This trend also reflects a shift in public opinion, which was showcased in a survey conducted by the London-based independent think tank British Foreign Policy Group on Thursday. The survey result said the British public is increasingly disillusioned with the once-hailed “special relationship” with the United States, especially under President Donald Trump. Facing strategic uncertainty and erratic U.S.

policies, many British are once again looking across the Channel.

Public trust in the United States has fallen sharply, from 53 percent in 2024 to just 38 percent in 2025, while over 60 percent of British now support closer ties with the EU, driven in part by concerns over Trump’s leadership.

Dubbed the Kensington Treaty, the new UK-Germany accord reaffirms cooperation across a range of issues: a shared commitment to limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels; strengthening bilateral trade within the framework of existing EU-UK agreements; and advancing security and defense cooperation, including joint military exercises, countering cyber threats and information warfare, and coordinating arms exports.

Though smaller in scope than the UK-France agreement signed last week, which included an unprecedented joint nuclear statement pledging co-ordination of the two countries’ independent nuclear deterrents, Thursday’s treaty nonetheless “anchored the E3 as a central pillar of European security,” according to Chatham House.

Dan Hough, professor of politics at the University of Sussex, told Xinhua that there is now “a real push to work constructively on issues where they didn’t have to work constructively in the past because the American influence was so strong.”

“However, given Donald Trump’s behaviour in the White House, we can’t rely on that anymore,” he added.

Bulgaria, which has taken steps in recent years against drug trafficking, is considered a transit point on the Balkan drug-trafficking route, which is used to supply Western Europe with heroin from Asia and the Middle East, and with cocaine from Latin America. (AP)

Finland crash kills pilot, injures passenger: A two-seat ultralight aircraft crashed Saturday morning near Jamijarvi Airport in western Finland, killing the pilot and seriously injuring the passenger.

According to Southwest Finland Police, the aircraft was a center-of-gravity-controlled ultralight model. The crash occurred shortly after takeoff from the Jamijarvi airfield, a popular destination for private and recreational flying.

The pilot, described as a middle-aged man, died at the scene. The sole passenger sustained serious injuries and has been transported to hospital.

According to national broadcaster Yle, police have cordoned off the airport hall and the surrounding area. An investigation into the cause of the accident is underway.

Yle’s meteorologist Annina Valtonen noted that local wind speeds were low when the incident occurred, ruling out weather conditions as a contributing factor.

Jamijarvi Airport experiences increased activity during the summer, attracting parachutists, glider pilots, and light aircraft enthusiasts. The Finnish Aviation Association has likened ultralight aircraft to the “Ferraris of aviation” due to their speed and lightweight construction. (Xinhua)



Radev

Europe

Bulgarian authorities seize drugs: Bulgarian border authorities said Sunday they have seized one of the largest hauls of cocaine from a Belgian-plated van en route to Turkey.

According to customs officials, the nearly 206 kilograms (453 pounds) of cocaine was the largest seizure at Bulgaria’s land border. A vehicle inspection led to the discovery of the drugs valued at 20 million euros (\$22 million). The drugs were hidden in 179 sealed bags stashed among personal belongings in five suitcases.

Haskovo District Prosecutor Ivan Stoyanov identified the three people attempting to cross the border into Turkey as a 40-year-old diplomat from the Democratic Republic of Congo accredited in Belgium, a 54-year-old Belgian citizen and a 43-year-old Bulgarian driver.

Stoyanov told reporters that they could face up to 20 years in prison if convicted on drug trafficking charges.

An investigation has been launched together with partner organizations in other EU countries into the origins of the cocaine and its final recipients. Bulgaria’s president is **Rumen Radev**.



Shoes and small liquid containers are placed in bins to be screened by TSA Supervisor Jennifer Haslip at Washington’s Ronald Reagan National Airport on June 27, 2008. (AP)

in TSA a multilayered screening process that allows us to change some of how we do security and screening so it’s still as safe.”

A Transportation Security Administration spokesperson said Noem and the agency “are constantly looking for ways to enhance security, and improve the travel experience for the public.”

Any changes will come through the same official channels that TSA used to announce this month that travelers

can keep their shoes on at checkpoints. That change offers relief from a rule adopted after “shoe bomber” Richard Reid’s failed attempt to take down a flight from Paris to Miami in late 2001 with a small explosive device hidden in his footwear.

The limits on liquids were triggered by the 2006 UK arrests. Three ring-leaders were eventually convicted.

Prosecutors told the jury in that case that authorities uncovered the plot af-



In this photo taken from video distributed by Russian Defense Ministry Press Service on July 19, assault troops of the Russian Army attend a training to hone their combat skills at one of the rear training grounds in an undisclosed location in Ukraine. (AP)

Tsunami threat over: PTWC

‘Russia open to peace with Ukraine’

MOSCOW, July 20, (AP): Russia is open to peace with Ukraine, but achieving “our goals” remains a priority, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Sunday, days after U.S. President Donald Trump gave Moscow a 50-day deadline to agree to a ceasefire or face tougher sanctions.

Peskov and other Russian officials have repeatedly rejected accusations from Kyiv and its Western partners of stalling peace talks. Meanwhile, Moscow continues to intensify its long-range attacks on Ukrainian cities, with more drones in a single night than it did during some entire months in 2024, and analysts say the barrages are likely to escalate.

“President Putin has repeatedly spoken of his desire to bring the Ukrainian settlement to a peaceful conclusion as soon as possible. This is a long process, it requires effort, and it is not easy,” Peskov told state TV reporter Pavel Zarubin.

“The main thing for us is to achieve our goals. Our goals are clear,” he added.

The Kremlin has insisted that any peace deal should see Ukraine withdraw from the four regions that Russia illegally annexed in September 2022 but never fully captured. It also wants Ukraine to renounce its bid to join NATO and accept strict limits on its armed forces, demands Kyiv and its Western allies have rejected.

President Donald Trump threatened Russia on July 14 with steep tariffs and announced a rejuvenated pipe-



Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks with employees of the Magnitogorsk Iron and Steel Works company in Magnitogorsk, Russia on July 16. (AP)

line for American weapons to reach Ukraine, hardening his stance toward Moscow after months of frustration following unsuccessful negotiations aimed at ending the war. The direct Russia-Ukraine negotiations in Istanbul resulted in several rounds of prisoner exchanges, but little else.

Trump said he would implement “severe tariffs” unless a peace deal is reached within 50 days. He provided few details on how they would be implemented, but suggested they would target Russia’s trading partners in an effort to isolate Moscow in the global

economy.

Also:

MOSCOW: The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC) says there is no longer a danger of tsunami waves on Russia’s Kamchatka Peninsula after five powerful quakes - the largest with a magnitude of 7.4 - struck in the sea nearby on Sunday.

The largest quake was at a depth of 20 kilometers (12 miles) and was 144 kilometers (89 miles) east of the city of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, which has a population of 180,000, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Smaller - but still substantial - quakes were recorded before and after. Russian state media said, citing local geologists, that over two dozen aftershocks had hit Kamchatka. It added their strength was gradually receding.

The PTWC initially said there was a danger of major tsunami waves but later downgraded its warning before finally saying the danger had passed.

Russia’s Emergency Ministry also issued a tsunami warning following the largest quake, urging residents of coastal settlements to stay away from the shore.

There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage, and the ministry said it had no plans to evacuate residents. Just over two hours later, it reported that the danger had passed.

On Nov. 4, 1952, a magnitude 9.0 quake in Kamchatka caused damage but no reported deaths despite setting off 9.1-meter (30-foot) waves in Hawaii.



Houses collapsed from a landslide due to heavy rain are seen in Sancheong, South Korea on July 19. (AP)

Heavy rains in South Korea leave 14 dead and 12 others missing

Torrential rains that slammed South Korea for five days have left 14 people dead and 12 others missing, the government said Sunday.

One person was killed on Sunday after their house collapsed during heavy rain and another person was found dead after being swept by a swollen stream in Gapyeong, a town northeast of Seoul, the Interior and Safety Ministry said.

The ministry said eight people were discovered dead and six others were reported missing in the southern town of Sancheong on Saturday after heavy downpours caused landslides, house collapses and flash floods there.

A ministry report said that six people remain missing in Gapyeong and the southern city of Gwangju.

Earlier last week, three people were found dead in a submerged car, and a person was also killed when their car was buried by soil and concrete after a retaining wall of an overpass collapsed in Osan, just south of Seoul, during heavy rain.

As of 9 am on Sunday, about 3,840 people remain evacuated from their homes, the ministry report said. The rain stopped in most of South Korea on Sunday, and heavy rain alerts have been subsequently lifted throughout the country, ministry officials said. (AP)



Waves are seen near Victoria Harbor following Typhoon Wipha, in Hong Kong on July 20. (AP)

Typhoon topples trees, causes flight disruptions in HK and China

Typhoon Wipha toppled trees and caused major flight disruptions Sunday in Hong Kong and at some nearby airports in China as it moved west off the country's southern coast.

Airports in Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Zhuhai and Macao canceled or postponed daytime flights, their websites showed. Hong Kong grounded about 400 flights, affecting some 80,000 passengers, broadcaster RTHK said. Some high-speed train services were also suspended.

The Hong Kong Observatory issued a hurricane signal No. 10, its highest warning. The eye of the storm passed just south of the city around midday with maximum sustained winds of 140 kilometers (87 miles) per hour, the observatory said.

Vehicles weaved around branches strewn on the streets. The government said it had received more than 350 reports of fallen trees and that 21 people had sought medical treatment at public hospitals. A news release did not provide details on any injuries.

About 240 people had sought refuge in public shelters, the release said. Hong Kong Disneyland and other amusement parks were closed. (AP)

Military leader puts in rare appearance at event honoring Suu Kyi's father

Myanmar military recaptures strategic town from rebels after a year: govt

BANGKOK, July 20, (AP): Myanmar's military has recaptured a strategic gateway town from rebel forces after nearly a year, state-media reported Thursday, marking a rare turnaround in the country's northeast, where an alliance of ethnic militias seized a large swath of territory in an offensive that began in late 2023.

Nawngkhio, which sits on a major highway trading route linking central Myanmar to China, had been under the control of the Ta'ang National Liberation Army, or TNLA, a group in the Three Brotherhood Alliance, since July last year.

Its recapture by the army comes after a long period where the military government had been seen as being on the defensive against an array of rebel forces in the civil war that is being fought over much of the country.

Nawngkhio, which also stands on the highway leading to the major military garrison town of Pyin Oo Lwin, was completely captured by the army at noon on Wednesday after nearly 11 months of operations to retake the town, according to a state-run Myanma Alinn newspaper report on Thursday.

After more than 500 armed engagements, including 20 major clashes, the bodies of 171 members of the TNLA and its allies were recovered and their ammunition supplies were captured, the report said, adding that the military was working to restore the town's administrative mechanisms, remove land mines and ensure the safe return of residents who had fled to avoid fighting.

The newspaper also published photos of the soldiers who had recaptured the town in front of the government offices, hospitals, and markets.

The Ta'ang National Liberation Army did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Restrictions on reporting make independent confirmation of the town's recapture virtually impossible, though the army's claim has not been challenged.

However, in a statement posted Wednesday on the Telegram messaging app, the TNLA said it had moved the group's civil administration and service offices in Nawngkhio to safe locations as the military's intensive offensive operations in the past few months made it difficult to carry out work.

The groups in the Three Brotherhood Alliance, which also include the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army and the Arakan Army, have been fighting for decades for greater autonomy from Myanmar's central government and are loosely allied with the People's Defense Force, the pro-democracy resistance that emerged to fight military rule after the army seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021.

Since October 2023, the alliance members captured and controlled significant swaths of territory in in north-eastern Myanmar near the Chinese border and in western Myanmar. Their victories were seen as forcing the army to go on the defensive over most of the country, while boosting the morale and strategic position of resistance forces.

The recapture of Nawngkhio comes more than two months after the TNLA rejected the military's demands to withdraw from five towns controlled by the group, including Nawngkhio, during talks brokered by China in the Chinese city of Kunming in late April.

China tries to maintain good relations with both the military government and the groups making up the Three Brotherhood Alliance, but fears that the aggressive posture of the rebel groups destabilizes Myanmar, which is a key Southeast Asian ally of Beijing with large strategic Chinese investments in minerals, energy and infrastructure.

Nawngkhio's recapture also comes just more than a week after the military claimed to take back the strategic town of Moby in southern Shan state, which had been seized since late 2023



In this photo released on July 20, 2025, by Myanmar Military True News Information Team, Myanmar military leader Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, (center left), pays respect together with his cabinet members and officials during the 78th anniversary of Martyrs' Day to mark the assassination of the country's independence heroes. (AP)

by another alliance of ethnic armed organizations in the eastern state of Kayah, also known as Karenni.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the army's 2021 takeover, which led to nationwide peaceful protests that escalated into armed resistance and what now amounts to civil war.

Also:

BANGKOK: The head of Myanmar's military government made a rare appearance at a ceremony on Saturday honoring General Aung San, an independence hero and father of jailed former leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

It was the first time that 69-year-old Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing attended the Martyrs' Day wreath-laying since the army ousted Suu Kyi and seized power in February 2021. The leader's appearance comes as his embattled government is preparing to hold elections while fighting armed opposition groups across the country.

Martyrs' Day was an important event in Myanmar's calendar for decades, but the military has downplayed the holiday in recent years. It commemorates the assassination of Aung San, a former Prime Minister who was gunned down at the age of 32 along with six Cabinet colleagues and two other officials in 1947, just months before the country - then called Burma - achieved freedom from British colonial rule. A political rival, former Prime Minister U Saw, was tried and hanged for plotting the attack.

Suu Kyi, who was detained when the army took over in 2021, was absent from the event for a fifth consecutive year. She is currently serving a 27-year prison term on what are widely regarded as contrived charges meant to keep her from political activity. She has not been seen in public since her arrest.

Ye Aung Than, a son of Suu Kyi's estranged older brother, laid a wreath in front of his grandfather's tomb during the main ceremony at the Martyrs' Mausoleum near the foot of the towering Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon.

With Myanmar national flags flying at half-staff, members of the ruling military council, and cabinet, as well as high-ranking military generals joined Min Aung Hlaing in placing a basket of flowers in front of the tombs of the nine martyrs.

As the ceremony was held, people in Yangon paid tribute to independence leaders by blaring car horns and sirens at 10:37 a.m., the time of the 1947 attack.

Democracy supporters also held scattered rallies in parts of the country that are not under military control.

The event comes five months before elections that the military has promised to hold by the end of this year.

The poll is widely seen as an attempt to legitimize the military's seizure of power through the ballot box and is expected to deliver a result that ensures the generals retain control.

Ishiba vows to stay on as PM despite possible upper house poll setback

TOKYO, July 20, (Agencies): Shigeru Ishiba vowed to stay on as Japan's prime minister after his ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and coalition partner Komeito appeared to be on course to lose their upper house majority following Sunday's election, local media reported.

"We have to take the projected outcome humbly," Ishiba said on a TV program, adding that "we must be fully aware of our responsibilities as the largest party in parliament. I want to be fully conscious of my own responsibility to properly address the issues" facing the country, according to Kyodo News.

Ishiba made the remarks after LDP Secretary-General Hiroshi Moriyama, the No. 2 figure in the party, said during a separate TV program that "we should not create a political vacuum."

Exit polls showed the ruling coalition of the LDP and Komeito is likely to lose its majority in the 248-seat House of Councillors following the election.

Currently, the coalition has 75 seats that are not up for re-election. It must win at least 50 of the 125 contested seats to clear the majority line. They are forecast to secure 32 to 51 seats, the public broadcaster NHK projected.

The embattled prime minister is expected to hold a press conference on Monday, as senior figures in the country's major opposition parties expressed reluctance to help the ruling bloc by forming an expanded coalition.

In the October 2024 general election, the ruling coalition already lost its majority in the more powerful House of Representatives, or lower house, forcing Ishiba to form Japan's first minority government in over three decades.

"It's a tough situation. I take it humbly and sincerely," Ishiba told a live interview with NHK. He said that the poor showing was because his government's measures to combat price increase have yet to reach many people.



Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and president of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), places a red paper rose on the name of an elected candidate at the LDP headquarters in Tokyo on July 20. (AP)

Mexican President Sheinbaum rejects new US border wall construction

MEXICO CITY, July 20, (Xinhua): Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum on Friday voiced strong opposition to the construction of a new segment of the US border wall in the state of New Mexico, calling it a unilateral move by the US government.

Speaking at her daily press conference, Sheinbaum emphasized that Mexico is not involved in the project in any way and is not contributing funding.

"They're building it on their own. We don't support the wall. We've achieved a safe border through cooperation and coordination, not walls," she said.

Sheinbaum described the construction as a decision made solely by US President Donald Trump and emphasized Mexico's preference for development-based cooperation and respect for Mexicans living in the United States.

