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Crown Prince, PM congratulate Egypt on revolution anniversary



HH the Crown Prince



HH the Prime Minister

KUWAIT CITY, July 23, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent Wednesday a cable to President of Egypt, Abdulfattah El-Sisi, congratulating him on the anniversary of the July 23rd revolution.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished the Egyptian President good health and the Egyptian people further prosperity.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent Wednesday a cable to President of Egypt, Abdulfattah El-Sisi, congratulating him on the anniversary of the July 23rd revolution.

Marking the 73rd July revolution anniversary, Egyptian President Abdulfattah El-Sisi affirmed in his speech that the country remained a beacon of stability,

welcoming millions from various countries.

He stated that Egypt has never abandoned its national and humanitarian responsibilities, recalling that on this day 73 years ago, Egyptians began the July Revolution, ending colonialism and realizing great achievements across the Arab region.

He also noted that this anniversary offers lessons and inspiration for Egypt's ongoing journey toward building a modern state focused on modernization, development, and the beginning of a new era.

The President took note of Egypt's "Decent Life" project targeting the underprivileged villages within the framework of the Sustainable Development Strategy.



HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

A Russian peasant defeated Napoleon before the war even began

People came out to witness his procession and his mighty army.

Women rushed out of their bedrooms to catch a glimpse of me passing by.

What business do I have with your procession? My land is more important to me.

I refuse to bear the name of someone vile like you who came to invade my land.

And then the Emperor said, "This is where defeat begins."

How many bodies belong to people whose coffers are full of wealth but their souls are weighed down by pain?

Peace of mind is the silent wealth that goes unseen, yet is deeply felt.

O God, spare us from pain in our bodies and anxiety in our souls.

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'Nationalize health care, raise Kuwaiti efficiency'

KUWAIT CITY, July 23, (KUNA): The Cabinet has underlined the need of nationalizing health services in a way that enhances care quality and raises national cadres' efficiency.

This was announced on Tuesday after the weekly Cabinet meeting held under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace.

The ministers were informed about the outcomes of Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi's official visit to France that included the signing of some memoranda of understanding with a number of outstanding medical institutions.

The Cabinet was apprised of the letters sent to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from the sisterly and friendly countries on means of boosting bilateral ties and activating mutual collaboration, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereeda Abdullah Al-Mousherji said after the meeting.

It also was briefed on His Highness the Prime Minister's reception of Egypt's Deputy

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First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah chairs the meeting.

Draft law legitimizes honest charity work

Sustainable outcomes targeted

KUWAIT CITY, July 23, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah chaired the seventh meeting of the Committee for Regulating Humanitarian and Charitable Work on Wednesday, with the participation of representatives from relevant government bodies.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Interior emphasized that the meeting reflects Kuwait's ongoing commitment to advancing the humanitarian and charitable sector. The aim is to further develop the regulatory and legislative frameworks in line with international standards, thereby maintaining Kuwait's distinguished status in this field.

During the session, the committee approved a draft law for

humanitarian work, designed to strengthen the legal foundation for charitable and humanitarian efforts in the country. The proposed legislation emphasizes principles of good governance, transparency, and accountability, while aiming to improve the effectiveness of projects and initiatives.

The committee also affirmed that these initiatives reflect Kuwait's steadfast dedication to supporting and enhancing humanitarian and charitable work. The goal is to ensure sustainable, impactful outcomes and strengthen institutional capacity to serve communities both locally and globally.

Meanwhile, the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) held a specialized workshop on Tuesday titled "Introduction to Compliance Management: Practical Applications" as part of the Tamkeen Initiative, in strategic partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA). The workshop aims to enhance the concepts of governance and institutional compliance in the charitable sector.

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Jump in flights seen: DGCA

Kuwait-India MoU to boost trade, tourism

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) confirmed that the memorandum of understanding (MoU) that the State of Kuwait signed recently with the Republic of India to increase the operational capacity of flights between the two countries is a strategic step in line with the commitment of Kuwait to strengthen its position as an international transit hub in the region and to expand its air connectivity network with Asian and international markets, particularly with India -- one of its largest partners in the field of air transport.

In a press statement Wednesday, the DGCA pointed out that the MoU paves the way for an increase in the number of direct flights between Kuwait International Airport and Indian airports; thereby, stimulating air transport, tourism and trade exchange. It added this move is beneficial to national and foreign airlines operating at Kuwait International Airport.

The DGCA affirmed that Kuwait is keen on signing such MoUs, as per the directive of the political leadership, after the recent visit of the Prime Minister of the Republic of India to Kuwait; with the Council of Ministers following up this issue. It is based on the vision to develop the civil aviation sector, enhance the efficiency of Kuwait International Airport, and achieve economic and strategic benefits; especially in light of the expansion projects and infrastructure currently being implemented at the airport.

According to DGCA, the MoU is also in response to the remarkable increase in the number of Indians residing in Kuwait -- from around 300,000 in 2007 to nearly one million at present. It stated this necessitates an increase in regular flights to meet the growing demand for travel between the two countries, in addition to serving the Kuwaiti citizens.

It expressed appreciation for the support of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah in the signing of this memorandum; as part of his directives to strengthen international cooperation, support efforts to develop the civil aviation sector, and open new horizons for economic partnerships that benefit the national economy.

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Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Air Vice Marshal Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receives Bangladesh Ambassador to Kuwait Syed Tareq Hussain.

Military ties boost eyed

Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Air Vice Marshal Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Wednesday Bangladesh Ambassador to Kuwait Syed Tareq Hussain.

In a press statement, the General Staff of the Army said that the two officials discussed issues of mutual interest and ways to boost bilateral military cooperation. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY, July 23, (KUNA): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed on Wednesday Kuwait's sympathy and solidarity with Bangladesh following the crash of a military aircraft in Dhaka, which resulted in dozens of deaths and injuries.

In a statement, the Ministry expressed the sincere condolences and heartfelt sympathy of the Kuwaiti government and people to the Bangladeshi people and victims' families, wishing the injured a swift recovery.

Kuwait sympathizes over Dhaka accident



Many Kuwaiti societies have installed water projects in Taiz, Yemen.

Wells dug by Kuwait help Yemeni city quench thirst

ADEN, July 23, (KUNA): War is no longer the only thing driving residents of the Yemeni city of Taiz to flee. Thirst has become a dangerous enemy, forcing dozens of families to leave the city every day.

The city has been partially besieged for a decade, as water sources have dried up and prices have risen to levels never known to Yemenis, threatening their security, stability, and right to survive.

Taiz has been experiencing a severe water crisis for over five months, exacerbating the suffering of hundreds of thousands of residents and fueling fears of an impending humanitarian disaster in the city.

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EU eyes Kuwait bonds upgrade

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: The European Union (EU) has agreed to begin negotiations with each of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, particularly Kuwait, to establish strategic partnership agreements aimed at enhancing cooperation in a wide range of sectors.

This is a confirmation of the report that the newspaper published earlier about the meeting with EU Ambassador to Kuwait Anne Koistinen on the growing interest in strengthening cooperation between the EU and GCC countries.

The EU member states made the decision on July 18; thus, making a pivotal step toward building a comprehensive and effective framework for bilateral cooperation in line with the shared priorities of the EU and the GCC. This reflects the commitment of EU to strengthen ties with the Gulf region, as outlined in the 2022 Joint Communication on the Strategic Partnership with the Gulf and reinforced during the first EU-GCC Summit held in Brussels in October 2024.

Koistinen described the development as a "historic moment" in the evolution of EU-GCC relations. "Both sides are seeking to elevate the strong and reliable EU-GCC partnership to new heights," she stated; while affirming the EU's intention to build a strong, ambitious and fruitful partnership with the State of Kuwait.

She added "I am optimistic that strengthening these relations will also have a positive impact on peace, stability and prosperity in the region."

She said she looks forward to the upcoming EU-GCC Ministerial Meeting and Joint Business Forum, which Kuwait is set to host later this year.

The new agreements will be customized to each Gulf country's specific context and are expected to complement existing cooperation frameworks, such as the ongoing regional free trade agreement negotiations.