This week, the Trump administration began a new phase of construction on a secondary border barrier between Santa Teresa, New Mexico, and Ciudad Juarez in northern Mexico. The project includes 9.6 km of 9-meter-high steel posts placed behind an older 5.5-meter fence.



Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum attends her morning press conference at the National Palace in Mexico City on April 2. (AP)

Sudan denounces new EU sanctions as lacking 'fair legal standards'

KHARTOUM, July 20, (Agencies): Sudan's Foreign Ministry on Saturday denounced the new sanctions imposed by the European Union on Sudanese individuals and entities as lacking "fair legal standards."

It is "not possible to equate" the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) with "outlawed rebel armed groups," read a statement by the ministry, urging the EU to adopt a more balanced approach that takes into account Sudan's unique national circumstances.

On Friday, the EU adopted sanctions against two individuals and two entities affiliated with the SAF and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), including asset freezes, prohibition of the provision of funds or economic resources, directly or indirectly, and travel bans.

Sudan remains gripped by a conflict between the SAF and the RSF, which erupted in April 2023. The fighting has killed tens of thousands of people and displaced millions, both internally and across borders, deepening the country's humanitarian crisis.

Also:

CAIRO: Eastern Libyan authorities have sent hundreds of Sudanese back to their war-torn home country, officials said Saturday, in a crackdown on migrants seeking to flee conflict and poverty for Europe by way of the the Mediterranean nation.

Seven hundred Sudanese who were detained recently in central and south-eastern Libya, were deported Friday by land to Sudan, the Directorate for Combating Illegal Migration in eastern Libya said in a statement.



Sudanese soldiers from the Rapid Support Forces unit, led by Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, the deputy head of the military council, secure the area where Dagalo attends a military-backed tribe's rally, in the East Nile province, Sudan on June 22, 2019. (AP)

Subcontinent

Land dispute kills 5 in Afghanistan: At least five people were killed and 11 others injured when a clash broke out between two families over a land dispute in northern Afghanistan's Baghlan province, a local police official said on Sunday.

The clash erupted after the two families disputed over a piece of land in Shahr Kohna region of the Baghlan Markazi district on Saturday. As a result, five people lost their lives and 11 others, including a woman and four mediators, were injured, said Mohammad Zia Tawoos, the district governor.

According to the official, police have taken into custody eight suspects in connection with the case and referred their dossiers to the judiciary for further investigation. (Xinhua)

■ ■ ■

18 dead in India rain-related incidents: Eighteen people died in rain-related incidents across India's northern state of Uttar Pradesh over the past couple of days, said local media reports.

Many parts of northern and western India have been facing heavy to very heavy rains during the ongoing monsoon season.

Normal life was disrupted after a heavy downpour in several parts of the western state of Rajasthan on Saturday, even as flood-like conditions were reported from several cities and towns, including Ajmer, Pushkar, Bundi, Sawai Madhopur, and Pali.

Many villages were reportedly cut off as rivers, drains and dams overflowed due to the intense rains. Highest rainfall of 234 millimeters was recorded in Nainwa area of Bundi district.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) sounded alerts of heavy rains for the northern hilly states of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh for the next couple of days. (Xinhua)

■ ■ ■

4 terrorists killed in Pakistan: At least four terrorists affiliated with the banned Tehreek-e-Taleban Pakistan (TTP) were killed and two policemen were injured during a joint operation by police and paramilitary forces in Pakistan's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, officials said Saturday.

The operation was conducted by acting on intelligence reports regarding the presence of militants in Hangu area of the province, during which the terrorists were killed, Deputy Superintendent of Police Amjad Khan told media.

Additional security forces were deployed to reinforce the area and prevent any retaliatory attacks, he added.

The injured policemen were shifted to a nearby hospital where their condition is stable, Khan added.

The officer said the killed terrorists were involved in recent attacks in the region, amid growing concerns over an uptick in militant activity across parts of the province. (Xinhua)

Boursa Kuwait ends mixed

KUWAIT CITY, July 20, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed on Sunday with mixed performance across its major indices. The All Share Index edged up by 3.71 points (0.04%) to close at 8,602.13 after a trading session involving 862.7 million shares across 40,274 transactions, with a total value of KD 113.1 million (USD 369.6 million). The Main Market Index posted a notable gain, rising 103.34 points (1.39%) to reach 7,555.72. This movement was supported by a high trading volume of 737.2 million shares from 33,633 transactions, valued at KD 78.7 million (USD 257.2 million).

Business

Reaffirming its commitment to community development with an interactive program that empowers future generations

Gulf Bank, Basta launch ‘Banker for the Day’ youth financial literacy program

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: As part of its ongoing commitment to community development and promoting financial literacy among younger generations, Gulf Bank has collaborated with Basta, a non-profit organization, to launch the “Banker for the Day” program. Aimed at children and youth aged 10 and above, the initiative offers an engaging and interactive opportunity to explore how banks operate from the inside.

This innovative program is a milestone in the field of financial education, offering participants a rich, three-hour experience that combines learning and fun. It provides young attendees with an in-depth look into the world of banking, while emphasizing the importance of making smart financial decisions from an early age.

Program activities include guided tours inside the Bank’s various departments, where participants are introduced to the daily operations



Group photo of participants with Gulf Bank employees.

of different roles. They are invited to step into the shoes of employees such as tellers, call center agents, and customer service representatives

– experiencing real-world tasks in a simulated environment.

The program also features hands-on exercises, educational

games, and financial-themed competitions designed to introduce basic concepts like saving, budgeting, and financial planning. To keep

participants motivated, the program features giveaways and rewards designed to spark enthusiasm and encourage teamwork.



Participants listen to an explanation of banking operations.

Gulf Bank’s team highlighted that the initiative provides young people with a valuable opportunity to explore the banking industry firsthand, while building essential life skills like communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving – key foundations for shaping future leaders.

Organizers emphasized that children are warmly welcomed and supported by Gulf Bank staff throughout the session, receiving clear and practical guidance to help them make the most of the experience. The result is an engaging and meaningful introduction to financial literacy.

The “Banker for the Day” program reflects Gulf Bank’s strong commitment to community engagement and empowering the next generation. By equipping young individuals with knowledge and confidence, the Bank continues to play a vital role in fostering Kuwait’s intellectual and economic development.

Under CBK’s Kafa’a initiative

Kuwait Finance House celebrates sixth KGDP graduates, boosts national talent

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) celebrated the graduation of six employees from the 12th edition of the Kuwaiti Graduates Development Program (KGDP). This achievement underscores KFH’s commitment to nurturing national talent by honing their skills, offering them job opportunities, career advancement, and pathways to assume leadership positions. The bank aims to enhance their creativity, boost performance, and ultimately achieve the aspirations of both KFH and its customers. KFH remains the leading bank in recruiting young graduates through this annual training program.

KFH remains committed to attracting the best young talents and providing them with opportunities for future leadership roles. This commitment reflects the Bank’s belief that attaining its key objectives and enhancing its strategic standing depends primarily on the dedication and excellence of its human capital, HR investment in addition to honing their skills and enriching their professional expertise.

It is worth noting that the KGDP program is launched as part of the

Kafa’a initiative by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) in collaboration with Kuwaiti banks. Managed by the Institute of Banking Studies (KIBS), the program is considered one of the best choices for fresh graduates interested in entering the banking and financial industry. It offers a diverse range of specialized training content in the sector. These extensive training courses are essential in hiring the participants in banking roles, after successfully completing the one-year training round under this program.

This program thoroughly equips fresh graduates with essential job market skills through a blend of theoretical and practical training, preparing them for professional careers with remarkable efficiency. The curriculum includes lectures, online courses from leading providers, and field training at local Kuwaiti banks to connect academic theory with practical experience. Subsequently, participants receive specialized international training in top banking countries, allowing them to explore the latest financial technologies and gain invaluable global expertise.



KFH honors new graduates of Kuwaiti Banking Development Program.

In line with Warba's vision for a healthier, sustainable future

Warba Bank sponsors ‘Wellness at the Heart of the Capital’ initiative

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: As part of its ongoing commitment to supporting national initiatives that promote public health and encourage active lifestyles, Warba Bank announced its principal sponsorship of the “Wellness at the Heart of the Capital” initiative, held at Assima Mall from July 14 to 16, 2025. The initiative was organized under the patronage of His Excellency the Governor of the Capital, Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, in collaboration with the Capital Governorate, the Public Authority for Youth, and several public and private sector entities.

The initiative served as a national community event aimed at raising awareness of the importance of walking and physical activity. It encouraged the public to adopt healthier lifestyles through an open challenge in which participants’ steps were recorded via smart applications. At the end of the initiative, participants with the highest number of steps, including individuals participating in the people with special needs category, were honored with awards.

The initiative kicked off at 5 PM on July 14 and ran for three consecutive days. Participants registered at the dedicated booth of the Capital Governorate and the Public Authority for Youth at Assima Mall. The event concluded with an award ceremony led by His Excellency Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, where the top ten participants and top participants in the people with special needs category were recognized.

Ayman Salem Al-Mutairi, Director Marketing and Corporate Communications at Warba Bank, stated: “We are proud to collaborate with the Capital Governorate and support this meaningful national initiative that highlights the importance of public-private partnerships in promoting a healthy society and an active lifestyle. Our participation stems from our belief that the banking sector has a vital role in supporting nationwide efforts to foster community health and wellness.”

He added: “Public health is a long-term investment in people and in society; an investment that reflects our vision and our slogan: ‘Let’s Own Tomorrow.’ That’s why we are committed to sponsoring events focused on health, fitness, and wellbeing, and

we aim to always be an active partner in initiatives that serve Kuwait and its people.”

Capital Governorate’s Efforts to Promote Health and Wellness

Major Turki Al-Baidan, Director of Public Relations and Citizen Services at the Capital Governorate, commented: “We are pleased to take part in the ‘Wellness at the Heart of the Capital’ initiative at Assima Mall, which ran until Wednesday, July 16, 2025, under the patronage of His Excellency the Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah.”

Al-Baidan emphasized that this initiative falls within the Governorate’s broader efforts to promote public health and community sports by encouraging individuals and families to walk in a safe and suitable environment, such as shopping malls. He also noted the collaboration with various official and volunteer entities to deliver educational, physical, and interactive activities throughout the initiative.

He extended his gratitude to all citizens and residents who participated in this impactful community initiative, which positively contributed to both physical and mental well-being and reinforced values of social responsibility and health awareness.

A Strategic Public-Private Partnership

This initiative serves as a model for strategic cooperation between the public and private sectors. The Capital Governorate joined forces with Warba Bank and several other stakeholders to implement this national event.

Warba Bank’s sponsorship of this initiative is part of a broader series of community-focused efforts that the Bank actively supports, aligning with its CSR strategy and reaffirming its commitment to a healthier, more sustainable future under the banner “Let’s Own Tomorrow.”

It is worth noting that Warba Bank has achieved remarkable success in a relatively short time, establishing a leading position in the field of Islamic digital banking in Kuwait. With one of the largest shareholder bases among local banks, Warba Bank continues to stand out as a trusted financial partner combining innovation and social responsibility to deliver outstanding Sharia-compliant products and services.

Expo highlights stc’s commitment to digital transformation

stc sponsors ‘Sayef Expo’ to support Kuwaiti SMEs



Ahmad Al Nowaibet and Anfal Alkandari at the company's pavilion.

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, sponsored ‘Sayef Expo’, an exhibition that gathered a selection of vendors that specialize in summer services and activities. The sponsorship comes as part of stc’s ongoing commitment to empowering small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and supporting the growth of local businesses across diverse sectors under “Weyak” Umbrella.

The three-day expo brought together over 30 Kuwaiti brands and SMEs, showcasing a variety of products and services spanning retail, technology, health, and lifestyle.

As part of its sponsorship, stc interacted with visitors at its booth which included interactive activities and dedicated areas highlighting its advanced digital solutions. The Company offered exclusive giveaways, promoted its youth line packages, and introduced attendees to the benefits of its recently launched 5G Advanced network. In line with stc’s ongoing commitment to support

Kuwait Vision 2035, which aims to enable digital transformation and provide an enhanced digital experience for customers, 5G Advanced serves as the next generation of 5G technology and is expected to revolutionize the online experience for individuals and businesses.

In addition, students were able to register to stc’s annual summer internship program, which provides young talents with the opportunity to explore future career opportunities within the telecom and ICT sectors. The summer training program includes three training courses: photography and editing, cybersecurity, and specialty coffee preparation in collaboration with the Coffee app, where each course will last one week, offering both theoretical and practical instruction.

In a statement, stc indicated that sponsoring the ‘Sayef Expo’ comes as part of its commitment to supporting local brands, SMEs, and the entrepreneurial community in Kuwait. stc actively seeks out platforms and initiatives that contribute to the growth of the startup ecosystem, while also providing opportunities to engage with its diverse customer base. Through such sponsorships, the



Heavy turnout at Sayef Expo.

Company aims to empower local businesses, encourage innovation, and strengthen connections within the community. This approach also aligns with stc’s broader ‘weyak’ program, which was launched to support SMEs and entrepreneurs to realize their potential in an increasingly digital marketplace.

About stc Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) is a Kuwaiti shareholding company incorporated pursuant to Amiri Decree No. 187 on 22 July, 2008, to operate and manage the third GSM mobile network in Kuwait as per Law No. 2 of 2008. Accordingly, stc launched its operations in December 2008 and was listed on Boursa Kuwait in December 2014.

stc Kuwait is a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and solutions to customers, both for individuals and enterprises, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, and is a subsidiary of stc Group. stc Kuwait has expanded its portfolio by acquiring companies such as Qualitynet General Trading and Contracting Company (solutions by stc) in Kuwait, and e-portal Holding Company and its subsidiaries.

Al-Mawasi Capital joins registry

CMA launches Book 19 to regulate fin-tech services

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: As part of its efforts to adopt and implement international best practices in developing Kuwait’s financial markets, and in line with its strategic objectives, the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) has issued Book 19 “Financial Technologies” of the Executive Regulations of Law No. 7/2010 on the Establishment of the CMA and the Regulation of Securities Activities, along with its amendments.

According to a press release issued by CMA, Book 19 governs the first package of financial technology services, specifically securities-based crowdfunding and robo-advisory services. This was followed by the CMA’s launch of the initial implementation phase of Book 19, as outlined in its Resolution No. 181/2023.

In line with its commitment to achieving the goals of regulating financial technology services in the Kuwaiti market, facilitating the qualification process for entities seeking to offer these services, and preserving the rights of participating investors, CMA has announced the registration of the first company - Al-Mawasi Capital - in its registry for securities-based financial technology services, to offer a securities-based crowdfunding platform.

This milestone marks a significant step in CMA’s implementation of fintech regulations by introducing a service that has not previously existed in Kuwait. It represents a major breakthrough aimed at supporting the growth of the financial technology sector, promoting financial inclusion, expanding the range of financial and investment tools, and creating new investment and financing channels that serve the widest possible audience.

This step contributes to supporting entrepreneurs and project owners by providing access to new fi-

nancing channels.

Crowdfunding is a method of raising funds by appealing to the public, and it includes several different models. Within its mandate, CMA is responsible for regulating the model related to securities activities, namely, securities-based crowdfunding.

Securities-based crowdfunding allows companies to raise capital from the public to finance specific projects by offering them through a CMA-registered crowdfunding platform. This is done by either transferring a portion of the company’s capital shares or issuing new securities.

A registered crowdfunding platform is a legal entity licensed by CMA to operate a digital system that enables specific entities to issue offerings, allowing the public to participate by offering and selling securities through crowdfunding.

Securities-based crowdfunding is designed to create direct channels of interaction between investors and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It offers alternative and innovative investment opportunities for small investors and entrepreneurs, while also contributing to increased cash flow within the market.

The initial implementation phase of Book No. 19 (Financial Technologies) was launched under CMA Resolution No. 181/2023.

During this phase, several individuals seeking to provide financial technology services under CMA’s supervision submitted their registration applications for securities-based financial technology services.

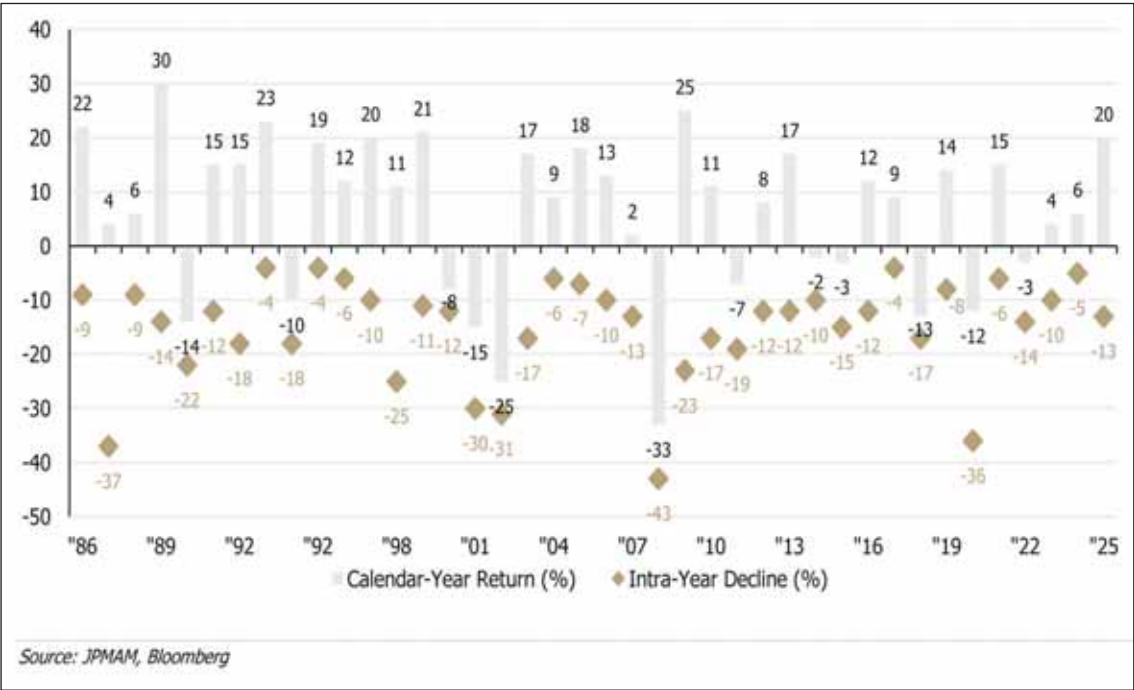
CMA has set a registration period from the start of the initial implementation phase on January 2, 2024, until July 1, 2024, for submitting applications. After reviewing the submissions, CMA has already registered three companies authorized to provide financial technology services.



His Excellency the Governor of the Capital honoring the Head of the Retail Banking Group at Warba Bank, Ahmad Al-Qatami.



A group photo of the Warba Bank team with His Excellency the Governor of the Capital during the event.



The power of compounding: Time in the market vs. timing the market

By NBK Wealth

Many investors think the key to success is timing the market by making the right moves at the right time, however this is difficult even for experts and it comes with many risks. Investors should instead focus on time in the market.

Time in the Market

The “time in the market” approach focuses on staying invested regardless of short-term price fluctuations. It leverages the power of compounding and the historical upward trend of markets over time. There are several benefits of staying invested.

1. The Power of Compounding – Staying invested, reinvesting dividends and earnings accelerates portfolio growth. Long-term investors will benefit from compounding returns that outweigh any short-term volatility.
2. Reduced Risk Over Time – While short-term market movements can be volatile, markets generally rise over the long run thanks to the risk premium that compensates investors for taking risk. The longer we stay in the market, the lower the risk of negative returns.
3. Avoiding Emotional Investing – A long-term focus reduces

the risk of making impulsive decisions based on short-term market movements. A disciplined, long-term approach helps avoid panic selling during market downturns and overenthusiastic buying in stable markets.

The Power of Compounding

Compounding is the process whereby investment returns generate additional returns over time. The longer money remains invested, the more significant the potential compounding effect.

“Compound interest is the eighth wonder of the world. He who understands it, earns it; he who doesn’t, pays it” — Albert Einstein

To illustrate the power of compounding as well as the risk associated with market timing, it helps to look at the long-term return of an index like S&P500. A \$1000 investment in the S&P500 20 years ago would have been worth \$7320 by the end of May 2025. An investor that missed the 10 best days during those 20 years would have seen the value of the \$1000 investment increase to only \$3257. Consequently, as illustrated in Chart 1, missing the 10 best days over the last 20 years cuts long-term returns by over 50%.



Risk Premium adds to Long-Term Returns

Investors are compensated for taking risks through what is known as the risk premium, i.e. the additional return expected from riskier assets, such as stocks, compared to holding low risk assets like cash or government bonds. While there are no guarantees when investing, the probability of risk being rewarded over time is much higher compared to the probability of the market going up or down over the next 3 months.

Timing the Market – A Risky Strategy

There are several challenges associated with trying to time the market that makes it a risky approach.

1. Difficult to Predict Markets Accurately – Short-term market movements are very hard to forecast because they depend on unpredictable factors like geopolitical crises, economic data releases and investor sentiment.
2. Emotional Decision Making



QR Code

– Many investors are influenced by emotions like fear and greed. They tend to buy when markets feel stable and sell when volatility rises. This behavior often leads to buying high and selling low, which can destroy value in a portfolio. Missing just a few of the market’s best-performing days can significantly reduce long-term returns.

3. Opportunity Cost – Staying out of the market while waiting for the “perfect” moment means missing out on potential gains from rising stock prices and dividends. This opportunity cost can hurt the long-term growth of a portfolio.
4. Increased Trading Cost and Taxes – Frequent buying and selling increases transaction costs and may trigger capital gains taxes both of which reduce net returns.

Historical Evidence Supporting Time in the Market

Equity markets have historically delivered positive returns over the long term, despite short-term market volatility. For example, during the 2008 Financial Crisis, markets lost nearly 50% but recovered to new highs within a few years. Similarly, after the sharp drop in the COVID-19 crash of 2020, markets rebounded within months. These examples show that long-term investors who stayed invested benefited from strong recoveries.

Chart 2 shows the FTSE All-Share Index’s calendar-year returns and largest intra-year losses over 40 years. Despite average intra-year declines of 15%, annual returns were positive in 28 out of those 40 years, highlighting that staying invested helped investors recover from short-term declines.

Stay Invested – Keep Investing and Diversify

Trying to predict short-term market movements is extremely difficult. A better approach is to invest regularly over time using dollar cost averaging, investing a fixed amount at set intervals regardless of market conditions.

This reduces the risk of investing a large sum at the wrong time and smooths out market volatility.

Investors should also maintain diversification across assets like stocks, bonds and alternative investments to reduce exposure to any single market downturn. Finally, regularly rebalancing a portfolio ensures that it stays aligned with the investor’s risk tolerance and financial goals.

Key Considerations Time in the Market vs. Timing the Market

- While market timing may seem attractive, it is very difficult to consistently predict price movements, with a significant risk of making poor decisions driven by emotions.
- The Power of Compounding makes a compelling case for prioritizing “time in the market” over “timing the market”.
- Historical Evidence supports the long-term benefits of staying invested.
- Successful investing does not require perfect timing – it requires patience, discipline, and time. By staying invested, applying consistent strategies like dollar-cost-averaging, appropriate diversification and rebalancing, investors are more likely to reach favorable investment outcomes.

Dollar dips, yields rise on Powell pressure

Volatility, Fed uncertainty, and economic data: Market sentiment swings amidst mixed signals

By National Bank of Kuwait

This week, global markets saw renewed volatility driven by leadership uncertainty at the US Federal Reserve and a mixed slate of economic indicators across major economies. In the United States, markets reacted sharply to renewed political pressure on Fed Chair Jerome Powell, with the dollar falling over 1% intraday on Wednesday and 10-year Treasury yield rising ~10bps to 4.49% before closing the week at 4.42%. June CPI rose 2.7% YoY, core CPI edged up 0.2% MoM, and producer prices remained flat. Retail sales beat forecasts rising 0.6% MoM, whilst jobless claims fell to 221K, the lowest since April. In Canada, June CPI increased to 1.9% YoY, with core inflation at 3.05%, and tariff pressures supporting a July rate hold. USD/CAD hovered near the 1.37 level. In Europe, euro area inflation was confirmed at 2.0% YoY in June, with core inflation holding at 2.3%, whilst the eurozone’s current account surplus grew to €32B. German producer prices fell 1.3% YoY, and the ZEW sentiment index rose to 52.7. EUR/USD closed the week at 1.1625. In the UK, CPI climbed to 3.6% in June, with steady services inflation at 4.7% and food prices up 4.4%. Labour market data softened, with unemployment at 4.7% and payrolls down 41K. GBP/USD gained 0.57% to 1.3409. In Asia-Pacific, China’s Q2 GDP grew 5.2% YoY, industrial production rose 6.8%, whilst retail sales slowed to 4.8%. The Japanese yen weakened 0.9% to 148.83 per USD amidst fiscal concerns ahead of today’s upper house election, whilst Australia’s unemployment rose to 4.3%, reinforcing RBA rate cut expectations. Global equities edged higher, with upbeat earnings lifting the S&P 500 and Nasdaq to record highs of 6,297.36 and 20,895.66 respectively. The US yield curve steepened as the 30-year Treasury yield surged past the key 5% mark before closing the week at 4.99%. September Brent crude futures settled near USD 69 a barrel, supported by economic data and geopolitical tensions. Spot gold ended the week broadly unchanged at USD 3,349.94 per ounce.

United States and Canada Dollar and Treasuries Volatile as Trump Pressures Powell Then Softens Stance

Financial markets moved sharply after President Donald Trump escalated pressure on Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, stating his dismissal was “highly unlikely” but not off the table. The comments followed reports that Trump had discussed Powell’s removal with Republican lawmakers and criticised his handling of a USD 2.5B Fed building renovation. The market reacted swiftly: DXY dropped over 1% intraday, whilst 10-year Treasury yields rose ~10bps before retracing as Trump tempered his tone. The episode reignited concerns over Fed independence and added volatility to the policy outlook. Powell’s term ends in May 2026, with succession planning reportedly underway. Later in the week, Governor Waller signalled rate cuts may soon be appropriate, citing labour market softening. Swap markets currently price in 1.82 rate cuts by year-end 2025. DXY was last seen at 98.482.

US CPI Rises 0.3% MoM, Core Gains 0.2%; PPI Flat as Tariff Pass-Through Signals Emerge in Select Goods

US consumer prices rose 0.3% MoM in June, whilst core CPI increased 0.2%, undershooting the 0.3% consensus forecast for the fifth consecutive month. On an annual basis, headline and core CPI rose 2.7% and 2.9%, respectively. Preliminary University of Michigan inflation expectations improved to 4.4% from 5.0% a month earlier. Tariff-related inflation signals emerged in core goods categories, with prices for toys, appliances, and furnishings posting their largest monthly increases in several years. Offsetting this, vehicle prices declined and hotel rates dragged shelter inflation lower. Separately, producer price inflation was flat MoM, with core PPI also unchanged. Goods prices excluding food and energy rose 0.3%, whilst services fell 0.1%, driven by a 4.1% decline in accommodation services.

Previous Week Levels					This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
Currencies	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.1689	1.1557	1.1721	1.1625	1.1450	1.1700	1.1698
GBP	1.3493	1.3365	1.3504	1.3409	1.3200	1.3520	1.3426
JPY	147.43	146.86	149.19	148.83	147.75	150.00	147.30
CHF	0.7966	0.7948	0.8064	0.8018	0.7925	0.8200	0.7922

US Initial Jobless Claims Drop 7K to 221K; Retail Sales Up 0.6% in June; New York Manufacturing Index Jumps to 5.5

Initial US jobless claims declined by 7K to 221K in the week ended July 12, marking a fifth consecutive weekly drop and reaching the lowest level since mid-April. The four-week moving average fell to 229.5K, the lowest since early May, signalling continued labour market resilience despite ongoing hiring slowdowns. Concurrently, retail sales rose 0.6% MoM in June, surpassing expectations, with sales excluding autos up 0.5%, supported by broad-based category gains. Additionally, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York’s manufacturing index rose 21.5 points to 5.5 in July, indicating expansion for the first time in five months, driven by stronger new orders and shipments.

Canada June Inflation Rises to 1.9%; Core Inflation Averages 3.05%, New Tariff Pressures Support July Rate Hold

Canada’s consumer price index (CPI) rose 1.9% YoY in June, accelerating from 1.7% in May, with monthly inflation edging up 0.1%. Core inflation - the Bank of Canada’s preferred average of trimmed mean and median CPI - increased slightly to 3.05%, whilst the three-month moving annualised average surged to 3.39%, up from 3.01% in May. Price pressures were driven by tariffs on passenger vehicles and furniture, whilst energy prices declined. The share of CPI components rising above 3% rose to 39.1% from 37.3% previously. These figures, combined with a solid June jobs report and elevated durable goods inflation, have led to markets to assign a 92.5% probability the BoC will keep the policy rate unchanged at 2.75% in the July 30 meeting. USD/CAD was last seen at 1.3726.

Europe and the United Kingdom European Inflation at 2.0%, Current Account Surplus Up to 32B euros; German PPI Falls 1.3% YoY, ZEW Sentiment Up to 52.7

Euro area headline inflation was confirmed at 2.0% YoY in June, aligning with the European Central Bank’s target and market expectations. Core inflation held steady at 2.3%. Monthly headline CPI rose by 0.3%. Meanwhile, the eurozone’s current account surplus widened to 32.3B euros in May from 18.6B euros the previous month, driven by stronger goods and services trade balances. In Germany, producer prices fell by 1.3% YoY in June, reinforcing the disinflation trend in input costs. Separately, the ZEW Economic Sentiment Index jumped to 52.7 in July (vs 47 expected), whilst the current conditions gauge improved to -59.5 (from -72.0), suggesting better outlooks amongst financial professionals. Markets are currently pricing in approximately 23.9 basis points of ECB rate cuts by year-end, amidst still-elevated core inflation and cautious forward guidance. EUR/USD ended the week at 1.1625.

UK CPI Rises to 3.6% in June; Food Inflation Climbs 4.4%; Services Hold at 4.7%

UK consumer price inflation rose unexpectedly to 3.6% YoY in June, up from 3.4% in May and above the Bank of England’s forecast for no change. Food prices increased by 4.4%, the highest rate since February 2024, whilst services inflation remained elevated at 4.7%. The increase is attributed in part to April’s payroll tax and minimum wage hikes, which have raised labour costs across sectors. Firms have

reportedly begun passing on these costs to consumers, notably in retail, hospitality, and apparel. Market pricing now reflects 48.5bps of Bank Rate cuts by year-end, down from 53bps prior, and yields on 10-year gilts climbed ~5bps to 4.67%. GBP/USD closed the week at 1.3409.

UK Unemployment Rises to 4.7%, Payrolls Decline by 41K in June Amidst Labour Market Cooling

The UK unemployment rate increased to 4.7% in the three months through May, reaching the highest level in four years, up from 4.6% previously, according to the Office for National Statistics. Payrolls fell by 41K in June, exceeding expectations of a 35K decline, though May’s payroll drop was revised to 25K from an earlier 109K. Pay growth excluding bonuses slowed to 5.0% YoY, slightly above forecasts, whilst vacancies dropped 56K to 727K, below pre-pandemic levels. Real regular pay grew 1.8%, marking the slowest increase since November 2023. These developments support market expectations of further Bank of England interest rate cuts.

Asia-Pacific China GDP Rises 5.2%; Industrial Output Up 6.8%, Retail Sales Growth Slows to 4.8%, New Yuan Loans Hit CNY 2.24T

China’s gross domestic product expanded 5.2% YoY in April-June, easing from 5.4% in Q1 yet outpacing the 5.1% consensus. June’s industrial production rose 6.8% YoY, led by a 7.4% manufacturing surge, signalling resilient supply-side momentum. Conversely, retail sales advanced only 4.8% YoY, underscoring subdued household demand despite targeted consumption subsidies. Credit growth accelerated as banks issued CNY 2.24T in new yuan loans (USD 312B) during June - more than triple May’s total - lifting total social financing growth to 8.9%, a 16-month high. Whilst robust external shipments and policy-driven lending supported output, persistent consumer softness and deflationary pressures continue to weigh on the domestic demand outlook. USD/CNY closed the week at 7.1746.

Australian Unemployment Rises to 4.3%, Highest Since November 2021, Supporting Case for RBA Rate Cuts

Australian unemployment increased to 4.3% in June, the highest level in four years and above the forecast of 4.1%, as employment growth slowed to 2K jobs, driven solely by part-time roles, against expectations of a 20K rise. Full-time employment declined by 38.2K, whilst part-time positions rose 40.2K. The participation rate increased to 67.1%, with underemployment at 6% and labour under-utilisation at 10.3%. The subdued labour market and ongoing global uncertainties have reinforced expectations for further Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) interest rate cuts in August, following the central bank’s recent surprise pause at 3.85%. Annual employment growth slowed to 2.0%, down from a 3.4% average between 2022 and 2024. AUD/USD closed the week at 0.6507.