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Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:32	Asr	15:30
Sunrise ..	05:03	Maghrib ..	18:46
Zohr	11:54	Isha	20:14

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Very hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-40 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.
By Night: Hot to rather hot with

Weather			
light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-32 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	49	38	
Kuwait Airport	49	32	
Abdaly	48	32	
Bubyan	49	26	
Jahra	49	34	
Salmiyah	43	37	
Ahmadi	45	32	
Nuwaisib	50	32	
Wafra	48	30	
Salmiya	48	31	

110 real estate contracts traded nationwide

Kuwait logs KD 74.4m in weekly property deals

KUWAIT CITY, July 23, (KUNA): Statistics released by the Real Estate Registration and Authentication Department at the Ministry of Justice on Wednesday showed that 110 real estate contracts were traded across the country during the week, with a total value of about KD 74.4 million (USD 245.5 million).

The statistics, published on the ministry's website, showed that private real estate contracts topped the list with 76 properties worth KD 27.4 million (USD 90 million).

Investment real estate contracts came second, with 30 properties worth KD 37.9 million (USD 125 million), while commercial real estate recorded two deals worth KD 6.5 million (USD 21.4 million).

Geographically, the statistics indicated that seven private real estate contracts and two investment contracts were traded in the Capital Governorate, while ten private real estate contracts and seven investment contracts were traded in Hawalli Governorate. Farwaniya Governorate witnessed 17 private contracts and three investment contracts.

Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate recorded six private sector contracts and two investment sector contracts, while Ahmadi Governorate saw the trading of 29 private properties, 16 investment contracts, and one commercial contract. In Jahra Governorate, trading was limited to seven contracts in the private sector.

Kuwait Airways, KFAS explore strategic training partnership



Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Airways Corporation, Abdul Mohsen Al-Faqan, and Director General of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, Dr. Amina Farhan, in a group photo with a number of the company's leaders.

Deal covers AI, energy and workforce development

By Mohammad Al-Mutairi

KUWAIT CITY, July 23, (KUNA): Kuwait Airways discussed with the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) ways to enhance training, cultural, and social responsibility initiatives, in addition to cooperating on training courses across various specializations.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Airways, Abdul Mohsen Al-Faqan, told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Wednesday that the airline explored avenues for joint cooperation with KFAS,

particularly in the fields of energy and artificial intelligence.

Al-Faqan added that Kuwait Airways will focus on developing human resources and training employees and leaders in collaboration with KFAS through specialized technical and scientific courses.

He stated that investing in human capital and leadership development plays a vital role in achieving the company's goals, especially in supporting its strategy for digital transformation and innovation.

He noted that the meeting also addressed ways to enhance Kuwait Airways' efficiency in terms of both human and technological resources. In addition, both parties emphasized the importance of spreading and promoting scientific culture, stressing that the visit reflects

Kuwait Airways' ongoing efforts to strengthen cooperation with national institutions.

Al-Faqan affirmed that the visit falls within Kuwait Airways' commitment to foster collaboration with entities from both the public and private sectors. He emphasized that the airline, being a key component of the national economy, is keen to contribute to driving economic growth and development in the country.

It is worth noting that Kuwait Airways has signed several agreements and partnerships with national companies and government agencies, including Zain, the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, the Touristic Enterprises Company, the Kuwait Oil Company, and the Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company, among others.



Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Airways Corporation, Abdul Mohsen Al-Faqan, and Director General of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, Dr. Amina Farhan, on a tour of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences building.



KUNA photos
Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Airways Corporation, Abdul Mohsen Al-Faqan, presents a commemorative shield to the Director General of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, Dr. Amina Farhan.

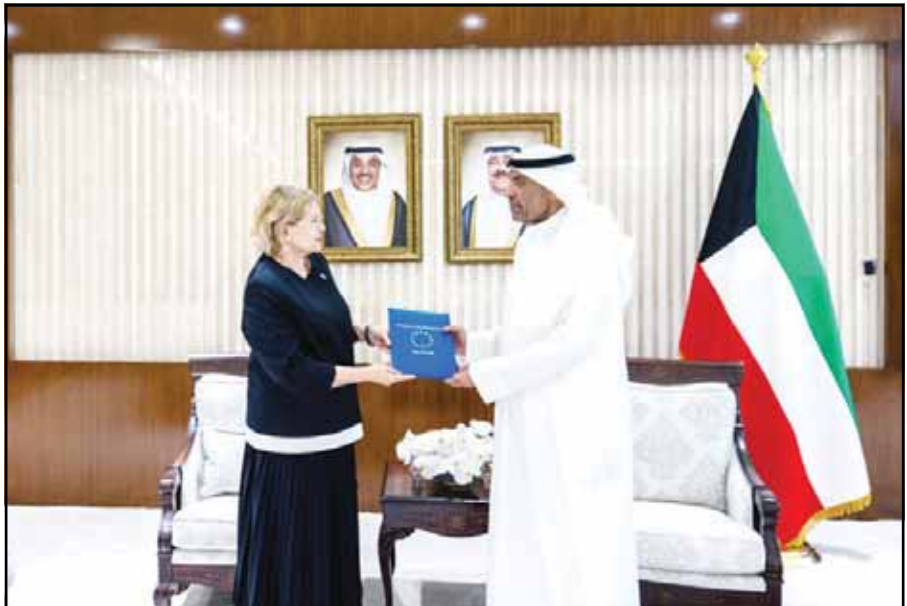
PADA gets organizational overhaul

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila issued a ministerial decision approving the amended organizational structure of the Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PADA) -- a significant step in enhancing governance and operational efficiency in the authority.

The new structure aims to streamline oversight and improve service delivery for individuals with disabilities by restructuring reporting lines, clarifying departmental responsibilities, and introducing new specialized units.

Following are the key changes in the organizational structure:

- Chairman of the Board of Directors: now directly reports to the Inspection and Audit Office at the management level, emphasizing enhanced transparency and oversight.
- Director General: oversees several vital units and departments under a revised administrative hierarchy, including the following:
 - 1. Legal Affairs Division under the Legal Affairs Control Department: consists of the Investigations and Cases Unit; Legal Studies, Fatwa and Contracts Unit; and Grievance Follow up Unit
 - 2. Office of the Director General under the Director General Office Control Department: consists of the Coordination and Follow up Unit, Donations Unit, Technical Office, Early Intervention Center for Children with Disabilities-Jahra, Daycare Unit-Sabah and Daycare Unit-Sulaibikhat
 - 3. Medical and Rehabilitation Services Division under the Rehabilitation Medical Center Department: consists of the Clinics Unit, Dental Unit, Nursing Staff Unit, Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Unit, Auxiliary Medical Services Unit, and the Wards and Staff Affairs Unit consisting of the Inmate Services, Medical Records, Administrative Support, Financial Coordination and Prosthetic Devices sections
 - 4. Care Center Affairs Division under the Disabled Care Centers and the Rehabilitation Medical Center Department which now supervises the following:
 - Disabled Care Center Unit
 - Programs and Activities Section
 - Technical Guidance Section
 - Financial Coordination Section
 - Administrative Support Section
 - Residential Care Center Unit - Sulaibikhat:
 - Disabled Care Section - Men
 - Disabled Care Section - Women and Children
 - Social Rehabilitation Section - Men
 - Social Rehabilitation Section - Women and Children
 - Disabled Care Center - Sabah:
 - Disabled Care Section - Men
 - Disabled Care Section - Women and Children
 - Social Rehabilitation Section - Men
 - Social Rehabilitation Section - Women and Children



KUNA photo
Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya receives a written message from the European Union Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, Anne Koistinen.

Kuwait FM receives EU envoy

Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya received on Wednesday the European Union (EU) Ambassador to Kuwait Anne Koistinen.

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that during the meeting the EU Ambassador delivered a written message

to the Minister from the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas.

The meeting also tackled ties and cooperation between Kuwait and EU as well as ways to enhance them in various fields. (KUNA)

Other Voices

Will prosperity come with peace?

By Ahmad alsarraf

DURING the presidency of John F. Kennedy, the United States, fearing the spread of communism in Southeast Asia, deployed military advisors to support South Vietnam, a Western ally, against North Vietnam, which was aligned with the communist regimes of China and the Soviet Union.

The situation escalated following the Gulf of Tonkin Incident in 1964, when American ships were attacked in what many later considered a pre-meditated act. In response, President Lyndon B. Johnson, Kennedy's successor, was granted extensive military authority to confront North Vietnam.

By 1969, U.S. troop numbers in Vietnam had increased to over half a million. However, faced with mounting human and financial losses, as well as increasing domestic and international opposition to the war, the United States was ultimately forced to withdraw.

U.S. forces eventually withdrew, transferring defense responsibilities to the South Vietnamese government. Peace negotiations between North Vietnam and the United States began in Paris and lasted several years, ultimately culminating in a humiliating and unprecedented American withdrawal. Decades later, a similar scene would unfold in Afghanistan. The Vietnamese capital, Saigon, eventually fell to communist forces from the North.

The toll on the United States was staggering. Over 58,000 American soldiers lost their lives in the last four years of the war, and the financial costs were immense. Upon their return, many veterans struggled with severe psychological trauma, and American society became deeply divided. Public opposition to the war intensified, triggering widespread social unrest. The war's failure also marked the end of President Johnson's political career.

The Vietnamese had previously resisted

ed invasions by France, then Japan, then France again, followed by the United States, and finally China. Despite the loss of five million of its citizens, Vietnam remained steadfast.

During the final phase of the Vietnam War, which ended in 1975, the United States lost over 58,000 soldiers, with more than 150,000 wounded. On the Vietnamese side, two million civilians and one million soldiers were killed. The war also witnessed widespread use of landmines, radioactive materials, and chemical agents whose harmful effects lingered for decades.

According to a Harvard University study, the war resulted in ten million refugees, one million widows, 880,000 orphaned children, 362,000 children without one parent, and three million unemployed individuals. By the end of the war, inflation in Vietnam had skyrocketed to 900 percent. In the aftermath, Washington imposed a boycott on Vietnam and refused to deal with its communist government. However, the two countries began a slow process of normalization in the mid-1990s.

The United States covers an area of approximately 10 million square kilometers, while Vietnam covers just 331,000 square kilometers. It was only half that size at the time it, being one of the poorest nations, went to war with America, which was the most powerful and wealthy nation in history.

The struggles of Vietnam, South Africa, Algeria, and even Afghanistan stand as powerful examples of resilience in the face of overwhelming force. Similarly, the Palestinian resistance, in all its forms, offers valuable lessons that deserve careful study.

Total surrender to Israel, as some advocates suggest, would bring consequences far more severe than many can imagine. Several Arab countries have normalized relations with Israel in hopes of achieving peace, cooperation, and prosperity. Yet, after more than two decades, these nations have seen little in the way of tangible benefits.

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Buildings ready for transfer

PAHW switches on sustainable road lighting in housing project

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) on Wednesday announced the operation of road lighting in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak suburb, in implementation of a contract that is the first of its kind among the projects of the authority; under which the roads are powered by renewable energy sources.

The PAHW affirmed its commitment to conserve and rationalize energy consumption for various uses in its housing projects, whether road lighting or smart public buildings.

It added that it is closely following up the construction of 31 public buildings in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak suburb, along with 186 other buildings in other residential cities.

Additionally, the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) continues to receive a number of service buildings in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak Residential City project, in preparation for their handover to the concerned government agencies.

Sources told the newspaper that some initial handover committees have conducted field inspections of the service sites and submitted their recommendations to the Deputy Director General for Implementation Affairs, pending



Al-Seyassah photo
Housing Authority activates intelligent street lighting in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak.

their approval by the Director General.

They revealed that the service sites consist of several buildings -- a police station, a community development building, a social unit building, a fire station, a health center, a central market building, a group of commercial stores, a post office, a citizen services building, a municipality building, an elementary school, and a kindergarten.

They confirmed that representatives of the beneficiary entities will be present during the handovers.

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



A Russian peasant defeated Napoleon before the war even began

When a person holds on to their rights, they can defeat even the most powerful forces. In doing so, they prevent the aggressor from forcing them to surrender or give him what he wants. This kind of resistance has always been a characteristic of free and dignified peoples.

What follows is a brief story about what it takes to confront a mighty imperial power like France during the era of Napoleon Bonaparte. It is the story of how a simple Russian peasant stood his ground and made Napoleon realize, even before the war had truly begun, that defeat was inevitable.

After Napoleon Bonaparte had secured his control over much of Europe, he set his sights on invading Russia. As he marched through European cities and villages along the way, crowds would gather and people would come out of their homes to watch his grand procession and massive army.

As he approached the outskirts of Russian territory, Napoleon noticed something unusual - a bent-over peasant, sickle in hand, tirelessly harvesting his crops, undistracted and unbothered. The man worked with steady focus, showing no interest whatsoever in Napoleon's procession.

Napoleon turned to his guards and commanders, and said, "Do you see that lowly Russian peasant? He doesn't even glance at my procession, while the women of Europe rush out of their bedrooms just to catch a glimpse of me passing by their homes."

Napoleon halted his procession and ordered that the peasant be brought before him. The man was brought in with his hands tied.

Napoleon asked, "Why didn't you stop harvesting to watch my procession?"

The peasant replied calmly, "What business do I have with your procession? My land is more important to me."

The emperor pressed further, "Don't you know who I am?"

The peasant answered without hesitation, "I don't care who you are. It is enough to know that you are a contemptible invader, and too mean to occupy my country."

People came out to witness his procession and his mighty army.

Women rushed out of their bedrooms to catch a glimpse of me passing by.

What business do I have with your procession? My land is more important to me.

I refuse to bear the name of someone vile like you who came to invade my land.

And then the Emperor said, "This is where defeat begins."

How many bodies belong to people whose coffers are full of wealth but their souls are weighed down by pain?

Peace of mind is the silent wealth that goes unseen, yet is deeply felt.

O God, spare us from pain in our bodies and anxiety in our souls.

Napoleon said to the peasant, "You must carry my name with you always, so that you will never forget me."

He then ordered his soldiers to tattoo his name on the peasant's forearm.

A soldier heated an iron rod and branded the name "Napoleon" into the man's skin, a mark intended to be permanent.

In an act of defiance, the Russian peasant raised his sickle and struck his forearm to remove the branded area. He threw his arm aside and said firmly, "Take your name with you. I refuse to bear

the name of someone vile like you who came to invade my land."

Napoleon turned to his officers and said his famous words, "This is where defeat begins." And indeed, history records that Russia would defeat him.

Regarding the attitude of that Russian peasant, what was the reaction of those groups and individuals who aided the occupier in entering their homeland?

History teaches us that defeat is inevitable when people choose loyalty to invaders over their own nation.



The most precious thing in the world

Nothing in this world is more precious than a blessing that cannot be bought or replaced, which is the blessing of health and peace of mind.

Many bodies are surrounded by wealth, but they are burdened by pain on the inside.

Many hearts dwell in palaces but have never tasted true comfort.

Health is the real treasure, and peace of mind is the silent wealth unseen by others but deeply felt in the heart, making life truly flourish.

Concealment is nothing but a cloak of mercy that hides our flaws from the eyes of others and protects us from irreversible harm.

O God, grant us concealment that remains unseen, health that never weakens, and peace of mind that never fades.

O God, spare us from pain in our bodies, anxiety in our souls, and sorrow that dims the light of our hearts.

O God, the treasures of this world can never replace health, and abundant wealth cannot restore lost serenity.

O God, bless us with a share of every good and protect us from all evil.

■ When hardship overwhelms you and you feel you can no longer bear it, hold on and never give up.



■ Remember, the first to claim he was a sincere advisor was Satan (May God protect us from him)



■ To this day, women whose citizenships were revoked under Article 8 continue to visit the Public Institution for Social Security to collect their pensions, based on the government's decision. Yet they are told, "We have no instructions to disburse these pensions."

Dear Minister of Finance, save them from poverty.



■ The crisis began to resolve the moment I accepted that it might never end. Such is life. Patience is the key to victory.

The story of the Prophet Job (Ayyub) serves as a good lesson.

He prayed to God, "My Lord, adversity has touched me, and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful."