Japan’s Core Inflation Remains Above 3% Ahead of Key Election, BOJ Outlook in Focus

Japan’s core CPI (excluding fresh food) rose 3.3% YoY in June, down from 3.7% in May, yet still well above the Bank of Japan’s 2% target. The deeper “core-core” index (excluding fresh food and energy) accelerated to 3.4%, the highest since January 2024. Price pressures remained concentrated in food and services, with service prices rising 1.5% YoY. Elevated inflation persists amidst rising political pressure ahead of the national Upper House election on July 20, with Prime Minister Ishiba’s coalition at risk of losing its majority. The BOJ is expected to maintain rates at its July 31 meeting but may raise its inflation outlook in response to sustained price strength. Meanwhile, the Japanese government bond yield curve steepened, reflecting increased market uncertainty ahead of the vote. USD/JPY closed the week at 148.83.

Kuwait

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30550.

Ratification marks final step among 57 Founding Signatories

AIIB strengthens regional ties with Kuwait’s membership

BEIJING, July 20: The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is pleased to announce that Kuwait has completed its ratification process on May 26, 2025. As one of the first Founding Signatories, Kuwait’s completion of membership reaffirms its longstanding commitment to the Bank’s mission of fostering sustainable infrastructure development across Asia and beyond.

This historic milestone reaffirms the long-term vision of bringing together the 57 Founding Members and marks the completion of the ratification process of all the Founding Signatories to the Articles of Agreement of AIIB - the Bank’s founding charter.

“AIIB began with 57 founding Members, and today we have grown to 110 Members,” said Konstantin Limitovskiy, Chief Investment Officer Public Sector Clients (Region 2) & Project and Corporate Finance (Global) Clients, AIIB. “Kuwait’s new status as a Full Member reflects the enduring commitment of our founding Members to the Bank’s mission and the strength of our shared vision. As the last of the Founding Members to complete its accession, Kuwait’s membership reaffirms the unity and long-term trust placed in AIIB. We look forward to exploring opportunities for collaboration on infrastructure projects that align with Kuwait’s national development priorities and support sustainable, inclusive growth across the region.”

With this milestone, Kuwait joins its fellow Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries as full members of the Bank. Kuwait’s transition to full membership comes at a pivotal moment, as the country advances its strategic objectives under Kuwait Vision 2035. These national goals - focused on economic diversification and infrastructure development - closely align with AIIB’s priorities to deepen regional partnerships, strengthen GCC connectivity with the rest of Asia and beyond, and invest in infrastructure that delivers long-term benefits for people and economies.

“As a founding member of AIIB, Kuwait has supported the



Family photo of AIIB governors assembled at this year’s 10th Annual Meeting in Beijing to engage with diverse stakeholders in critical conversations to finance infrastructure for tomorrow.

Bank’s mission since its inception”, said Eng. Noora Sulaiman AlFassam, Minister of Finance and Minister of State Economic Affairs and Investments of the State of Kuwait and Governor of AIIB. “Completing the ratification process as a Full Member reaffirms our commitment to sustainable economic development, regional connectivity, and multilateral cooperation benefiting the wider region. We look forward to deepening our partnership with AIIB to support projects aligned with Kuwait’s priorities, including Vision 2035, and regional prosperity.”

AIIB is working closely with its Members in the region. Notably, the 11th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors

will be held in Doha on September 23-24, 2026, to be chaired by the AIIB Governor and Minister of Finance of Qatar. This flagship event will highlight AIIB’s strong engagement in the region and provide an opportunity to further enhance interregional collaboration on sustainable infrastructure, connectivity, and innovation.

As a multilateral development Bank established in 2016, AIIB’s mission focuses on Financing Infrastructure for Tomorrow (i4t), working towards unlocking new capital, technologies and exploring new ways to address climate change and bridge a stronger connection between Asia and the world.

By 2030, AIIB aims to deploy at least USD75 billion more

in sustainable infrastructure, focusing on green transition and scaling private-sector mobilization.

About AIIB

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is a multilateral development bank dedicated to financing “infrastructure for tomorrow,” with sustainability at its core. AIIB began operations in 2016, now has 110 approved members worldwide, is capitalized at USD100 billion and is AAA-rated by major international credit rating agencies. AIIB collaborates with partners to mobilize capital and invest in infrastructure and other productive sectors that foster sustainable economic development and enhance regional connectivity. For more information, visit www.aiib.org.

Trump admin imposes new Mexican flights restrictions

Delta alliance at risk amid trade dispute

WASHINGTON, July 20, (AP): The Trump administration imposed new restrictions Saturday on flights from Mexico and threatened to end a long-standing partnership between Delta Air Lines and Aeromexico in response to limits the Mexican government placed on passenger and cargo flights into Mexico City several years ago.

Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said Mexico’s actions to force airlines to move out of the main Benito Juarez International Airport to the newer Felipe Angeles International Airport more than 30 miles (48.28 kilometers) away violated a trade agreement between the two countries and gave domestic airlines an unfair advantage. Mexico is the top foreign destination for Americans with more than 40 million passengers flying there last year.

“Joe Biden and Pete Buttigieg deliberately allowed Mexico to break our bilateral aviation agreement,” Duffy said, referring to the previous president and his transportation secretary. “That ends today. Let these actions serve as



Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffy testifies during a House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Oversight hearing on the Department of Transportation’s Policies and Programs and Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request on Capitol Hill, on July 16, 2025, in Washington. (AP)

a warning to any country who thinks it can take advantage of the U.S., our carriers, and our market. America First means fighting for the fundamental principle of fairness.”

All Mexican passenger, cargo and charter airlines will now be required to submit their schedules to the Transportation Department and seek government approval of their flights until Duffy is satisfied with the way Mexico is treating U.S. airlines.

It’s not immediately clear how Duffy’s actions might affect the broader trade war with Mexico and negotiations over tariffs. A spokesperson for Mexico’s President Claudia Sheinbaum didn’t reply immediately to a request for comment. Sheinbaum didn’t mention the new restrictions during either of her two

speaking events on Saturday.

Delta and Aeromexico have been fighting the Transportation Department’s efforts to end their partnership that began in 2016 since early last year. The airlines have argued that it’s not fair to punish them for the Mexican government’s actions, and they said ending their agreement would jeopardize nearly two dozen routes and \$800 million in benefits to both countries’ economies that come from tourism spending and jobs.

“The U.S. Department of Transportation’s tentative proposal to terminate its approval of the strategic and pro-competitive partnership between Delta and Aeromexico would cause significant harm to consumers traveling between the U.S. and Mexico, as well as U.S. jobs, communities, and transborder competition,” Delta said in a statement.

Aeromexico’s press office said it was reviewing the order and intended to present a joint response with Delta in the coming days.

But the order terminating approval of the agreement between the airlines wouldn’t take effect until October, and the airlines are likely to continue fighting that decision.

The airlines said in a previous filing fighting the order that it believes the loss of direct flights would prompt over 140,000 American tourists and nearly 90,000 Mexican tourists not to visit the other country and hurt the economies of both countries with the loss of their spending.

Empowering national talent for leadership roles

KIB promotes Naser Al-Qenai to GM of Facilities Administration Department

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: As part of its continued efforts to develop the next generation of leaders and accelerate the recruitment of promising Kuwaiti talent in leadership roles, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the promotion of Naser Al-Qenai to General Manager of the Facilities Administration Department. This promotion reflects the Bank’s strategic focus on appointing qualified national professionals to senior leadership positions and fostering a positive work environment that supports the growth and advancement of local talent.

KIB firmly believes that investing in Kuwaiti talent is the foundation of its continued success and excellence in the banking sector. With this in mind, the Bank remains committed to developing its employees and fostering a work environment that encourages innovation and supports the professional growth of Kuwaiti professionals.

Al-Qenai is recognized as one of the Bank’s standout national talents, bringing extensive and in-depth experience in the field of facilities and administrative services management, a vital function for an institution of KIB’s scale. His career has been defined by consistent progression and professional growth, having begun his journey at KIB in 2017, during which he held a series of leadership positions, most notably: Head of Administration Division, then Head of the Engineering and Design Unit, before being appointed Assistant General Manager of the Facilities Administration Department, and later Deputy General Manager. Over the years, he contributed to the implementation of large-scale infrastructure projects and led significant operational transformations that posi-



Naser Alqenai

tively impacted the efficiency of facilities management and the quality of services provided.

Before joining KIB, Al-Qenai worked at several prestigious institutions, including the Industrial Bank of Kuwait, Agility Logistics, Tawasil Telecom, and Vision Advisory.

In his new role as General Manager of the Facilities Administration Department at KIB, Al-Qenai will oversee all of the Bank’s physical assets, including branches, data centers, administrative offices, and logistical facilities. He will be responsible for ensuring the highest standards of quality and efficiency in the maintenance and operation of these assets, with a focus on innovation and the implementation of modern technological solutions to enhance performance and reduce costs. Additionally, he will lead the development of long-term facilities management strategies aligned with the Bank’s future expansion and growth plans, while emphasizing environmental sustainability and resource efficiency.

Appointing local talent to senior positions goes beyond simply supporting national professionals. It also strengthens institutional stability and ensures the continuity of banking operations at the highest standards. With the rising number of qualified young Kuwaitis holding advanced degrees and accumulated experience, it is essential to provide them with opportunities to step into leadership roles. This not only facilitates knowledge transfer but also contributes to the advancement of the banking work environment. Such promotions serve as a powerful incentive for employees to invest in developing their skills and expertise, foster greater loyalty to the institution, and ultimately enhance the Bank’s overall performance and competitiveness.

KIB is actively working to attract specialized talent to drive its ambitious strategic plans for the next phase. This commitment is clearly reflected in the Bank’s decision to double its investment in training initiatives over the past year, with the goal of equipping employees with the knowledge and skills required to stay ahead of the latest developments in the global banking sector.

It is worth noting that KIB’s strategy to empower national talent is a key pillar of efforts to support the sustainable development of both the banking sector and the Kuwaiti economy. By cultivating a new generation of Kuwaiti leaders, the Bank aims to drive innovation in banking services, contribute to Kuwait’s vision for economic diversification, create high-quality job opportunities for young Kuwaitis, and reinforce institutional citizenship through its investment in human capital.



Honoring the bank for sponsoring the event.

ABK sponsors Excellence Awards Ceremony at Kuwait Blind Association

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: As part of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) program, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced its sponsorship of the Excellence Awards Ceremony, reaffirming the Bank’s commitment to education and community empowerment.

The ceremony, hosted at the Kuwait Blind Association, featured a special recognition of ABK for its support, highlighting the Bank’s active role in advancing CSR initiatives and its dedication to supporting events that bring together diverse segments of Kuwaiti society.

Commenting on the occasion, Sager Albenali, Chief Communications Officer at ABK, stated, “Our sponsorship of this ceremony reflects our deep commitment to supporting students and education, as well as addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities and ensuring their full integration into society in the best way

possible.”

Albenali added that ABK’s involvement in such initiatives reflects the continued evolution of its CSR strategy to reach a broader spectrum of the Kuwaiti community.

He emphasized that education remains a key priority for the Bank, as demonstrated through its ongoing efforts to promote financial and banking literacy among school students across Kuwait.

He also reaffirmed the Bank’s interest in strengthening partnerships with educational institutions to support ongoing efforts in the educational sector and continue positively to Kuwait’s future.

During the event, the ABK team showcased its comprehensive suite of banking solutions tailored specifically for students, emphasizing the features that support their financial and banking needs in accordance with the highest market standards.

In conclusion, Albenali extended his thanks to the Kuwait Blind Association and reiterated ABK’s commitment to engaging in impactful initiatives that foster inclusivity and community development, further cementing its leadership position in Kuwait’s banking sector.



Albenali

Six showrooms opened across GCC

Malabar Gold & Diamonds unveils Mojawhraty by Malabar – exclusive retail offering for Arabic jewellery

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the 5th largest jewellery retailer globally with over 400 showrooms across 13 countries and a name synonymous with trust, quality, and timeless craftsmanship, has unveiled Mojawhraty by Malabar, the brand’s latest retail concept dedicated exclusively to Arabic jewellery.

In the GCC region, Mojawhraty by Malabar has launched 6 showrooms: 2 showrooms in the UAE at Dalma Mall & Ajman City Centre, 2 showrooms in Bahrain at Bahrain City Centre & Bab Al Bahrain and 1 showroom each in the KSA & Oman at Nakheel Mall, Damman and Muthra Souq respectively.

The second showroom of Mojawhraty by Malabar in the UAE at Dalma Mall was inaugurated by Chairman of Malabar Group, M.P. Ahamad, in the presence of Vice Chairman, Mr. Abdul Salam K.P.; MD-International Operations, Mr. Shamlal Ahamed; Senior Director of Malabar Group, Mr. Mayankutty C; Director of Finance & Admin, Mr. Ameer CMC; Head of Manufacturing, Mr. Faisal A.K.; Business Head of Arabic Value Chain, Mr. Sherif Abdelmonem Meligy Hassanin, other senior management team members from Malabar Gold & Diamonds, customers and well-wishers.

“It is with great pride & pleasure that we unveil Mojawhraty by Malabar to the discerning lovers of Arabic jewellery. As part of Malabar Gold & Diamonds’ vision to become the world’s No. 1 jewellery retailer, expanding our design portfolio across diverse cultural and value chains is a key focus. The launch of Mojawhraty by Malabar marks a significant step in establishing a distinct presence in the traditional and contemporary Arab jewellery space. With six showrooms across the GCC and more on the horizon, we are confident that Mojawhraty by Malabar will be welcomed with open arms by jewellery lovers in the region”, commented Malabar Group Chairman, M.P. Ahamad.

At Mojawhraty by Malabar, each piece of jewellery is meticulously



The 2nd showroom of Mojawhraty by Malabar in the UAE – the exclusive retail offering for Arabic jewellery from Malabar Gold & Diamonds, was inaugurated by Malabar Group Chairman, M.P. Ahamad, in the presence of Mr. Abdul Salam K.P., Mr. Shamlal Ahamed, Mr. Mayankutty C, Mr. Abdul Majeed, Mr. Ameer CMC, Mr. Faisal A.K., Mr. Sakkeer P, Mr. Shaji K, Mr. Sherif Abdelmonem Meligy Hassanin, other senior management team members from Malabar Gold & Diamonds, customers and well-wishers.



Showroom exterior



Showroom interior

crafted by master artisans and is available in responsibly sourced 18K, 21K & 22K gold, alongside an exclusive range of ornaments featuring certified natural diamonds. The curated brand portfolio showcases several in-house collections that are reflective of Arabic artistry and the evolving tastes of the modern Arab consumer. Every purchase is also covered under the Mojawhraty Promise, which includes 100% value on diamond exchange, exclusive usage of tested & certified natural diamonds, assured lifetime maintenance, guaranteed buyback and more.

“We are thrilled to introduce Mojawhraty by Malabar to our valued

Arab customers, whose patronage has always been integral to our success in the region,” said Mr. Abdul Salam K.P., Vice Chairman of Malabar Group. “The rich legacy of Arabic jewellery and its profound cultural relevance has long



inspired us. With Mojawhraty, we have created a distinct platform that will offer customers an immersive and personalized retail experience focused exclusively on Arabic design traditions. By utilizing our globally renowned artistry to craft jewellery that will be welcomed by Arab consumers of all design sensibilities, our goal is to evolve this brand into the most trusted and preferred name in Arabic jewellery segment.”

Mojawhraty by Malabar has charted an ambitious expansion plans for the coming years, aiming to bring the Mojawhraty experience to a broader clientele of discerning jewellery lovers.

Concert venues often film their audiences

Tech CEO resigns after Coldplay concert video controversy

NEW YORK, July 20, (AP): The IT company CEO captured in a widely circulated video showing him embracing an employee at a Coldplay concert has resigned.

Andy Byron resigned from his job as CEO of Cincinnati-based Astronomer Inc., according to a statement posted on LinkedIn by the company Saturday.

"Astronomer is committed to the values and culture that have guided us since our founding. Our leaders are expected to set the standard in both conduct and accountability, and recently, that standard was not met," the company said in its post on LinkedIn.

The move comes a day after the company said that Byron had been placed on leave and the board of directors had launched a formal investigation into the jumbotron incident, which went viral. A company spokesman later confirmed in a statement to AP that it was Byron and Astronomer chief people officer Kristin Cabot in the video.

The short video clip shows Byron and Cabot as captured on the jumbotron at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Massachusetts, during a Coldplay concert on Wednesday.

Lead singer Chris Martin asked the cameras to scan the crowd for his "Jumbotron Song," when he



Chris Martin of Coldplay performs during the band's Music Of The Spheres World Tour at D. Y. Patil Sports Stadium in Navi Mumbai, Saturday, Jan. 18, 2025. (AP)

sings a few lines about the people the camera lands on.

"Either they're having an affair or they're just very shy," he joked.

Internet sleuths identified the man as the chief executive officer of a US-based company and the woman as its chief people officer.