■ Has the government finally started considering an agreement with China to cultivate the desert and transform it into a green oasis, as other Gulf states have done? In this world, anything is possible once the decision is made.



■ What is stopping us from fully privatizing schools?

At the very least, students would have access to clean bathrooms, better-maintained facilities, and improved standards of behavior compared to what currently exists.



KUNA photo
Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Major General (Pilot) Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah reviews key duties and operations of naval forces with the senior command.

'Hone your skills, cut errors with training and expertise'

KUWAIT CITY, July 23, (KUNA): Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Major General (Pilot) Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, conducted an official visit to Mohammad Al-Ahmad Naval Base on Tuesday to review the key duties and operations of the naval forces.

According to a statement issued by the General Staff, Major General Al-Sabah was briefed on the principal responsibilities assigned to the naval force, including its role in safeguarding and securing Kuwait's territorial waters.

The briefing also covered notable development projects aimed at enhancing operational readiness and improving rapid response capabilities at sea.

As part of his visit, Major General Al-Sabah toured the Naval Force Institute, where he observed the training programs and educational curricula in place.

He was introduced to the institute's initiatives in training and qualifying officers and non-commissioned officers across various specialties.

Among the future projects highlighted was the Naval Training Center for Simulators, distinguished by its advanced tech-

nological capabilities and capacity to offer high-quality, professional training for new recruits.

Major General Al-Sabah commended the efforts of the institute's instructors and trainers in cultivating a highly skilled and dedicated naval force.

He expressed pride in the discipline and commitment demonstrated by trainees, encouraging them to continue honing their skills, embrace hands-on training, and learn through experience to minimize errors and improve field performance.

The visit concluded with a viewing of the unmanned training boat, used as a mobile target for live exercises. Major General Al-Sabah praised the exceptional dedication of naval personnel - including officers, non-commissioned officers, and enlisted members - emphasizing that the professionalism and discipline he observed reflect the continuous progress and development of Kuwait's naval capabilities.

Upon his arrival, Major General Al-Sabah was welcomed by Rear Admiral Saif Al-Hamlan, Commander of the Naval Force, along with several officers from the base.

Bribes galore, 19 in custody

Mol busts co-ops network

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: As part of its ongoing efforts to combat corruption and protect public funds, the Ministry of Interior confirmed that the Criminal Investigation and Licensing Department of the General Department of Criminal Investigation under the Criminal Security Sector has uncovered a corruption network involving several members of the boards of directors of cooperative societies and the Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies (UCCS), reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The network was found to have accepted bribes from commercial companies to promote their products and grant them priority within the cooperative societies, in violation of regulations and laws.

The ministry explained that the competent authorities immediately launched investigations, which led to the collection of evidence confirming the involvement of several companies and intermediaries in providing cash payments to officials in exchange for illegal facilitation.

Several intermediaries responsible for transporting and delivering the funds were arrested, and all suspects confessed to the charges brought against them.

The ministry stated that a total of 19 individuals were arrested in two separate incidents. They include:

- Four board members of UCCS
- One board member of a cooperative society
- Three intermediaries between companies and board members
- Two employees of UCCS
- Nine employees from the involved commercial companies

The ministry confirmed that all necessary legal procedures were taken, and the suspects have been referred to the concerned authorities for further action.

Fire safety drive starts in Amghara

KUWAIT, CITY, July 23: Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) -- in coordination with the Ministry of Interior, Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) and Public Authority for Industry (PAI) -- conducted an intensive inspection campaign in South Amghara (scrapyard) in Jahra Governorate, reports Al-Anba daily.

The campaign aimed to identify and address violations of fire safety and prevention regulations in various buildings and industrial facilities in the area.

According to an official statement from

KFF, the campaign resulted in the issuance of multiple citations for safety violations and the administrative closure of several non-compliant establishments, including wood warehouses operating in breach of fire codes.

This intensified inspection effort follows a massive fire that recently broke out in the same area, which required the intervention of about 200 firefighters who battled the blaze for nearly 12 hours before putting it under control, underscoring the urgent need for strict enforcement of safety regulations.

Nazaha and FIU in joint effort to combat corruption

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) recently met with the Financial Investigations Unit, which presented preventive measures to combat corruption and promote integrity standards.

In a press statement on Wednesday, Nazaha confirmed that the meeting is in line

with its commitment to strengthen cooperation with regulatory authorities.

Nazaha disclosed that the 'Adaa' project, which aims to activate the implementation of codes of professional conduct, was reviewed during the meeting; as well as its experience in activating the Audit and Inspection Office and the self-assessment of the application of corporate governance principles.

They also talked about the project of

Nazaha to prepare a corruption risk assessment guide in accordance with international and national standards. They reviewed the corruption risk assessment and management guide, along with an explanation on how it can be used as a preventive tool to detect and address potential risks.

The two sides discussed opportunities for cooperation, which could contribute to establishing a fair and sustainable work environment.

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Municipal Council approves retail expansion for Kuwait Flour Mills

Fourth master plan campaign gets green light

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: The Technical Committee at the Municipal Council, chaired by Munira Al-Amir, approved the request of Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company to utilize the retail outlets in the designated bakery sites, add retail activities for all food products manufactured by the company, as well as cold and hot beverages, pies, pastries, sweets and bakeries during its meeting on Tuesday.

The committee also approved the proposal of council member Alia Al-Farsi to conduct an awareness campaign on the Fourth Master Plan

for the State of Kuwait, which is currently with the Council of Ministers.

The committee referred three items on its agenda to the executive branch for detailed studies. These items include creating and adding activities in Plot 293 in Ardiya (Media Street), develop residential cities and commercial and investment buildings, and allocate several floors in Al-Hamra Business Tower for the establishment of an international hotel.

On the other hand, the Farwaniya Governorate Committee, headed by Vice Chairman of the council Khaled Al-Mutairi, will hold its second meeting for the fourth term on Wednesday.



Al-Amir

The committee will discuss a number of items on its agenda as follows:

- Link West Abdullah Al-Mubarak with Abdullah Al-Mubarak,
- Allocate a site for a pumping station and two sewage paths to connect with it in order to pump sewage from the West and South Abdullah Al-Mubarak housing areas to the Kabad purification station,
- Allocate an alternative site in Kabad for the Sulabiya agricultural water pump.

Meanwhile, the Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality announced that, as part of the national awareness campaign "Our Beaches Are Beautiful", efforts are ongoing, with the support of several government agencies and volunteer teams, to clean the islands, protect the marine environment, and raise awareness among citizens and residents about the importance of disposing of waste properly and only in designated areas.

Districts prep training courses

Education Ministry sets Aug 24 start for teacher work handover

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Public Education at the Education Ministry Mansour Al-Dhafiri said the ministry has set the date for the handover of work assignments to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti teachers for academic year 2025/2026 -- starting Aug 24 -- in preparation for the first semester.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the letter of Al-Dhafiri, based on the letters of the assistant undersecretary for Administrative Affairs and Administrative Development who inquired about the starting dates for teachers.



Al-Dhafiri

In his letter, Al-Dhafiri stressed the need for all teaching staff to start work on time to be ready for the next academic year. He said the decision has been circulated to several entities, including the Public Education Coordination and Follow-up Department and the Technical Follow-up Department, as part of the extensive preparations to ensure a smooth start of the academic year.

In a related development, educational districts are preparing training courses for new teachers in order to improve their pedagogical, administrative and technical skills. These courses cover a variety of topics; such as the latest teaching strategies, classroom management, handling students with special needs, technical aspects, the teacher's charter, and dealing with students in general. The goal is to continuously develop teaching competencies by providing advanced training programs to enhance teachers' leadership and technical skills, which contribute to the development of the educational process in general.

Real-time labor compliance tracking

PAM rolls out second phase of digital salary oversight portal

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has activated the second phase of its 'Easier Portal for External Entities' platform -- a major step toward fully digital and transparent oversight of salary disbursements for government contract workers, reports Al-Rai daily.

The new phase allows government and oil sector agencies involved in public contracts to electronically monitor salary transfers, track contract data, and verify the legal status of workers. The platform features smart oversight tools and provides real-time and transparent reporting.

Sources told the daily that the move is in line with Cabinet recommendations, urging greater accountability on the part of contracting companies regarding wage payments. Sources said the initiative supports efforts to regulate the labor market, improve labor rights compliance, and help agencies clearly define and document their manpower needs.

"The launch of the portal will facilitate the smooth operation and timely completion of government facilities and projects requiring specialized labor in various sectors," the sources added.

The portal enhances institutional integration among government bodies. It provides an interactive dashboard for users, enabling them to generate real-time reports, report labor violations, and track the compliance of contracting companies with Labor Law provisions.

Following are the services offered by the portal:

1. Government contract registration
2. Subcontract registration
3. Contract extension
4. Contract cancellation
5. Contract data modification
6. Tracking records
7. Labor violations reporting service

Recognition affirms Kuwait's urban leadership

PAHW receives Outstanding Achievement Award in Geographic Information Systems

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) received the Outstanding Achievement Award in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), presented by Esri International at a ceremony held in San Diego, California, USA.

Deputy Director General for Planning and Design at PAHW Eng. Nasser Khuraibat stressed that the authority deserves this prestigious award; which is usually given to entities that use GIS technologies in innovative and distinctive ways, achieve the desired results in improving institutional performance, enhance decision-making, and develop



PAHW photo Outstanding Achievement Award in Geographic Information Systems.

services provided to the community.

Khuraibat stated that this year's award nominations were made by a team of experts at Esri. He explained the award is not open to direct submissions, as a limited number of entities around the world are selected based on certain criteria. "They are honored at the annual conference in front of tens of thousands of specialists and experts in the field of GIS. This global recognition is a confirmation of the leadership of the PAHW in employing modern technologies and its commitment to adopt the best digital practices in order to achieve development goals and guarantee efficiency in government work," he added.

JULY

Room Promotion

Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 57.173	BHD 128.000/-net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 65.000/-net	BHD 145.000/-net

Promo period from 1st July to 31st July 2025 Terms & conditions apply*

Governor Al-Habashi calls for special needs schools in Jahra

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: In a step toward promoting inclusive education, Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi has formally addressed Minister of Education Dr. Jalal Al-Tabtabaei with a proposal to allocate government schools specifically equipped to serve students with special needs in Jahra Governorate, reports Al-Rai daily.

The initiative reflects the commitment of Al-Habashi to support all segments of society and ensure equal access to education for people of determination. The proposal aims to ease the burden of families by reducing the need for students to travel outside the governorate to access suitable educational facilities.

In his letter to the minister, the governor underscored the importance of providing an educational environment tailored to the needs of students with disabilities. The plan includes establishing the needed facilities throughout Jahra, including the rapidly growing Al-Mutlaa City.

The project is expected to roll out gradually, beginning with one educational level before expanding to include all levels. The goal is to promote



Jahra Governorate photo Hamad Al-Habashi, Jahra Governor

educational integration, improve accessibility, and support the long-term development of inclusive learning environments in the area.

Top majors require GPAs above 85%

PUC opens bachelor's and diploma scholarship registration for 2025/26

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: The Secretariat General of the Private Universities Council on Tuesday confirmed the launching of the internal scholarship plan for academic year 2025/2026.

The Secretariat revealed that online registration for high school graduates will be on Aug 4-14 through its official website.

It also announced the minimum grade and specializations available for the bachelor's program in internal scholarship plan as follows:

First: For the Science Section (overall grade of 75 percent)

- Some specializations requiring higher grades are excluded as follows:
- Law: 88 percent
- Physical Education and Sports Education: 85 percent
- Media: 82 percent
- Accounting (Deanship and Leadership): 80 percent

Second: For the Literature Section (overall grade of 78 percent)

- Some specializations that require higher grades are excluded as follows:
- Law: 88 percent
- Physical Education and Sports Education: 85 percent
- Media: 82 percent
- Accounting (Deanship and Leadership): 80 percent

Third: Engineering specializations (special application and comparison)

Applications for the Bachelor's de-

gree in Engineering programs will be based on the high school GPA, but admission comparison will be based on the equivalent GPA plus the result of the unified national exam.

- The minimum grades for admission to engineering programs are as follows:
- Chemical Engineering: 92 percent
- Civil and Electrical Engineering: 90 percent
- Other Engineering Programs: 85 percent

Fourth: Diploma Program

- The minimum grade for applying to diploma programs has been set at 70 percent; except these specializations -- Law, Mechanical Engineering and Civil Engineering that require a minimum grade of 75 percent.

The Secretariat also explained the method of calculating the equivalent average as follows:

- General Secondary Certificate: 65 percent
- Mathematics Test: 20 percent
- English Language Test: 15 percent

It then stressed that acceptance of an application does not mean final acceptance into internal scholarships, and that obtaining an acceptance letter from a university or college does not guarantee acceptance into the scholarships. It urged the students to adhere to the instructions and carefully fulfill the application requirements to avoid the exclusion of incomplete applications.

FM Al-Yahya receives credentials of Kazakhstan Ambassador to Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, July 23, (KUNA): Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya received on Wednesday the credentials of the newly appointed Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Kuwait, Yerzhan Yelekeyev.



KUNA photo
Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya receives the Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the State of Kuwait, Yerzhan Yelekeyev.

Other Voices

Kuwait and Peru building bridges across continents

By Nasser Al-Hajeri

In 2025, Kuwait and Peru proudly celebrate 50 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations, a golden milestone that reflects decades of cooperation, shared values, and a sincere desire to build bridges between two distant yet increasingly connected nations.



Al-Hajeri

Diplomatic ties were formally established in 1975, and over the years, both countries have worked to deepen cooperation in a range of areas. The Embassy of Peru in Kuwait originally opened in 1989 but had to close due to the war. It was officially reopened in 2011, marking a renewed phase of engagement and presence in the Gulf region.

This year has already seen notable developments. In April 2025, the Foreign Minister of Peru paid an official visit to Kuwait, meeting with His Highness the Crown Prince and several senior authorities. The visit reflected the importance Peru places on strengthening bilateral ties, not only politically and economically, but also in strategic areas such as food security, where both countries see significant potential for cooperation.

Economically, the relationship continues to grow. According to the United Nations COMTRADE database, Kuwait imported goods worth approximately 6.27 million US dollars from Peru in 2023. With Peru's dynamic and diverse economy, particularly in agriculture, mining, and clean energy, and Kuwait's strong financial institutions and investment appetite, the groundwork is in place for deeper trade and investment opportunities.

Cultural exchange has also become an important part of the relationship. In 2023, Peru and Kuwait signed a cultural cooperation agreement, supported by the National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters of Kuwait. These partnerships have paved the way for artistic dialogue, mutual learning, and cultural diplomacy that brings the people of both countries closer together. It's also worth noting that, according to recent estimates, between 150 to 200 Kuwaiti citizens visit Peru each year, a modest but meaningful number that reflects growing interest in tourism and cultural exploration.

As Kuwait and Peru look ahead to the next chapter, the relationship is anchored in shared ambition, openness, and trust. The 50th anniversary is not just a commemoration of the past but a celebration of the future, one filled with opportunity, understanding, and continued friendship across continents.

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: The Capital Governorate Committee at the Municipal Council, chaired by Dr. Hassan Kamal, met on Wednesday; during which it approved the following:

- Request to abolish the pumping station site that belongs to the Ministry of Public Works;
- Allocation of a transformer station site for the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy in Al-Nuzha (Plot One) measuring 30x30 meters, with a total size of

900 square meters.

On the other hand, the committee referred to the executive branch a proposal to construct a pedestrian bridge linking the Justice Palace and Kuwait Municipality Park parking lot, as well as another pedestrian bridge linking the Justice Palace with the square opposite the National Assembly, for a detailed



Dr. Kamal

study.

The committee retained on its agenda the request of Kayan Capital Real Estate Company to purchase a 183-square-meter State-owned land and add it to the plot located in Qibla. The commercial plot measured 366 square meters before the addition, while the size after the addition is 549 square meters.

Meanwhile, the Farwaniya Governorate Committee, headed by Deputy Chairman of the council Khaled Al-Mutairi, also met on the same day.