Pete DeJoy, Astronomer's cofounder and chief product officer, has been tapped as interim CEO while the company conducts a search for Byron's successor.

It's easy to miss, but most concert venues have signs informing the audience that they could be filmed during the event. Look for them on the walls when you arrive and around the bar areas or toilets. It's common practice especially when bands like to use performances for music videos or concert films.

The venue in this case, Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, also has a privacy policy online which states: "When you visit our location or attend or participate in an event at our location, we may capture your image, voice and/or likeness, including through the use of CCTV cameras and/or when we film or photograph you in a public location."

"They probably would have got away with it if

they hadn't reacted," said Alison Taylor, a clinical associate professor at New York University's Stern School of Business. And by the time the alleged identities emerged on social media, it hit a classic nerve around "leaders acting like the rules don't apply to them," she added.

Still, Taylor and others stress how quickly such a video lead to an internet search to find the people involved - and note that it's important to remember that such "doxing" isn't just reserved for famous people. Beyond someone simply spotting a familiar face and spreading the word, technological advances, such as the rising adoption of artificial intelligence, has made it easier and faster overall to find just about anyone in a viral video today.

"It's a little bit unsettling how easily we can be identified with biometrics, how our faces are online, how social media can track us - and how the internet has gone from being a place of interaction, to a gigantic surveillance system," said Mary Angela Bock, an associate professor in the University of Texas at Austin's School of Journalism and Media. "When you think about it, we are being surveilled by our social media. They're tracking us in exchange for entertaining us."

Variety

STOCKHOLM: Ingvar Ambjrnsen, a Norwegian author who mixed a sharp, even dark tone with humor and empathy in works that depicted the lives of the oppressed and vulnerable, has died, his publisher said. He was 69.

The Cappelen Damm publishing house did not specify the cause of death. Ambjrnsen had long been public with his battle against a lung illness called chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD.



Ambjrnsen

Born on May 20, 1956, in Tnsberg - described on his German-language author website as "Norway's most bar-filled town" - Ambjrnsen grew up in Larvik and worked in various jobs in industry and psychiatry before publishing his first documentary novel in 1981. Four years later, he moved to Hamburg, where he lived for decades.

"His books are characterized by powerful, realistic descriptions of the seamier side of life," the publisher said. (AP)

PARIS: Paris is reviving the spirit of US-French entertainer and civil rights activist Josephine Baker with a new mural.

Fifty years after her death, Baker now gazes out over a diverse neighborhood of northeast Paris, thanks to urban artist FKDL and a street art festival aimed at promoting community spirit.

Born in St. Louis, Missouri, Baker became a megastar in the 1930s, especially in France, where she moved in 1925 as she sought to flee racism and segregation in the United States.

In addition to her stage fame, Baker also spied on the Nazis for the French Resistance and marched alongside Martin Luther King Jr. in Washington. She died in Paris in 1975.

"I feel moved and I feel happy, because this is part of a memory of my mother," her son Brian Baker told the Associated Press at the unveiling of the mural Saturday. He was one of 12 children Josephine Baker adopted from around the world that she called her "rainbow tribe" and what her son called "a little United Nations." (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Alan Bergman, the Oscar-winning lyricist who teamed with his wife, Marilyn, for an enduring and loving partnership that produced such old-fashioned hits as "How Do You Keep the Music Playing?," "It Might Be You" and the classic "The Way We Were," has died at 99.

Bergman died late Thursday at his home in Los Angeles, family spokesperson Ken Sunshine said in a statement Friday. The statement said Bergman had, in recent months, suffered from respiratory issues "but continued to write songs till the very end."

The Bergmans married in 1958 and remained together until her death, in 2022. With collaborators ranging from Marvin Hamlisch and Quincy Jones to Michel Legrand and Cy Coleman, they were among the most successful and prolific partnerships of their time, providing words and occasional music for hundreds of songs, including movie themes that became as famous as the films themselves. Frank Sinatra, Michael Jackson, Tony Bennett and many other artists performed their material, and Barbra Streisand became a frequent collaborator and close friend.

Sunshine said that there will still be a centennial celebration of Alan Bergman as planned at Santa Monica's Broad Stage, with guests including Michael Feinstein, Jackson Browne and Patti Austin. (AP)

Film



A child stands near characters to promote an upcoming Smurf movie in Beijing, China, Sunday, July 13. (AP)

Film struggles to find magic in familiar formula

'Smurfs' has Rihanna but not much else

LOS ANGELES, July 20, (AP): Justin Timberlake had "Trolls." Rihanna has "Smurfs." Now, we patiently await a "Gummi Bears" with the Biebs.

But first we have "Smurfs," which, like "Trolls," gets as much mileage as it can from its pop singer-voice actor. Rihanna voices Smurfette and supplies a new song, giving a half-hearted injection of star power to an otherwise uninspired, modestly scaled, kiddo-friendly cartoon feature.

"Smurfs," directed by Chris Miller ("Puss in Boots," "Shrek the Third"), cribs heavily from the "Trolls" playbook. Both feature brightly colored little forest creatures that like a good tune. In the opening of "Smurfs," Papa Smurf (John Goodman) is DJing for a dancing Smurf Village.

As the many Smurfs gyrate next to mushroom houses, you might find yourself wondering how we got here. And what, exactly, is a Smurf, anyway? It's been nearly 70 years since Belgian comic artist Peyo created "Les Schtroumpfs," though most of those still familiar with the little blue fellas remember them from the 1980s Hanna-Barbera cartoons.

The Smurfs have never really transcended their Saturday morning cartoon origins. Neither a pair of live-action hybrid movies in the early 2010s or a 2017 animated release have done much more than keep us vaguely aware of what a Phrygian cap is.

And "Smurfs" is unlikely to change that. The best thing that can be said for the latest attempt to reboot the blue Belgian beings is that it maintains the light feel of a morning cartoon. Even with a brief SpongeBob SquarePants short running ahead of it, "Smurfs" - seemingly designed to be the



Rihanna arrives at the premiere of 'Smurfs' on Sunday, July 13, at Paramount Studios in Los Angeles. (AP)

least ambitious of all possible parent-child outings - passes in about 90 minutes.

The pressing issue in Miller's film is that one Smurf, No Name Smurf (James Corden), lacks a defining feature. There are so many other labels already taken that all that's left for him are Clog Making Smurf and Shark Taming Smurf - and neither of those is promising, either.

When No Name Smurf suddenly grows magical powers, he gets a boost in confidence but inadvertently sets off a dangerous

chain reaction. The burst of magic reveals the location of Smurf Village and a long-hidden magical book that, if reunited with three others, confers world domination. (Fun fact: This is also what happens if you reunify all first editions of James Joyce's "Ulysses.")

The outburst brings the attention of the evil wizard Razamel, brother of Gargamel. (Both are excellently voiced by JP Karliak.) And the Smurfs are cast into a chase through dimensions to rescue the kidnapped Papa Smurf and prevent Razamel from seizing the fourth book. The trip takes them through Paris, Munich, Australia and, briefly, Claymation.

The zaniness is often forced. There are also Koosh ball-like creatures named Snooter Poots with a leader named Mama Poot (Natasha Lyonne). And if you were ever hoping to hear Rihanna sing, as a Smurf, from the seat of a kangaroo pouch, your movie has finally arrived.

But any expectations of something more quickly dissipate, despite the fact that "Smurfs" was scripted by Pam Brady, the screenwriter of "Hot Rod" and co-writer of "Team America: World Police." Most of the attempts at adult-winking gags are hackneyed jokes about Zoom, podcasting, spam filters and LinkedIn.

You can almost feel IP-rights pressures animating the entire enterprise. See, there are other Smurf names out there. What about Corporate Mandate Smurf?

"Smurfs," a Paramount Pictures release, is rated PG by the Motion Picture Association for action, language and some rude humor. Running time: 92 minutes. One and a half stars out of four.

TV

Financial cut

'Late Show' with Colbert to end

NEW YORK, July 20, (AP): CBS is canceling "The Late Show With Stephen Colbert" next May, shuttering a decades-old TV institution in a changing media landscape and removing from air one of President Donald Trump's most prominent and persistent late-night critics.

CBS said "Late Show" was canceled for financial reasons, not for content. But the timing - three days after Colbert criticized the settlement between Trump and Paramount Global, parent company of CBS, over a "60 Minutes" story - led two US senators to publicly question the motives.



Colbert

Colbert told his audience at New York's Ed Sullivan Theater that he had learned Wednesday night that, after a decade on air, "next year will be our last season. ... It's the end of 'The Late Show' on CBS. I'm not being replaced. This is all just going away."

The audience responded with boos and groans.

"Yeah, I share your feelings," the 61-year-old comic said.

Three top Paramount and CBS executives praised Colbert's show as "a staple of the nation's zeitgeist" in a statement that said the cancellation "is purely a financial decision against a challenging backdrop in late night. It is not related in any way to the show's performance, content or other matters happening at Paramount."

Monologue

In his Monday monologue, Colbert said he was "offended" by the \$16 million settlement reached by Paramount, whose pending sale to Skydance Media needs the Trump administration's approval. He said the technical name in legal circles for the deal was "big fat bribe."

"I don't know if anything - anything - will repair my trust in this company," Colbert said. "But, just taking a stab at it, I'd say \$16 million would help."

Trump had sued Paramount Global over how "60 Minutes" edited its interview last fall with Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris. Critics say the company settled primarily to clear a hurdle to the Skydance sale.

The president - a longtime target of Colbert - on Friday said on Truth Social that "I absolutely love" that Colbert was "fired." In his message, he insulted the late-night hosts on ABC, CBS and NBC.

"I hear (ABC's) Jimmy Kimmel is next," Trump wrote. "Has even less talent than Colbert. (Fox News Channel's) Greg Gutfeld is better than all of them, including the Moron on NBC who ruined the once great Tonight show."

Colbert took over "The Late Show" in 2015 after becoming a big name in comedy and news satire working on Comedy Central with Jon Stewart on "The Daily Show" and hosting "The Colbert Report," which riffed on right-wing talk shows. The guests on his very first show in September 2015 were actor George Clooney and Jeb Bush, who was then struggling in his Republican presidential primary campaign against Trump.



K-pop band 1VERSE members pose for photo at the dance practice room at their label in Seoul, South Korea, Wednesday, July 16. (AP)

Band blends diverse global backgrounds

K-pop’s 1VERSE debuts with North Korean members

SEOUL, South Korea, July 20, (AP): With two out of five of its members North Korean defectors, the K-pop group 1VERSE is breaking new ground as it debuts its single album Friday.

The band represents an unusual convergence of backgrounds: North Korea-born rapper Hyuk and singer Seok join Nathan from Arkansas, Kenny from Los Angeles, and Aito from Japan.

While not the first K-pop act to include North Korean defectors - BE BOYS' Hak Seong debuted earlier this year - the diversity of the group's members add a rare dimension to the genre's growing global diversity.

The group debuts Friday with their single album "The 1st Verse" under Seoul-based label Singing Beetle. Their title track "Shattered" features lyrics co-written by Hyuk and Kenny.

"With members from different countries all coming together as 1VERSE, I just thought 'we can do this regardless of background' going forward," said Aito, the group's youngest member from Chiba, Japan.

Hyuk, who lived in North Korea's North Hamgyong Province until age 12, defected to the South in 2013. His journey to K-pop stardom began while working in a factory in South Korea, where a chance encounter with the CEO of a music label eventually led to weekend rap lessons in Seoul.

"I went to university but then things went bad. It was when COVID was pretty severe, and a bad incident happened, so I had no choice but to work at a factory," he said.

Initially skeptical, Hyuk thought the invitation to become a pop star might be a scam. He recalled thinking: "I really have nothing right now, even if you rob me, not even dust would come out."

After a year of meetings where the music executive consistently bought him meals and encouraged his training, Hyuk joined the agency in late 2021.

Seok's path was similarly unconventional. A former soccer player who started playing at 8 years old in North Korea, he defected in 2019. He declined to provide additional details, citing safety concerns.

After arriving in South Korea, he briefly played for a semi-professional team before pursuing physical education studies. During weekend soccer games he was approached about an idol training program.

"I was starting music for the first time, right? So I started with the mindset that if it doesn't work out, I can just stop and try something else," Seok said.

Both members' experiences reflect harsh realities they left behind. Hyuk described spending eight to 10 hours daily collecting firewood as a child just to survive.

"Where I lived, we had to collect firewood just to cook rice and survive day by day - it was essential," he recalled.

Hyuk didn't have much access to music growing up. "Since I lived struggling every day, I lived so busily that I wonder if I even had time to listen to music - I didn't have that luxury," he said.

Seok had some exposure to K-pop in North Korea, listening occasionally to f(x)'s "LA cha TA" and Super Junior songs despite it being illegal in North Korea to listen to South Korean music.

Gaming

Dance

School shooting

‘Call of Duty’ in legal crosshairs

LOS ANGELES, July 20, (AP): A lawyer for the maker of the video game Call of Duty argued Friday that a judge should dismiss a lawsuit brought by families of the victims of the Robb Elementary School attack in Uvalde, Texas, saying the contents of the war game are protected by the First Amendment.

The families sued Call of Duty maker Activision and Meta Platforms, which owns Instagram, saying that the companies bear responsibility for promoting products used by the teen gunman.

Three sets of parents who lost children in the shooting were in the audience at the Los Angeles hearing.

Activision lawyer Bethany Kristovich told Superior Court Judge William Highberger that the "First Amendment bars their claims, period full stop."

"The issues of gun violence are incredibly difficult," Kristovich said. "The evidence in this case is not."

She argued that the case has little chance of prevailing if it continues, because courts have repeatedly held that "creators of artistic works, whether they be books, music, movies, TV or video games, cannot be held legally liable for the acts of their audience."



Highberger

Families

The lawsuit, one of many involving Uvalde families, was filed last year on the second anniversary of one of the deadliest school shootings in US history. The gunman killed 19 students and two teachers. Officers finally confronted and shot him after waiting more than an hour to enter the fourth-grade classroom.

Kimberly Rubio, whose 10-year-old daughter Lexi was killed in the shooting, was among the parents who came from Texas to Southern California, where Activision is based, for the hearing.

"We traveled all this way, so we need answers," Rubio said outside the courthouse. "It's our hope that the case will move forward so we can get those answers."

An attorney for the families argued during the hearing that Call of Duty exceeds its First Amendment protections by moving into marketing.

"The basis of our complaint is not the existence of Call of Duty," Katie Mesner-Hage told the judge. "It is using Call of Duty as a platform to market weapons to minors."

The plaintiffs' lawyers showed contracts and correspondence between executives at Activision and gunmakers whose products, they said, are clearly and exactly depicted in the game despite brand names not appearing.

Mesner-Hage said the documents show that they actually prefer being unlabeled because "it helps shield them from the implication that they are marketing guns to minors," while knowing that players will still identify and seek out the weapons.

Kristovich said there is no evidence that the kind of product placement and marketing the plaintiffs are talking about happened in any of the editions of the game the shooter played.



In this photo provided by HELI, Gillian Murphy acknowledges the audience at the curtain call of Swan Lake, her farewell performance with American Ballet Theatre on Friday, July 18, in New York. (AP)

American ballerina leaves ABT on a high note

A Swan’s farewell: Murphy leaps into legend

NEW YORK, July 20, (AP): In every career, there are plenty of consequential decisions to be made. And they tend to get more consequential as time goes on.

So it was when Gillian Murphy, one of the most admired American ballerinas for nearly three decades, began contemplating not only when, but how to retire from American Ballet Theatre.

She knew she wanted to go out on a high note. Murphy, at 46, is in incredible shape; at a rehearsal earlier this week, she was leaping and twirling like colleagues in their 20s.

But in what role should she take her final bow, after 29 years at ABT? Should it be as Juliet? As Giselle? The first of these ends up stabbing herself to death. The other goes mad.

The best (and most athletic) option, it turned out, was to jump off a cliff. That's what Odette, the swan queen, does at the end of ABT's version of "Swan Lake" - followed in this dramatic leap by the prince who loves her, to be joyfully reunited in the afterlife. (In real life they leap onto a mattress offstage, dust themselves off and clamber back for the finale.)

Murphy, who's known for her Odette/Odile - especially those fouettés, Odile's fiendishly hard whiplash turns - retired with "Swan Lake" on Friday night, ending her career in a blur of bouquets, tears and golden confetti.

The sold-out Metropolitan Opera House crowd was vocal in their appreciation, cheering her entrances and exits and giving her a standing ovation when she finished her Black Swan variation.

Once the ballet finished, the stage filled with Murphy's fellow dancers, teachers and other ABT colleagues bearing flowers. As golden confetti poured from the rafters, Murphy hugged fellow dancers like Misty Copeland, who herself will retire from ABT with fanfare in October.