During the meeting, the committee approved the following:

- Request of the Ministry of Public Works to allocate a site for the establishment of a pumping station and two sewage lines that will be connected to it in order to pump wastewater from West and South Abdullah Al-Mubarak residential areas to the Kabad purification plant;
- Proposal to allocate an alternative site in Kabad for the Sulaibiya agricultural water pump.

In addition, the committee referred to the executive branch the proposal to establish a road linking West Abdullah Al-Mubarak with Abdullah Al-Mubarak in order to conduct a technical study in this regard.

Kuwait to host 8th Youth Energy Forum and WPC annual meeting

Free grants offered to young specialists from 60 countries

KUWAIT CITY, July 23, (KUNA): The Ministry of Oil announced Wednesday that Kuwait will host the 8th Youth Energy Forum and the World Petroleum Council's (WPC) annual meeting on October 22. The two-day event will be held in partnership with the WPC under the umbrella of the Kuwait National Energy Committee (KNEC), a member of the Council since 1994.

In a press statement, the ministry added that the National Energy Committee held a coordination meeting chaired by Undersecretary of the Ministry of Oil and Chairman of the Committee Sheikh Dr. Nimer Fahad Al-Malek Al-Sabah, with the participation of WPC President Pedro Miras, WPC Director General Ms. Burcu Gunal, and a number of specialists from both sides.

The meeting discussed the ongoing organizational and technical arrangements for the forum, which represents a pivotal event to showcase Kuwait's efforts in technological transformation, youth empowerment, and sustainable energy.

The statement quoted Sheikh Dr. Nimer as saying, "Kuwait's hosting of this global forum reflects the State's commitment to achieving the New Kuwait Vision 2035 by investing in national cadres and preparing future leaders."

He added that the forum is an extension of Kuwait's active role in international petroleum forums and reinforces its position as a regional



KUNA photo
Group photo during the National Energy Committee meeting.

and global energy hub.

He noted that the committee has opened the door for free participation by youth from the Council's 60 member states, and has allocated 50 free participation and accommodation grants for young specialists from member states to enhance interaction, build capacity, and empower young talent in the energy sector.

The program will feature strong

participation from young Kuwaiti professionals, with about 50 percent of the seats allocated to Kuwaiti participants, reaffirming the State's commitment to showcasing national competencies and enhancing their expertise in the fields of oil, gas, and energy.

The National Energy Committee also announced it had sent over 55 official invitations to national committees of Council member states,

specialized international institutions, and major national and international companies, reflecting Kuwait's commitment to enhancing integration and international cooperation in the energy sector.

The forum embodies the Ministry's vision to develop petroleum resources in line with the latest technological standards and to strengthen Kuwait's pioneering role in the global energy industry.

Continued from Page 1

Draft law

Deputy Director General of the IICO and Head of the Tamkeen Initiative, Abdulrahman Al-Mutawa, told KUNA that the workshop is an extension of the IICO's approach to instilling an institutional culture based on integrity, transparency, and sustainability—especially since it was the first to establish an independent department for compliance and governance in 2022, making it the first charitable organization in Kuwait to take this proactive step.

Al-Mutawa added that the organization has fulfilled all the requirements of the institutional evaluation issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs, including the organizational structure, risk management, governance, and internal control, in addition to its initiative to develop systems and policies that promote institutional excellence.

He explained that the workshop is not merely an introductory session, but rather part of a strategic roadmap aimed at protecting the institutional reputation, reducing risks, and enhancing administrative efficiency in charitable work. He noted that a new training program will soon be launched to qualify "compliance specialists" in charitable societies, offering an accredited training certificate in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs, in an effort to empower workers in this field with the necessary knowledge and expertise.

For her part, Acting Director of the Department of Charitable Societies and Endowments at the Ministry of Social Affairs, Iman Al-Enezi, confirmed to KUNA that holding the workshop is part of a long-term strategic project to strengthen the culture of institutional commitment and governance within charitable organizations.

Al-Enezi explained that the "Tamkeen" initiative was launched in 2018 in partnership between the IICO and the Ministry of Social Affairs to train cadres working in the charitable sector and to keep pace with administrative and technical developments. So far, the initiative has organized 46 training programs, benefiting more than 1,500 participants from various charitable organizations.

She praised the efforts of the In-

ternational Islamic Charitable Organization and the Tamkeen initiative, stressing the Ministry of Social Affairs' commitment to supporting all efforts aimed at raising the level of institutional performance in Kuwait's charitable and humanitarian sector.

It is noteworthy that a number of leaders of charitable associations and foundations, as well as representatives from the public sector, participated in the one-day workshop as part of joint efforts to qualify administrative cadres in accordance with the best international practices.

Kuwait-India

The DGCA confirmed that the Indian side expressed the desire to sign this agreement; given its importance in facilitating the movement of Indian citizens and supporting historical, social and economic ties with Kuwait. It asserted that this step reflects the strong relations between the two countries and enhances opportunities for bilateral cooperation in various fields, particularly air transport.

The MoU is considered a qualitative leap attributed to the continuous efforts exerted by the DGCA -- headed by Sheikh Hamoud Al-Sabah who coordinated with various government agencies to address this demand, which was first presented more than 18 years ago. This development is a manifestation of the continuous efforts exerted by the concerned authorities in both countries to overcome obstacles and sign such a vital MoU.

'Nationalize health

Meanwhile, the Cabinet saw a presentation made by Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investments Noora Al-Fassam and other officials on the requirements of the upcoming phase of Kuwait's assessment in this regard.

The cabinet was further informed about a presentation by Al-Fassam on the final statement of the State's FY 2024-2025 that showed a deficit of KD 1,056,000,000. This requires concerted efforts of all governmental

bides and ministers to address waste and develop non-oil revenues.

Furthermore, the Cabinet reviewed some bills on the final statements for 2024-2025, and approved them, referring them to His Highness the Amir.

Finally, the Cabinet endorsed the report of the Supreme Committee for the Investigation of Kuwaiti Citizenship on the loss and withdrawal of nationality from some, in line with Law No. 15 of 1959.

EU eyes

Koistinen confirmed that the strategic partnership agreements will address a wide range of sectors, including foreign policy and security; justice and law enforcement; trade and investment; energy and climate; digital transformation; environmental cooperation; regional connectivity; education, research and innovation; and cultural exchange and people-to-people engagement.

The European Union has called for a positive response from all six GCC member states to initiate negotiations aimed at addressing shared challenges and unlocking mutual opportunities in a rapidly evolving Middle East.

This proves that the EU is not only keen on strengthening its global partnerships, as it also aims to contribute to regional and international stability and growth.

Wells dug

The crisis has led to an unprecedented rise in the price of 6,000-liter portable water tanks, jumping from 24,000 Yemeni riyals (USD 99.56) to more than YER 100,000 (USD 414.85) in recent weeks.

This has made obtaining water for domestic use an unattainable commodity for many low-income families, given the scarcity of water resources in the city, which previously relied for most of its water supply on fields located in the suburbs under Houthi militia control.

The crisis has not stopped with the water tankers, but has extended to the desalinated drinking water, popularly known in the city as "Kawthar

Water."

Desalination plants are suffering from a shortage of supplies and a high demand, with the city's neighborhoods witnessing long queues at grocery stores and filling stations, all searching for a 20-liter bottle of water.

In remarks to KUNA, Director of the Water Corporation in Taiz, Wathiq Al-Aghbari, said that the water crisis in the city is "an old problem that has worsened this year in an unprecedented manner due to the interruption of the main water sources that supplied the city before 2015."

Taiz had previously relied on major water fields with a production capacity of 20,000 cubic meters per day, but these fields had been completely cut off due to the war, as most of those fields were located in areas under the control of the Houthi militia, Al-Aghbari added.

He also noted that the Water Authority is currently working to resolve the drinking water crisis, or "Kawthar Water," by meeting a large portion of the desalination plants' needs through wells drilled by the State of Kuwait through the Kuwait Relief Society three years ago. However, he stressed that the situation "remains extremely fragile" in light of the high water demand.

Further, Al-Aghbari said the Water Corporation has developed urgent emergency solutions, including technical studies to drill 10 new wells to a total depth of 4,000 meters at an estimated cost of between USD 750,000 and USD 800,000. He believes that "the only and most immediate solution currently to alleviate the crisis lies in expanding well drilling and maintaining old networks."

Large parts of the city of Taiz are under a stifling siege by the Houthi militia, which has cut off its parts and isolated it from its resources for nearly 10 years. Meanwhile, its residents are living in difficult humanitarian conditions, lacking basic services amid the ongoing war and the lack of sustainable solutions.

Taiz is writing a new chapter in Yemen's tragedy: Thirst haunts the living, displacement squanders what little stability remains, and hearts await a glimmer of hope, along with a drop of water, to save them from destruction.

143K vacancies, 877 buildings in progress

PACI maps out Kuwait's property landscape across 6 governorates

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: The latest building statistics from the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) revealed the residential and commercial property distribution in the six governorates, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The statistics showed that Ahmadi Governorate has the highest number of residential villas -- 34,270 out of the total 153,004; followed by Hawally, Farwaniya, Capital, Mubarak Al-Kabeer and Jahra.

Meanwhile, Jahra Governorate recorded the highest number of eastern houses -- an older form of Kuwaiti residential architecture, with 10,447 units. The Capital came next with 2,606 and Farwaniya with 2,463.

The Capital Governorate has the highest number of palaces, totaling 29, which accounts for 40 percent of all palaces in the country.

Hawally Governorate ranked first in terms of the number of residential buildings and commercial complexes with 5,317 buildings and 223 complexes.

Hotel distribution remains centered in the Capital, which has 38 hotels; followed by Hawally with 35 and Ahmadi with 20. The nationwide total reached 100 hotels.

For commercial buildings, Kuwait recorded a total of 5,038 and 2,019 of which are located in the Capital while 1,267 are in Farwaniya.

As of June 2025, 877 buildings are under construction throughout the country. Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate accounts for nearly half, with 421 projects.

In addition, 707 buildings were classified as unsuitable and 70 percent of which are located in the Capital Governorate.

The total number of residential units nationwide reached 796,620 including houses, apartments, annexes, shops and traditional units; and 176,336 out of which are houses distributed as follows: 36,068 in Ahmadi; 32,276 in Farwaniya and 30,489 in Jahra while the remaining houses are in the other three governorates.

The number of apartments totaled 357,854 -- Hawally has the highest number with 146,165; while Jahra has the lowest with 7,502

Ahmadi has the highest number of annexes, while the Capital Governorate topped the list for shops with 55,963 out of the total 161,230 in all governorates.

A total of 143,725 units were found to be vacant -- 18.04 percent of all units, slightly up by 0.02 percent compared to the end of last year.

Currently, 430,112 units are being used for housing, with Hawally accounting for the largest share with 133,702 units; while 138,924 units are used as workplaces.

Ministry launches digital water meter certificate via Sahel app

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy has introduced a new digital service through the unified government services app Sahel; allowing users to obtain the 'Water Meter Installation Certificate' electronically, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to an announcement posted on the official Sahel account

on the social media platform X, the new service enables users to generate an official certificate that confirms the date of their water meter installation.

This is just one of the measures being taken by the ministry to improve public services, enhance digital accessibility, and improve customer experience through smart government solutions.



US Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, R-La., stops to answer reporters about calls to release documents related to Jeffrey Epstein, at the Capitol in Washington, on July 21. (AP)

US House ending session early as Republicans clash over Epstein vote

WASHINGTON, July 23, (AP): US House Speaker Mike Johnson is rebuffing pressure to act on the investigation into Jeffrey Epstein, instead sending members home early for a month-long break from Washington after the week's legislative agenda was upended by Republican members who are clamoring for a vote.

Johnson, a Republican from Louisiana, said Tuesday morning that he wants to give the White House "space" to release the Epstein information on its own, despite the bipartisan push for legislation that aims to force the release of more documents.

"There's no purpose for the Congress to push an administration to do something they're already doing," Johnson said at his weekly news conference, his last before lawmakers depart Washington on Wednesday for their traditional August recess.

The speaker's stance did little to alleviate the intra-party turmoil unfolding on Capitol Hill as many of

President Donald Trump's supporters demand that the administration meet its promises to publicly release a full accounting of the trafficking investigation into Epstein, who killed himself in his New York jail cell in 2019 while awaiting trial. Under pressure from right-wing online influencers, as well as voters back home, rank-and-file Republicans are demanding that the House intervene in the matter.

"The public's not going to let this die, and rightfully so," said Rep. Ralph Norman, a South Carolina Republican.

Even before Johnson spoke Tuesday morning, the powerful House Committee on Oversight was advancing a resolution to subpoena Epstein's former girlfriend, Ghislaine Maxwell, for a deposition.

The Republican chair of the committee, Rep. James Comer of Kentucky, said there will be a negotiation with Maxwell's attorney over the terms of the deposition and that it could happen at the prison where she is

serving a lengthy sentence for helping Epstein sexually abuse underage girls. The Justice Department also indicated Tuesday it was separately seeking to interview Maxwell.

While Democrats on the House Oversight Committee supported the action, the top Democrat on the committee, Rep. Robert Garcia of California, warned that her testimony should be treated with skepticism.

"We should be looking and continue to push for a full release of the files," Garcia told reporters. "I think it's important for people to know that she obviously is a documented liar and someone that has caused enormous harm to young girls and women."

Trump didn't address the issue during a reception for House Republicans at the White House on Tuesday night but heaped praise on Johnson, saying he would "go down as one of the great speakers at any time in history." In remarks alongside Trump, Johnson made no mention of it either.

'He's 81 years old, he's tired'

Hunter Biden lashes out at Clooney, other Democrats over Biden's 2024 campaign

WASHINGTON, July 23, (AP): Former US President Joe Biden's son Hunter, seen by some as the problem child of the Democratic Party for legal and drug-related woes that brought negative attention to his father, is lashing out against Democratic "elites" and others over the way he says his father was treated during last year's presidential campaign.

Hunter Biden spoke publicly in recent interviews about last year's election, when Joe Biden ultimately dropped his bid and Donald Trump won the White House. In a three-hour, expletive-filled online interview with Andrew Callaghan of Channel 5, he directed ire toward actor and Democratic Party donor George Clooney for his decision to call on the elder Biden to abandon his 2024 reelection bid.

He also ranted against longtime Democratic advisers he accused of making money off the party and trading off previous electoral successes, but not helping candidates' current efforts.

The lengthy screed made plain the younger Biden's feelings that his father was mistreated by those around him in the waning days of his candidacy and administration. He also laid bare critiques of the party's operation and operatives that, he says, aren't well-serving its opposition to Trump and the Republican Party.

Hunter Biden spared no feelings in

his assessment of the actor, questioning why anyone should listen to the "Ocean's Eleven" star.

Clooney supported Joe Biden's bid for a second term, even headlining a record-setting fundraiser for the then-president, but changed his stance after Biden's disastrous debate performance against Trump in June 2024.

Clooney made his feelings known in an opinion piece in The New York Times, adding his voice to mounting calls for the then-81-year-old president to drop his presidential bid. Biden ended up leaving the race a few weeks later and endorsed his vice president, Kamala Harris, who went on to lose to Trump.

"What right do you have to step on a man who's given 52 years of his life to the services of this country and decide that you, George Clooney, are going to take out basically a full page ad in the New York Times to undermine the president," Hunter Biden said before he trailed off to talk about how Republicans are more unified than Democrats.

Los Angeles-based representatives for Clooney did not respond to an emailed request for comment.

There were also weighty critiques of a number of longtime Democratic advisers.

Anita Dunn, a longtime Biden senior adviser, has made "\$40 to \$50 million" off of work for the Democratic Party, Hunter Biden said. James Carville, ad-



US President Joe Biden shakes hands with actor, director and producer George Clooney during the Kennedy Center honorees reception at the White House in Washington on Dec 4, 2022. (AP)

viser to former president Bill Clinton, "hasn't run a race in 40 years."

Former Obama strategist David Axelrod, Hunter Biden said, "had one success in his political life, and that was Barack Obama - and that was because of Barack Obama." Other former Obama aides who now host "Pod Save America," are "four white millionaires that are dining out on their association with Barack Obama from 16 years ago," he said.