She was also greeted by her husband, former ABT principal dancer Ethan Stiefel, and their 6-year-old son, Ax, who'd just watched him mom perform at the opera house for the first

time. Murphy lifted Ax off his feet and twirled him around joyfully.

Murphy spoke to The Associated Press in the rushed moments between rehearsals, classes and delayed commuter trains in the days leading up to the big occasion. The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

AP: You were only 17 when you joined ABT. Now you're 46. Did you imagine such a long career?

Murphy: I would have never expected to be dancing this long, honestly. I think in my mind I always had 40 years old as a time frame. But I didn't expect to feel this good at this point! I've truly loved my career at ABT, and it's given me the opportunity to dance all over the world. So I'm happy I'm still here."

AP: Ballet takes a huge amount of athletic ability. But you need to be an actor, too. How have your abilities developed as you've gotten older?

Murphy: I do feel that life experience really does come out in performances. And when we're telling these stories about true love and forgiveness and loss, all the dramatic sort of themes that come out in these ballets, it does make a difference when you've experienced those things in your life.

AP: Speaking of true love: Some ABT ballerinas have chosen Juliet for their retirement performance. You've chosen a much more physically demanding role: "Swan Lake." Just seeing you rehearse it was exhausting.

Murphy: (laughing) It doesn't get any easier, yeah. I have so many favorite roles, but "Swan Lake" includes two of my most favorite, Odette and Odile. It's always been incredibly challenging, but also so fulfilling. When I was a kid, my dream role was the Black Swan (Odile), actually. So just in a full-circle moment, it feels special to finish with this ballet that I dreamed of doing as a kid, and first did as a young soloist with ABT 24 years ago.

AP: Let's not forget that you're known for Odile's fouettés (32 whiplash turns on one leg that the Black Swan performs). Are you still



Dancer Gillian Murphy attends the American Ballet Theatre's 2017 Spring Gala on May 22, 2017, in New York. (AP)

throwing in double turns?

Murphy: Well, I used to throw in triples, triple pirouettes in the middle of the fouettés. Anything could happen on Friday night, but I think I just want to finish strong ... and take risks elsewhere. I'll probably aim to do the 32, possibly with a few doubles in there.

AP: It's such a tough call in any career — how did you make the decision to retire now?

Murphy: It's never an easy decision for any dancer. It's a calling from a very early age ... but I've always wanted to finish strong and with my own sense of agency. I really relish when that sense of imagination and life experience and artistry is integrated with the physicality, the athleticism, the technique. And I feel like I'm still in

that place where I can do that. So I want to finish with that sense of fullness.

AP: How have you managed to keep your conditioning so strong, for so long?

Murphy: I never knew what to expect in terms of how long I'd be able to do this job that I love so much. But I've always had strong feelings about getting plenty of sleep and rest. I try to keep a daily practice of class and sometimes several hours of rehearsal, but also to take at least one day off in the week to recover. And I've always put a priority on being as fit and strong as possible in terms of my nutrition. So, having a really balanced diet and also enjoying desserts and just good quality, good nutritious food, I think that has helped with longevity.

AP: It sounds like you're talking about a healthy attitude toward food.

Murphy: A healthy attitude towards food, and also a sense of humor about myself. You know, dancers are not robots. Like an athlete, we can have an off day and (we should) not let that be too discouraging. That's par for the course.

AP: Have there been any major injuries or setbacks along the way?

Murphy: I've been pretty fortunate about bouncing back from muscle strains and things like that. I'd say coming back from pregnancy and an emergency c-section was not easy ... but I was able to get onstage and do a full-length "Giselle" when my son was 8 months old. And then, a couple of weeks after that, the pandemic hit. I had just gotten everything back together.

AP: So when you hang up those pointe shoes ... how do you envision spending your time?

Murphy: I'm going to lean into coaching and staging, especially (husband) Ethan's choreography, for the immediate future. I also want to take some time to process this huge transition and consider options and think about what I really want to do. I would be really surprised if it doesn't involve giving back or working in some way in the dance world, because it's so meaningful to me. Clearly, this is a lifetime pursuit.

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Shohei Ohtani is adding author to his list of accomplishments. The Los Angeles Dodgers two-way superstar has co-written a children's book starring his beloved dog, Decoy.

Ohtani posted a photo of Decoy, a Dutch Kooikerhondje, sitting next to the book on his Instagram account on Thursday. The cover of "Decoy Saves Opening Day" features a drawing of the pup with a ball in his mouth and Ohtani in his baseball jersey.

It tells the story of how Decoy is supposed to throw the first pitch on opening day but realizes he left his lucky baseball at home and scrambles to retrieve it in

time.

The book will be released on Feb. 3, according to publisher HarperCollins.

Ohtani co-wrote the book with Michael Blank, and Fanny Liem did the illustrations. (AP)



Ohtani

BOOM, Belgium: Fans roared in excitement and organizers sighed with relief as the Tomorrowland music festival kicked off Friday - two days after a massive fire engulfed the main stage and threw one of Europe's biggest summer concert events into doubt.

Workers labored around the clock

to clear out the debris from the elaborate backdrop that was consumed in Wednesday's fire.

The festival's opening performers, DJs Odymel and Pegassi, took to the main stage Friday after a last-minute scramble and slight delay, with charred set frames still visible behind them.

Australian electronic music group Nervo came next, opening their set by shouting: "We made it!"

No one was hurt in the fire, organizers said. The cause is being investigated.

Hundreds of thousands of people from around the world attend Tomorrowland's annual multi-day festival outside the Belgian town of Boom. Some 38,000 people were camping at the festival site Friday, Tomorrowland spokesperson Debby Wilmsen said.

"Maybe there are some few people that say, 'OK, we

would like to have a refund,' but it's only like a very small percentage because most of them are still coming to the festival," she told The Associated Press.

"It is all about unity, and I think with a good vibe and a positive energy that our festival-goers give to each other and the music we offer, I think they will still have a good time. 'We really tried our best.'"

Australian fans Zak Hiscock and Brooke Antoniou - who traveled half the world to see the famed festival as part of a summer holiday in Europe - described hearing about the fire.

"We were sitting having dinner when we actually heard the news of the stage burning down. We were very devastated and shattered, quite upset because we travelled a long way," Hiscock said. (AP)

Liver injury deaths prompt agency’s action

Sarepta rejects FDA order to stop gene therapy despite 3rd death

WASHINGTON, July 20, (AP): Drugmaker Sarepta Therapeutics said late Friday it won't comply with a request from the Food and Drug Administration to halt all shipments of its gene therapy following the death of a third patient receiving one of its treatments for muscular dystrophy.

The highly unusual move is a latest in a string of events that have hammered the company's stock for weeks and recently forced it to lay off 500 employees. The company's decision not to comply with the FDA also places future availability of its leading therapy, called Elevidys, in doubt.

The FDA said in a statement Friday night that officials met with Sarepta and requested it suspend all sales but "the company refused to do so." The agency has the authority to pull drugs from the market, but the cumbersome regulatory process can take months or even years. Instead, the agency usually makes an informal request

and companies almost always comply.

"We believe in access to drugs for unmet medical needs but are not afraid to take immediate action when a serious safety signal emerges," FDA Commissioner Marty Makary said in a statement.

Elevidys is the first gene therapy approved in the US for Duchenne's muscular dystrophy, the fatal muscle-wasting disease that affects males, though it has faced scrutiny since its clearance in 2023. The one-time treatment received accelerated approval against the recommendations of some FDA scientists who doubted its effectiveness.

The FDA granted full approval last year and expanded the therapy's use to patients 4 years and older, including those who can no longer walk. Previously, it was only available for younger patients who were still walking.

Sarepta said Friday that its scientific review showed "no new or changed safety signals" for younger patients

with Duchenne's who have earlier stages of the disease. The company said it plans to keep the drug available for those patients.

"We look forward to continued discussions and sharing of information with FDA," the company said in a statement.

Sarepta halted shipments last month of the therapy for older boys with Duchenne's, which gradually destroys muscle and skeletal strength, resulting in early death. The move followed the deaths of two teenage boys taking the therapy.

The company also confirmed a third death Friday: a 51-year-old patient who was taking an experimental gene therapy in a trial for a different form of muscular dystrophy. Sarepta said it reported the death to the FDA on June 20. The FDA said Friday it placed that trial on hold.

Sarepta noted that the gene therapy involved in the in-

cident uses "a different dose and is manufactured using a different process," than Elevidys.

All three patient deaths were linked to liver injury, a side effect noted in Sarepta's prescribing information.

Earlier this week Sarepta announced it would add a bold warning to drug and lay off a third of its employees. The company did not mention the third patient death in its news release or conference call announcing those changes, sparking pointed criticism from Wall Street analysts.

Company shares fell more than 35% Friday to close at \$14.07.

Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Sarepta has received FDA approval for three other Duchenne's drugs since 2016, none of which have been confirmed to work. The company has long been criticized for failing to complete several studies needed to secure full FDA approval of its drugs.



A cow drinks water from a drying mountain spring during a severe drought on a mountain in Suva Planina, southeast Serbia, Thursday, July 17. (AP)

Water tanks replace springs

Drought wrecks farms and livestock in Serbia

SUVA PLANINA, Serbia, July 20, (AP): A severe drought this summer has left over 1,000 cows and horses without water on a mountain in southeast Serbia, forcing the authorities to bring up emergency supplies.

The early drought that started in May has affected people, animals and crops throughout the Western Balkans, causing water and power restrictions, disruptions in river traffic and problems in agriculture in this part of southeast Europe.

At Suva Planina, Serbian for Dry Mountain, cattle owners said they can't remember the springs ever drying up before mid-August. Lack of water has sent the cattle roaming down the mountain in panic, they said.

"We haven't had any rain on the mountain since May 27," lamented Nikola Manojlovic, from the nearby village of Mali Krcimir.

Suva Planina is located about 250 kilometers (155 miles) from Serbia's capital, Belgrade.

The drought has left visible consequences on a plateau at the altitude of some 1,200 meters (nearly 4,000 feet) - cracked ground has replaced the main water spring, along with dry, yellow grass and dust.

"We tried to dig new wells but everything has dried up," he said. "It was horrible, our cattle had no water for three days, they were screaming."

Alarmed, authorities drove up water trucks on Thursday, and workers used hoses to fill up a pond from the tanks for the thirsty animals. The Ministry of Agriculture said it will keep sending supplies in the coming weeks.

"We are out of imminent danger," local municipal chief Milisav Filipovic said after the water trucks drove up the mountain. He warned that the situation remains just as bad down the mountain,

in villages that have faced restrictions in water supplies for weeks now.

"Our farmers don't recall such a bad and hard year," Filipovic said. "People here mostly do farming and use products for own needs, for their existence. This year has brought unseen hardship for them."

While a spell of rainy weather in July brought some relief, farmers say that the land is too dry deep below the surface to recover easily. Scores of small rivers, lakes and creeks that are normally used in Serbia's rural areas have dried up.

In neighboring Bosnia, meteorologists have said that June this year could end up being the driest in recent history, causing huge damage in agriculture.

In eastern Croatia, authorities declared emergency measures in several municipalities along the border with Hungary to deal with the effects of the drought. The country's vegetable growers have warned many could go out of business. Earlier in July, both Albania and Kosovo reported water shortages that affected also electricity production in Albania.

Serbia's farmers have asked for financial help from the government, fearing poor yield, which could spike prices. Irrigation systems in the country are underdeveloped, leaving many farmers dependent on the weather.

Jovica Jaksic, of the Independent Farmers' Association told the state RTS television that the damage to the corn is so big already that even if it rained for the rest of the summer, it wouldn't help.

Scientists warn that climate change is exacerbating the frequency and intensity of heat and dryness in parts of Europe, making the region more vulnerable to health impacts and wildfires.

How to recognize, treat chronic venous insufficiency

What causes swollen legs? A closer look at CVI

WASHINGTON, July 20, (AP): Swollen legs led to President Donald Trump being diagnosed with what's called chronic venous insufficiency. It's a fairly common condition among older adults but requires a thorough checkup to rule out more serious causes of swelling in the legs. Here are some things to know.

What is chronic venous insufficiency?

Chronic venous insufficiency, or CVI, happens when veins in the legs can't properly carry blood back to the heart. That can lead to blood pooling in the lower legs. In addition to swelling, usually around the feet and ankles, symptoms can include legs that are achy, heavy feeling or tingling, and varicose veins. Severe cases could trigger leg sores known as ulcers.

What causes chronic venous insufficiency?

Overcoming gravity to pump blood from the feet all the way up to the heart is a challenge, especially when



The left foot and swollen ankle of President Donald Trump are pictured as he sits with Bahrain's Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa in the Oval Office of the White House, Wednesday, July 16, in Washington. (AP)

someone is standing or sitting for long periods. So legs veins are lined with one-way valves that keep blood from sliding backward on that journey. Anything that damages those valves can lead to chronic venous insufficiency. Risk factors can include blood clots, vein inflammation known as phlebitis or being overweight.

How is chronic venous insufficiency diagnosed and treated?

Doctors must rule out serious causes of leg swelling, such as heart problems, kidney disease or blood clots. Ultrasound exams of the leg veins can help confirm chronic venous insufficiency. According to the Cleveland Clinic, treatment can include wearing compression stockings, elevating the legs and achieving a healthy weight. Also exercise, especially walking, is recommended — because strong leg muscles can squeeze veins in a way that helps them pump blood. Medications and medical procedures are available for more advanced cases.

CRISPR innovations push gene therapy forward

Hope for safer, precise gene therapy

CORALVILLE, Iowa, July 20, (AP): Global genomics leader Integrated DNA Technologies (IDT) is revolutionizing the field of translational gene editing with new additions to its end-to-end CRISPR portfolio. These expanded CRISPR translational research solutions are designed to help researchers accelerate more CRISPR-based therapies for patients like KJ Muldoon, an infant who suffered CPS1 deficiency and made history when he received the world's first personalized CRISPR therapy manufactured jointly by IDT and Aldevron. IDT provided the guide RNA (gRNA), off-target analysis services and regulatory support for baby KJ's treatment, which was delivered in a significantly compressed timeline.

As researchers advance from discovery to clinical applications, the demand for higher purity in CRISPR reagents increases. To meet this need, IDT's chemically synthesized gRNAs are now available for online ordering in a range of modification and purity options. With high purity ideal for translational applications such as gene editing in primary cells and in vivo models, IDT's high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC)-purified gRNAs are orderable in 2 nmol and 10 nmol yields with larger quantities available by request and ship in as little as 12 business days. Formats include CRISPR-Cas9 gRNA and Custom Alt-R CRISPR gRNA. 2' Fluoro, 2' O-Methyl, and other modifications can be added to increase stability and specificity with IDT's custom gRNA tool.

CRISPR-based genome editing allows for targeted editing at specific sites in the genome, but there is potential risk that off-target edits at other locations can occur. To enable scientists to understand where these off-target edits might happen and assess how they might impact safety early in the therapeutic development process, IDT

launched UNCOVERseq, off-target nomination services which uses an enhanced GUIDE-seq methodology to identify off-target sites for its customers. When paired with IDT's award-winning off-target confirmation services, rhAmpSeq CRISPR Analysis System, CRISPR pioneers can confidently accelerate their path to the clinic by obtaining a deeper understanding of editing risks.

The custom safety services provided in baby KJ's treatment helped launch UNCOVERseq and represent a major step forward in ensuring the safety of CRISPR-based therapies.

Future IDT launches, planned for late 2025, include complementary offerings such as the Alt-R HDR Enhancer Protein, which is designed specifically for therapeutic applications, and manufactured by Aldevron, to meet rigorous quality standards. The HDR Enhancer Protein improves HDR efficiency in difficult-to-edit cells, and maintains safety and cell health. IDT, in collaboration with Aldevron, will also be launching a novel Cas9 mRNA to support early discovery to clinical stage customers. IDT has been a long-time provider of CRISPR gRNA libraries for screening applications and will unveil a new design tool later this year for efficient ordering of custom, configured libraries.

"IDT's rich history, deep expertise, and ability to manufacture bespoke products at the highest quality uniquely positions us to consistently innovate on our CRISPR portfolio and support customers at every stage of their gene editing journey," said Sandy Ottensmann, VP/GM, Gene Writing & Editing at IDT. "On the heels of the world's first personalized CRISPR-based therapy, we're honored to bring more CRISPR tools that will enable researchers to make important discoveries, like the one designed for baby KJ, and progress science forward."

‘Synthetic DNA’ shows promise

TIANJIN, July 20, (Xinhua): A Chinese research team has made a significant leap in the field of synthetic biology by precisely synthesizing and assembling large-scale human DNA and successfully transferring it across species.

This achievement not only advances the technology of human genome synthesis but also opens new avenues for treating genetic disorders, according to the researchers.

The study, conducted by the state key laboratory of synthetic biology at Tianjin University, was recently published in the international journal Nature Methods under the title "De novo Assembly and Delivery of Synthetic Megabase-Scale Human DNA into Mouse Early Embryos."

The team, led by Yuan Yingjin, an academician with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, developed a method called SynNICE. This method involves assembling synthetic human genomic DNA in yeast and then extracting the yeast nuclei with intact chromosomes using a technique called NICE (Nucleus Isolation for Chromosomes Extraction).

The extracted nuclei, carrying the synthetic DNA, were then injected into the early embryos of mice.

The researchers focused on a specific region of the human genome known as AZFa, located on the Y chromosome.

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WNBA All-Stars make statement with warmup shirts over CBA

Collier’s record-breaking performance leads Team Collier to victory

INDIANAPOLIS, July 20, (AP): Napheesa Collier made a statement with her record play on the court, and the players made one with warmup shirts for the WNBA All-Star Game.

Collier scored a record 36 points to help Team Collier beat Team Clark 151-131 in the WNBA All-Star Game that was devoid of defense but full of 4-point shots.

This record offensive effort came a year after the league’s annual exhibition game was a competitive contest that pitted the U.S Olympic team against WNBA All-Stars.

The game capped off a weekend where negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement took center stage. Players wore T-shirts while warming up before the game that said “Pay us what you owe us.”

“The players are taking this seriously, I think it sends a really strong message that we’re standing really firm in certain areas that we feel really strong that we need to improve on. I think we got the message across,” said Collier, who was named the game’s MVP.

As she waited to get her trophy, the crowd chanted “Pay them more” and All-Star Brittney Sykes held up a sign saying “Pay the Players.”

Captain Caitlin Clark was unable to play for her team because of a groin injury she suffered earlier this week. She still served as ambassador for the weekend.

Known for her deep logo 3-pointers, Clark would have loved a chance at the 4-point shot that was added to this game, which was 28 feet from the basket.

Both teams took advantage of the deep shot en route to the record-setting offensive night. They combined to hit 20 of the shots on 65 attempts.

The 151 points scored by Team Collier broke the mark put up by Team Stewart of 143 in 2023 for the most in an All-Star Game. Collier’s point total broke Arike Ogunbowale’s previous record of 34 points scored last year.

The combined total of 282 also surpassed the previous high total of 270 set in 2023.

While there was little defense played, both teams challenged plays in the fourth quarter, with the game not in doubt. One was successful and one wasn’t.

The game also featured rookies Paige Bueckers, Sonia Citron, and Kiki Iriafe, making up the largest rookie contingent at the game since 2011. Citron and Iriafen were on Team Clark, and Bueckers was a starter for Napheesa Collier’s team.

Kelsey Mitchell of the Indiana Fever and Jackie Young of the Las Vegas Aces were announced earlier in the day as starters for Team Clark, replacing Clark and Satou Sabally of Phoenix. Mitchell received a loud ovation from the fans who were happy to have another one of their players in the starting lineup. Young didn’t actually start as Gabby Williams took her spot as a starter. Young injured her hip in Las Vegas’ last game before All-Star weekend.

Besides the 4-point shot, the game also included a 20-second shot clock instead of the normal 24 and the ability for teams to substitute during live play. There also were no free throws shot, not that there usually are many in an All-Star Game, until the final two minutes of the game. Instead, players were automatically awarded the points. The only free throw shot was by Skylar Diggins with 1:01 left in the game. She made both. Diggins also had the first triple-double in All-Star history.

All four rules had been used at some point during previous All-Star Games, but not all in the same one.

The All-Star Game brought the stars out in Indianapolis. Rapper GloRilla performed at halftime while musicians Common and Jennifer Hudson sat courtside near WNBA legends Lisa Leslie and Tamika Catchings. Indiana Pacers star Tyrese Haliburton sat in a suite and got the loudest ovation from the crowd when he was shown on the videoboard.



Messi puts on a show in Miami’s blowout of Red Bulls



Nashville SC defender Walker Zimmerman, left, heads the ball over Toronto FC defender Kevin Long, center and Nashville SC forward Sam Surridge, right, during the first half of an MLS soccer match in Nashville, Tenn. (AP)



Inter Miami’s Lionel Messi (10) drives past New York Red Bulls’s Raheem Edwards (44) during the first half of an MLS soccer match Saturday, July 19, 2025, in Harrison, N.J. (AP)

San Diego remains atop West as Cincinnati takes East lead

HARRISON, N.J., July 20, (AP): Lionel Messi had two goals and two assists, Telasco Segovia also scored twice, and Inter Miami beat the New York Red Bulls 5-1.

It was Messi’s sixth multi-goal game in his last seven matches.

Messi became the fifth player in MLS history to record at least 35 goals and 25 assists over two years, joining Robbie Keane (2013-14), Sebastian Giovinco (2015-16), Carlos Vela (2018-19), and Cucho Hernández (2023-24).

Miami scored two goals in three minutes midway through the first half to take the lead. Messi’s beautiful pass to Jordi Alba tied it at 1-all in the 24th minute. Then Messi’s lofted pass over the defense led to Segovia’s first goal.

Messi scored on a breakaway in the 60th and he chested down Luis Suárez’s pass for a left-footed blast in the 75th for his 18th goal of the season.

Luca Orellano scored late in the second half, and Roman Celentano turned away seven shots as FC Cincinnati snapped Real Salt Lake’s five-match unbeaten run with a 1-0 victory, grabbing the lead in the Eastern Conference and

Supporters’ Shield races with the win.

Orellano subbed in for Gerardo Valenzuela in the 63rd minute and used Tah Brian Anunga’s first career assist to score in the 87th. It was his second goal after scoring 10 times as a rookie last season.

Celentano notched his eighth clean sheet of the campaign for Cincinnati (15-6-3), which moved one point in front of Nashville SC and the Philadelphia Union in both races.

Ian Pilcher scored his first goal in MLS for San Diego FC in a 1-1 tie with the Vancouver Whitecaps in a matchup of the top-two teams in the Western Conference.

San Diego (13-7-4) leads the conference with 43 points and the Whitecaps have 42. Minnesota United is third with 41 points.

Pilcher, a 22-year-old rookie defender, made it 1-1 in the 80th minute. Anders Dreyer’s corner kick was cleared by Vancouver before Luca Bombino misplayed a shot from the edge of the area that rolled to Pilcher for a first-touch finish from near the penalty spot.

Sam Surridge scored his 18th goal of the season, Joe Willis earned his ninth clean sheet and Nashville beat Toronto FC 1-0.

Nashville (14-5-5), which won its ninth home game this season, set a franchise record for wins during the regular season, topping 13 set in 2022 and ’23.

Petar Musa scored two goals, his second consecutive multi-goal game, and added an assist to help FC Dallas beat St. Louis City 3-0.

Kaick Ferreira - known simply as “Kaick” - gave Dallas a 1-0 lead when the 19-year-old scored his first MLS goal in the 24th minute. Musa tapped a pass back to a charging Kaick for a first-touch finish from just inside the area.

Musa won a loose ball and then beat goalkeeper Roman Bürki, who charged off his line, with a rolling shot from the center of the area to make it 2-0 in the 79th and his penalty kick in the 88th minute capped the scoring.

Pep Biel had a goal and two assists for his eighth career game with multiple goal contributions to set a club record and Charlotte beat Atlanta United 3-2 for its third straight victory.

Charlotte (11-11-2) extended its unbeaten streak to four matches at 3-0-1. Charlotte has tallied at least one goal in 16 straight matches across all competitions, including 11 multi-goal matches. Charlotte’s streak of 14 MLS regular-season

matches with a goal is the longest active streak in the league.

Hugo Cuypers and Jack Elliott each scored a goal, and Chris Brady recorded his third clean sheet of the season to help the Chicago Fire beat Montreal 2-0.

Chicago (9-9-5), which secured its seventh road win, also scored two goals at Atlanta on Wednesday to surpass last year’s total output of 40. The 44 goals are the most since the Fire scored 55 in 2019.

Montreal (3-15-6) remains on pace to complete its worst season in the club’s 32-year history.

Martín Ojeda scored two goals for Orlando City and tied the club’s single-season goal contributions record in a 2-1 win over the New England Revolution that snapped a four-game winless streak.

Ojeda, on the counter-attack, scored on a first-touch shot off a pass from Iván Angulo to give Orlando a 2-1 lead in the 58th minute.

Dániel Sallói scored a goal in the 74th minute for Sporting Kansas City in a 1-1 tie with New York City FC, the first regular-season matchup between the clubs since 2018.

Kansas City (6-11-6) lost 3-0 at home to Seattle last Saturday to snap a three-game unbeaten streak.

Uganda avoids relegation

Zimbabwe overcomes Namibia to qualify for 2027 Rugby World Cup



Players of Zimbabwe celebrate having qualified for the Men’s Rugby World Cup 2027 after winning the final match of the Rugby Africa Cup between Zimbabwe and Namibia in Kampala, Uganda. (Xinhua)

KAMPALA, July 20, (Xinhua): Zimbabwe’s national 15s rugby team, the Sabres, has qualified for the 2027 Rugby World Cup after edging out arch-rival Namibia 30-28 in a thrilling final of the Rugby Africa Cup.

Led by captain Hilton Mudariki, Zimbabwe sealed its ticket to the global tournament - set to be held in Australia - with a spirited performance at the Mandela National Stadium in Kampala.

The closely contested first half ended in a 16-16 stalemate, but the Sabres returned stronger after the break. Tries from Godfrey Muzangwo and Brandon Mudzenkedyzi, along with flawless conversions by Ian Prior, pushed Zimbabwe to a commanding 30-16 lead.

Namibia, however, staged a late comeback with two tries and a conversion, narrowing the deficit to just two points. A missed penalty in the dying moments ultimately cost it the match, handing Zimbabwe the Rugby Africa Cup trophy and its first World Cup qualification since 1991.

“We are very happy that we have remained focused

since the start of the competition and eventually qualified for the World Cup after last making it in 1991. I want to thank all the players and technical bench for a job well done,” Mudariki told Xinhua.

In an earlier classification match, host Uganda avoided relegation by defeating Cote d’Ivoire 37-17 to finish seventh out of eight teams.

Algeria pulled off a surprise 15-5 win over Kenya to claim third place, while Senegal edged Morocco 33-28 to secure fifth.

Herbert Mensah, President of Rugby Africa, praised the organizers and commended the quality of competition throughout the tournament.

“The level of competition in the tournament was high and I want to thank all the eight teams for the good show. Congratulations to the Zimbabwe team for qualifying for the World Cup, and Namibia - you still have a chance to qualify through the repechage,” said Mensah.

Costa snaps three-match losing streak

Holloway retains UFC BMF title, spoils Poirier’s retirement fight

NEW ORLEANS, July 20, (AP): Max Holloway said he wanted to play spoiler and he did it Saturday night in the main event.

Holloway defeated Dustin Poirier in a unanimous decision to retain the UFC BMF Championship in UFC 318 at the Smoothie King Center.

The win for Holloway is the first in three fights against Poirier, who beat him in 2012 and 2019.

Holloway (28-8) retained his BMF title after landing 98 more strikes (201-109) and landing 53% of his significant strikes.

Fighting against a partisan Louisiana crowd for the native son Poirier in his retirement match, Holloway was the quicker fighter for the entire match, knocking Poirier off his feet early in the first round.

In the second, another flurry of combinations put Poirier on the mat again, followed by two minutes of dominant grappling.

“I’m pretty happy,” Holloway said. Poirier can still hit hard, he said. “but he kept coming back and back. I came in and I knew I was going to try and be the spoiler and the villain.”

Poirier’s best chance came in the last 30 seconds of the second round, getting Holloway on the ground with a chokehold and several ground punches before the round ended.

The loss ends a brilliant career for Poirier, who finishes his career with a 30-10 record. Poirier, the UFC Lightweight Interim Champion in 2019, also defeated the likes of Connor McGregor twice in addition to victories over Justin Gaethje and Michael Chandler.

“Obviously I wanted to win, but being inside the eye of the storm I thought the fight was a lot closer,”



Poirier said. “I thought I had him out in the second round, we couldn’t hear the bell. The fight just felt a lot closer. It is what it is though.”

“Going into the fifth round I thought it was close. I feel like I could have maybe put myself in harm’s way more. I could have taken more chances, but I didn’t want to take too many risks. I thought I fought smart. I tried to win.”

In the co-main event, Paulo Costa (15-4) snapped a three-match losing streak, defeating Roman Kopylov for a middleweight division win by a unanimous decision.

Daniel Rodriguez (20-5) won his third consecutive fight after a unani-

mous decision over Kevin Holland in welterweight action in a significant upset. Rodriguez was +425 to win the fight, but beat Holland (28-14), who lost his second fight of 2025.

In the featherweight division, Patricio Freire beat Dan Ige by a unanimous decision. Freire (37-8) dominated the three-round fight, taking down Ige five times. The five-fight main card opened with a unanimous decision upset win by Michael Johnson over Daniel Zellhuber in the lightweight action. Johnson opened the fight +475 according to Bet MGM. Johnson (25-19) landed 81 strikes compared to only 52 from Zellhuber as he won his third consecutive fight.

Usyk becomes undisputed heavyweight champ again

Ukrainian KOs Dubois in 5th round

LONDON, July 20, (AP): Oleksandr Usyk disagreed with the idea that he’s become one of boxing’s all-time greats, but the evidence is mounting after his fifth-round knock-out of Daniel Dubois at Wembley Stadium.

The victory, sealed with a crunching left hook to Dubois’ jaw, made Usyk the undisputed world heavyweight champion for a second time. The undefeated southpaw retained his WBA, WBC, and WBO belts and regained the IBF belt he relinquished just over a year ago.

The bad news for opponents - especially the British ones that he keeps beating - is that the 38-year-old Ukrainian has no plans to stop anytime soon. He said he’s still a “young guy” and named Tyson Fury, Derek Chisora, Anthony Joshua, and Joseph Parker as possible next foes. Jake Paul threw his own hat in the ring.

“I will continue boxing and I will continue training, but now I cannot say who my next opponent will be,” Usyk said at his press conference.

“I prepared 3 1/2 months, I’ve not seen my family, my wife. Every day I live with my team - 14 guys in one house. Now I want to go back home.”

Usyk dropped Dubois twice in the fifth - the second time with a lunging left hook midway through the round after Dubois missed with a right. The London native looked stunned on the canvas and couldn’t beat the count before about 90,000 spectators at Wembley.

Usyk, best known as a slick tactician rather than a power puncher, certainly answered questions about his age and whether he’d slow down.

He said that the hook is called an “Ivan.”

“Ivan is like a big guy who lives in the village and works on a farm... It’s a hard, hard punch,” Usyk said.

Usyk (24-0, 15 KOs) beat Dubois for the second time in under two years, and this time there was no low-blow drama. It was a ninth-round stoppage in Poland with, of all things, a straight jab. But the finishing shot Saturday was a no-doubter.

Dubois (22-3, 21 KOs) joined British countrymen Fury and Joshua in having lost twice to Usyk, who was an undisputed world champion as a cruiser-weight before he moved up in weight six years ago.

The 27-year-old Dubois’s last fight - also at Wembley - had been a stunning knockout of Joshua last September.

He couldn’t muster the same magic, telling DAZN: “I gave everything I had. Take no credit away from that man, I’ll be back.”

The Briton gave a better showing than two years ago, when Usyk peppered him with jabs and won almost every round. Between the fourth and fifth rounds on Saturday, Dubois’s corner was urging him to use a double jab, but there was not enough time to carry out the orders as Usyk ended it shortly thereafter.

Dubois was hoping to become the first British heavyweight to hold every major belt since Lennox Lewis just over 25 years ago.



Ukraine’s Oleksandr Usyk celebrates winning the undisputed world heavyweight boxing title fight against Britain’s Daniel Dubois in London. (AP)

Dubois had inherited the IBF title that Usyk vacated last year when the Ukrainian chose to focus on his rematch with Fury.

Usyk said flatly, “No” in response to whether he thinks he’s one of the sport’s all-time greats.

He said he’s just disciplined.

“I don’t have motivation, I have discipline. Motivation is temporary,” he said.

Usyk said Britain has been like a “second home” to him. He won a gold medal at the 2012 London Olympics. He dethroned Joshua at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in 2021.

“I’m very grateful for this country. Thank you so much, you’re the best,” he said.

In 2008, in Liverpool, Usyk was crowned European amateur champion in the light heavyweight category.

25 players welcomed in opening session

Kazma kicks off new season build-up under Dragan Tadic



Players jogging on the first day of training.

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: Kazma officially kicked off its pre-season training in preparation for the upcoming football season. The first session took place on the club’s secondary field under the guidance of Croatian head coach Dragan Tadić.

The club has scheduled its external training camp in Turkey to begin on August 14, during which the team will play several friendly matches to prepare for the start of the Zain Premier League.

A total of 25 players participated in the initial session, including Jordanian professionals Anas Al-Awadat and Yousef Abu Al-Jazar, as well as new local signings Sultan Al-Enezi and Khalifa Rahil.

Jordanian midfielder Ali Al-Azaizeh is expected to join the squad in training today, while Beninese professional Samson Enekol will link up with the team during the Turkey

camp. The club is also close to finalizing deals with additional foreign players and is currently negotiating with an African player to join for the new season.

Kazma has further reinforced its squad with key additions, most notably Olympic team player Bandar Al-Barazi, who joined from Al-Nasr Club. The team also secured contract renewals with defender Bader Dhikrallah and striker Mishaal Al-Shammari for an additional season.

Before traveling to Turkey, Kazma is expected to play several local friendly matches as part of its preseason build-up.

In organizational news, the club confirmed the structure of its football, technical, and administrative staff for the first team. Club treasurer Omar Al-Mulla will continue as head of the football staff, with Khaled Al-Dhiyab serving as assistant to the club president. Mohammed Al-Harees has been appointed team manager, while Nawaf Al-Humaidan will serve as team administrator.

Al-Salmiya in final talks to sign Syrian star Al-Aswad

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: Al-Salmiya is on the verge of completing contracts with several foreign players, most notably Syrian international Mahmoud Al-Aswad, with negotiations between both sides reaching advanced stages.

Al-Aswad, an attacking midfielder and forward, previously represented Zakho in Iraq and Al-Karamah in Syria, having joined the senior squad at just 16 years old. He has played for various Syrian national teams since 2019, making his senior debut in 2022.

Earlier, Al-Salmiya finalized the signing of Jordanian Hussam Abu Dhabab a former player for Al-Faisaly who has represented Jordan internationally.

Head coach Nasser Al-Shatti is seeking to complete additional deals to strengthen the squad ahead of the new season. The club has already renewed the contracts of key players including Tunisian Imad Louati, Brazilian Alex Lima, and Libyan Al-Sanousi Al-Hadi.

Preseason training will officially begin next Saturday, followed by an external training camp in Turkey starting August 15, in preparation for the start of the Zain Premier League on September 12.

Best of the Rest

Rosario Central tops Lanus:

Angel Di Maria scored a late penalty as Rosario Central edged to a 1-0 away win over 10-man Lanus in Argentina’s Primera Division Clausura tournament on Saturday.

Lanus defender Carlos Izquierdoz was sent off in the 71st minute for remonstrating with the referee over a penalty awarded against goalkeeper Nahuel Losada for tripping Gaspar Duarte in the area.

Di Maria converted the resultant spot kick and Rosario Central held on to secure its first win of the campaign.



Al-Mutawa takes part in his first training session with Al-Qadsiya.

ber 12.

Al-Qadsiya captain Bader Al-Mutawa rejoined his team during a training session held at the late Farouk Ibrahim Stadium. Al-Mutawa had missed the start of preseason, which began last Wednesday, due to personal reasons.

Also returning to action was goalkeeper Hamid Al-Qallaf, who signed with the club after a two-year absence from competitive football.

Moroccan forward Ismail Khafi, despite speculation surrounding his future, also participated in training. Though there had been talk of contract termination, he received the green light from head coach Nabil Maaloul and is now likely to remain with the team through the upcoming season.

At Al-Arabi, French-Guinean player Hassame Fadiga has joined the team’s training camp, becoming the club’s fourth foreign signing. He joins Ugandan Kenneth Semakula and Nigerians Ayano Iwala and Christopher John.

The club still has one foreign player slot available, with Jordanian international Ali Alwan emerging as a leading candidate to fill that position.

In domestic transfers, Al-Arabi also strengthened its lineup by signing Aziz Nassari, who has previous experience with Al-Qadsiya and Al-Tadamon.

The team will continue local training until next Thursday before heading to the UAE for an external training camp, which will include three friendly matches. Following that, Al-Arabi will travel to the Maldives, where they will face Maziya Sports in a crucial AFC Challenge League play-off on August 12, with the winner advancing to the group stage.

“It was a tough game against a difficult opponent but thankfully we were awarded a clear penalty and I was able to make the most of it,” said Di Maria, who rejoined his original club on a free transfer earlier this month.. (Xinhua)

□ □ □

Carter reveals racial abuse: England defender Jess Carter says she has been subject to racial abuse online at the Women’s European Championship.

Carter came in for a lot of criticism for her performance during England’s opening loss to France.

And some of that has crossed the line even as the 27-year-old and the Lionesses have reached the semifinals at Euro 2025. (AP)

Bremen-born anchors Germany to gold

Wellbrock ‘rediscovers’ joy with historic gold haul at World Aquatics Champ’ships

BERLIN, July 20, (Xinhua): Despite having competed in countless swimming events, Florian Wellbrock still experiences nerves before a race.

“I had a rough night and couldn’t sleep because of my nerves. I kept thinking about our chance to make history,” said the 27-year-old German after claiming his fourth gold medal at the 2025 World Aquatics Championships on Singapore’s Sentosa Island.

His latest triumph came in the newly introduced 3 km open water knockout sprint team event, adding to his individual golds in the 10 km, 5 km, and individual sprint races.

The Bremen-born swimmer anchored the Germany team - alongside Celine Rieder, Oliver Klemet, and Isabel Gose - using a 10-second advantage built by his teammates to seal victory.

With his unprecedented haul of three individual gold medals plus the team title, Wellbrock became the first swimmer to achieve such a feat.

Despite his success, there is little time to celebrate. The indoor competitions at Singapore’s Sports Hub begin on July 27, giving Wellbrock just a week’s break before his next challenge.

While Klemet, who took silver in the 10 km at the 2024 Paris Olym-



Gold medalists from Germany, from left, Celine Rieder, Oliver Klemet, Isabel Gose and Florian Wellbrock stand on the podium after the mixed 4x1500m open water final at the World Aquatics Championships in Singapore. (AP)

pics, described the mission as “accomplished.” Wellbrock’s campaign at the 2025 World Championships is far from over. Notably, he handled the high water temperatures in Singapore with ease.

German broadcaster ARD likened the conditions to a “hot tub,” while Bild called the tournament “Wellbrock’s Championships.” But despite

his dominance in open water, painful memories remain from his struggles in the pool at the 2024 Paris Olympics. Cooler water temperatures saw Wellbrock underperform in the Seine, missing out on a medal in the 10 km and failing to qualify for the finals in the 800 m and 1500 m indoor events.

“My world collapsed after Paris,”

Wellbrock admitted in recent interviews. “But I managed to reset by taking longer breaks, training less, and adopting a more relaxed approach. My body told me I had to stop.” At one point, joy vanished from competition, replaced by crippling pressure. “I thought I had to win every medal in advance of every race,” he said.

Now, he says he has regained independence from public expectations, listening only to his own body and mind. “I’ve reinvented myself,” he explained, after briefly considering retirement.

“I’m back on the starting block because I enjoy it. I do this because I love the sport, not because people expect me to win.” Working with a new sports psychologist and revising his training routines have helped rebuild his confidence. Even so, he admits the scale of his medal haul in Singapore came as a surprise.

The success, he said, provides fresh motivation heading into the indoor events. Wellbrock also revealed his intention to retire after the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics, with plans to transition into a career in real estate.

But for now, retirement can wait, as more challenges loom in the pool in Singapore.

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NEWS



Members of China pose after the awarding ceremony of the 3rd place match between China and South Korea at the FIBA Women's Asia Cup 2025 in Shenzhen, south China's Guangdong Province. China wrapped up its 2025 FIBA Women's Asia Cup campaign in dominant fashion, routing South Korea 101-66 in the third-place game. (Xinhua)

Sports

Salwa Club to host West Asian Volleyball Clubs Championship



Sheikha Naima with Ali Al-Kuwari and Mohammed Al-Kuwari.

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: Salwa Al-Sabah Club President Sheikha Naima Al-Ahmad has announced that the club will host the West Asian Women's Clubs Volleyball Championship from December 1 to 14.

The announcement followed a meeting with Ali Al-Kuwari, President of the West Asian Volleyball Federation, held at the Salwa Club headquarters. Also present was the Federation's Secretary-General, Mohammed Al-Kuwari.

Sheikha Naima expressed her pride in Salwa Club's selection, stating:

"This is not the first time Salwa Club has hosted a continental championship. We have previously welcomed numerous events featuring clubs from the Gulf, Arab world, Asia, and even international teams."

She extended her gratitude to the Board of Directors of the West Asian Federation, led by Ali Al-Kuwari, for their trust in Salwa Club and for assigning it the responsibility of organizing this prestigious women's tournament.

She emphasized the club's readiness:

"Salwa Club and all its working committees are fully prepared to host this continental event. Our team has gained valuable experience through the successful organization of previous international tournaments across various sports."

Sheikha Naima also confirmed that preparations for the championship are already underway, with the goal of presenting an edition that reflects the highest standards of organization and competition.

Germany reaches Euros semis

France beaten in drama-filled match



Germany's Jule Brand, left, jumps for the ball with France's Oriane Jean-Francois during the Women's Euro 2025 quarterfinals soccer match between France and Germany at St. Jakob-Park in Basel, Switzerland. (AP)

BASEL, Switzerland, July 20, (AP): Germany overcame France on penalties and reached the semifinals of the Women's European Championship despite playing almost the entire match, and extra time, with 10 players.

A drama-filled match finished 1-1, then Germany won the shootout 6-5 thanks to the heroics of Ann-Katrin Berger, who saved two as well as dispatched her own spot kick.

Germany will face World Cup winner Spain in Zurich on Wednesday.

That seemed improbable after less than 13 minutes when Germany midfielder Kathrin Hendrich pulled the hair of France captain Griedge Mbock and issued a straight red card.

Grace Geyoro converted the resulting penalty, but Sjoeko Nüsken headed her team level just 10 minutes later.

Despite being at a numerical disadvantage, Germany could have taken the lead with a penalty of its own in the second half but France goalkeeper Pauline Peyraud-Magnin saved Nüsken's spot kick.

Nüsken scored Germany's last spot kick in the shootout.

It was an incredible way for Germany to mark its 50th appearance at a Euros, more than any other team.

For the second straight match, Germany was forced to play the majority of the contest with 10 players -- Carlotta Wamser was sent off shortly before halftime of the 4-1 thrashing by Sweden in their final group match.

This time it happened even earlier.

A France free kick was headed wide, but the Video Assistant Referee spotted Hendrich yanking Mbock's ponytail.

Geyoro stepped up and, despite the resounding jeers from the wall of Ger-

many fans behind the goal, dispatched the penalty powerfully down the middle. Germany knew that, with a player down, it had to take full advantage of its set-pieces.

Klara Bühl floated in a corner, and Nüsken raced to the near post to meet it with a glancing header that looped into the far corner of the net.

Despite the player advantage, France was struggling to impose itself. Delphine Cascarino thought she restored France's lead just before halftime, but it was ruled out for offside.

France had a second goal ruled out after the break, following a lengthy

VAR review. Both sets of players were waiting to kick off again when referee Tess Olofsson ruled out Geyoro's strike for an offside in the buildup.

Germany was gifted a chance to take a remarkable lead when France defender Selma Bacha gave away a needless penalty when she tripped Jules Brand near the byline.

But France goalkeeper Pauline Peyraud-Magnin saved Nüsken's spot kick in yet another failed penalty at Euro 2025.

The best save of the night - and maybe even of the tournament - came from her German counterpart in extra

time. A backward header from Germany captain Janina Minge had Berger scrambling back to scoop it off the line with an astonishing one-handed stop to spare her teammate's blushes.

Melvine Malard sent a long-range screamer crashing off the crossbar with almost the last touch of the 120 minutes.

It was then time for more Berger heroics.

Berger saved the first penalty she faced from Amel Majri, but Les Bleues were back level when Germany's Sara Däbritz hit the bar with her penalty.

Al-Tarmoom breaks national record, claims gold in Jordan

AMMAN, July 20, (KUNA): Kuwaiti swimmer Rashid Al-Tarmoom, representing Qadisiya Sporting Club and the national team, clinched first place in the 50-meter breaststroke on Saturday at the Open Swimming Championship held in Jordan.

Al-Tarmoom secured the gold medal after setting a new Kuwaiti national record with a time of 28.21 seconds. The championship, which began yesterday, runs until the 22nd of this month and features swimmers from across the Arab world.

Faisal Abu Al-Hassan, General Manager of Water Sports at Qadisiya Club, told KUNA that Al-Tarmoom's exceptional performance marks another milestone for Kuwaiti swimming. He expressed optimism for continued achievements that will elevate Kuwait's name on the international stage, reaffirming the club's commitment to supporting its athletes.

Al-Hassan also noted that Al-Tarmoom recently won a silver medal in the same event at the Swiss World Open Championship.



Rashid Al-Tarmoom

Mario retains WBC welterweight title in majority draw

Pacquiao's comeback falls short against Barrios

LAS VEGAS, July 20, (AP): Manny Pacquiao pushed back against his doubters, the odds, and nearly made some history.

But Pacquiao, in the end, fell just short on the judges' scorecards as Mario Barrios escaped with a majority draw to retain the WBC welterweight championship. Two judges scored the bout a draw, and judge Max DeLuca awarded Barrios a 115-113 victory.

The Associated Press scored the fight 115-113 in favor of Pacquiao.

"I thought I won the fight," Pacquiao said.

Barrios landed more total punches (120-101), according to CompuBox, but Pacquiao had the edge in power shots (81-75).

Pacquiao, enshrined into the International Boxing Hall of Fame last month, was trying to break his own record for the oldest welterweight champion. He was 40 when he emerged in 2019 split decision over Keith Thurman. This also was his first appearance in the ring in nearly four years for the 46-year-old Filipino, a loss by unanimous decision to Yordenis Ugas.

Barrios, a 30-year-old from San Antonio, was a -275 favorite at BetMGM Sportsbook. He hoped to bounce back from a split-decision draw on Nov. 15 against Abel Ramos, but didn't exactly come away with an emphatic victory



Mario Barrios, left, fights Manny Pacquiao in a welterweight title boxing match in Las Vegas. (AP)

in improving to 29-2-2. The heavily pro-Pacquiao crowd loudly booed the decision. "It was an honor to share the ring with him," Barrios said. "This is by far the biggest event I've had to date, and we came in here and left everything in the ring. I have nothing but respect for Manny."

"His stamina is crazy. He's still strong as hell and his timing is real. He's still a very awkward fighter to try

to figure out."

Pacman (62-9-2) moved swiftly around the ring from the beginning, often looking more like the younger champion who captured 12 world titles in eight divisions. He began to take control in the seventh, landing several big left hands to win the following three rounds on two cards and two on the other.

But Barrios was the better fighter at

the end, coming out more aggressive, knowing he might be in trouble with the judges. All three, in fact, awarded Barrios each of the final three rounds.

"I didn't think the fight was getting away from me, but I knew I had to step it up to solidify a win," Barrios said.

Both sides would be interested in a rematch.

"I hope this is an inspiration to boxers that if you have discipline and work hard, you can still fight at this age," Pacquiao said.

Sebastian Fundora (23-1-1, 15 KOs) retained his WBC super welterweight title when Tim Tszyu (25-3) didn't come out for the eighth round in the co-main event. Fundora felled Tszyu with a left hand in the first round and dominated the action with 118 power punches, according to CompuBox, by repeatedly backing down the Australian.

"I'm the bigger guy," said Fundora, who led 69-63 on all three judges' cards. "Everyone says I'm a bully in the ring, so I thought I should start really bullying these guys. I just kept working on aggression my whole career, and we've just been adding."

It was a big week for Fundora, who was accepted into Harvard and then won the rematch with Tszyu. The first fight on March 30, 2024, was much closer, with Fundora emerging with a split-decision victory.

Kuwait U-17 team heads to Serbia for a training camp

KUWAIT CITY, July 20: The Kuwait U-17 national football team departed for to begin a training camp in preparation for upcoming competitions. The delegation is led by Kuwait Football Association Board Member Ayman Al-Husseini.

The camp will feature several friendly matches designed to evaluate the players' readiness ahead of future tournaments.

Meanwhile, the Olympic team has wrapped up its training camp in Cairo, Egypt, where it played a series of friendly matches. The camp was part of the team's preparations for the AFC U-23 Asian Cup qualifiers, which are set to take place in Saudi Arabia in January. Kuwait will compete in Group B, alongside Japan, Afghanistan, and host nation Myanmar, with matches scheduled from September 1 to 9.

In a related development, the junior team continues its daily training sessions in the Czech Republic, where it is also holding a preparatory camp for upcoming engagements.



The U-17 delegation.