One of the four, Tommy Vietor,

As for the debate performance, the fallout from which ultimately led to the calls for his father to step down from the 2024 presidential campaign, Hunter Biden said his father may have been recovering from Ambien, a medication that he had been given to help him sleep following trips in the weeks before the debate to Europe, as well as the Los Angeles fundraiser at which Clooney said his interactions with Biden made him feel the president wasn't mentally capable.

"He's 81 years old, he's tired as ...," Hunter Biden said. "They give him Ambien to be able to sleep, and he gets up on the stage and he looks like he's a deer in the headlights."

A spokesperson for Joe Biden declined to comment on the interview.

Hunter Biden also appeared Monday in an episode of "At Our Table," a new podcast hosted by former Democratic National Committee Chair Jaime Harrison.

"Yeah, Joe Biden did get old. He got old before our eyes. ... But you know what? A few changes does not mean that you do not have the mental capacity to be able to do your job."

In that interview, Hunter Biden also talked about the calamitous presidential debate.

"And then they saw him at that debate. It was awful, and it was truly horrible," he said, saying he was opposed to holding it, given Trump's recent convictions on 34 felony charges in a

New York hush money case.

To Harrison, Hunter Biden also addressed Clooney, saying, "I love George Clooney's movies, but I don't really give a ... about what he thinks about who should be the nominee for the Democratic Party."

Asked by Harrison about his father's decision to quit the 2024 race, Hunter Biden said "I think that he could have won" but still made the right choice for Democrats broadly.

"I know that it wasn't a mistake in that moment," Hunter Biden said, adding that his father "chose to save the party" over saving himself.

The podcast drops come just days ahead of the expected beginning of court proceedings in a Los Angeles federal court.

Hunter Biden is suing Patrick Byrne, alleging that the former CEO of Overstock.com falsely claimed that Hunter Biden was reaching out to the Iranian government in the fall of 2021 and offering to have his father Joe Biden "unfreeze" \$8 billion in Iranian funds "in return for \$800 million being funneled into a numbered account for us."

In the waning days of his administration, Joe Biden pardoned his son, sparing the younger Biden a possible prison sentence for federal felony gun and tax convictions and reversing his past promises not to use the extraordinary powers of the presidency for the benefit of his family.

Turkey and Britain sign preliminary deal for Eurofighter Typhoon jets

ANKARA, Turkey, July 23, (AP): Turkey and Britain on Wednesday signed a preliminary agreement for the sale of Eurofighter Typhoon fighter jets to Turkey, a significant step in Ankara's efforts to modernize its air fleet.

Turkish Defense Minister Yasar Guler and his British counterpart, John Healey, inked a memorandum of understanding during a defense industry fair in Istanbul, Turkey's Ministry of National Defense said.

NATO member Turkey has long aimed to buy 40 Eurofighter jets, which are built by a consortium of British, German and Italian companies. Germany reportedly initially opposed the sale but later reversed its position. Britain led negotiations on behalf of the consortium.

A Turkish defense ministry statement said the memorandum takes



Spanish Air Force Eurofighter Typhoon military fighter jet participates in NATO's Baltic Air Policing Mission operate in Lithuanian airspace on Sept 12, 2023. (AP)

the two countries "one step closer to a full agreement on the Typhoon."

"Both Ministers welcome signature as a positive step towards bringing Turkey into the Typhoon club and share a mutual ambition to conclude the necessary arrangements as soon as possible," it added.

Turkish officials have said that they are still negotiating over pricing and technical terms, saying that they have received an initial offer and expect to submit a counter-proposal.

Turkey is also seeking to return to the US-led F-35 fighter jet program, from which the country was ousted in 2019, following its purchase of Russian-made S-400 missile defense systems. The U.S. said the systems posed a risk to the F-35s.

Turkey is also developing a domestic fifth-generation fighter jet, the KAA, which is slated to be operational in 2028.



A major forest fire burns in the village of Karteri, near Corinth, west of Athens, Greece, on July 22. (AP)

Major forest fire in Greece forces several villages to evacuate

A major forest fire broke out near the Greek city of Corinth on Tuesday, prompting authorities to order the evacuation of several villages.

More than 180 firefighters, 15 planes and 12 helicopters were tackling the wildfire in a pine forest in the mountains near Corinth, the fire department said. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Weather conditions were particularly tough for firefighters. Temperatures have risen to around 40 Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) in many parts of the country.

Earlier Tuesday, a firefighting helicopter crashed into

the sea and sank while attempting to take on water to tackle a separate fire near Athens. The three crew were rescued and transported to a hospital.

Wildfires are frequent in Greece during its hot, dry summers, and the fire department has tackled dozens across the country this year.

In 2018, a massive fire swept through the seaside town of Mati, east of Athens, trapping people in homes and on roads as they tried to flee. More than 100 died, including some who drowned while trying to swim away. (AP)

Zelenskyy faces backlash as Ukrainians protest new anti-corruption law

KYIV, Ukraine, July 23, (AP): Ukrainian activists called for more protests Wednesday against a law they say weakens the country's anti-corruption watchdogs, following the first major demonstration against the country's government in more than three years of war. The legislation has also drawn rebukes from European Union officials and international rights groups.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, under pressure as the change threatened to endanger his public support at a critical time in the war, convened the heads of Ukraine's key anti-corruption and security agencies Wednesday morning in a response to the outcry against his decision to approve the new law that was passed by Parliament.

"We all hear what society says," Zelenskyy wrote on Telegram after the meeting. But he insisted the new legal framework was needed to crack down harder on corruption.

"Criminal cases should not drag on for years without verdicts, and those working against Ukraine must not feel comfortable or immune from punishment," the Ukrainian leader said.

He said all government agencies agreed to work constructively and respond to public expectations for fairness and effectiveness. A detailed joint action plan is expected within two weeks, aimed at addressing institutional weaknesses, removing legal hurdles, and ensuring justice across the board, he said.

Thousands of people gathered in the



A man waves a flag during a protest against a law targeting anti-corruption institutions in central Kyiv, Ukraine on July 22. (AP)

capital and other cities across Ukraine on Tuesday evening to urge Zelenskyy to veto the controversial bill. After Zelenskyy approved it, activists called on social media for another demonstration in the center of Kyiv at 8 p.m. Wednesday.

The legislation tightens government oversight of two key anti-corruption agencies. Critics say the step could significantly weaken the independence of those agencies and grant Zelenskyy's circle greater influence over investigations.

Fighting entrenched corruption is crucial for Ukraine's aspirations to join

the EU and maintain access to billions of dollars in Western aid in its fight against Russia's three-year invasion.

"Limiting the independence of Ukraine's anti-corruption agency hampers Ukraine's way towards the EU," German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl warned Wednesday in a post on X.

EU Defense Commissioner Andrius Kubilius, also on X, noted: "In war trust between the fighting nation and its leadership is more important than modern weapons - difficult to build and to keep, but easy to lose with one significant mistake by the leadership."

Europe

Russian navy conducts July Storm drills: The Russian Navy has launched the large-scale operational exercise July Storm, involving forces from the Northern, Pacific, Baltic Fleets and the Caspian Flotilla, Russia's Ministry of Defense announced Wednesday.

Guided by Navy Commander-in-Chief Admiral **Alexander Moiseyev**, the drills will run from July 23 to 27 across several maritime regions, including waters of the Pacific Ocean, Arctic Ocean, Baltic Sea and Caspian Sea.

According to the ministry, more than 150 warships and support vessels, 120 aircraft, 10 coastal defense missile systems, around 950 units of military and specialized equipment, and over 15,000 personnel are participating in the exercise.

The exercise is intended to test the readiness of naval groupings to respond to non-standard operational scenarios as well as the integrated use of long-range precision weapons, unmanned systems and other advanced military technologies, according to the ministry.

The agenda includes crew deployment to designated combat zones, anti-submarine operations, and the defense of naval bases and key maritime economic zones. (Xinhua)

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Northern Ireland shooting kills 2: A shooting in a rural area of Northern Ireland left two people dead and two others seriously wounded, police said Wednesday.

Police didn't indicate a possible motive. But Gemma Dolan, a member of the Northern Ireland Assembly from the

area, called it "a domestic incident" in a post on social media.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland said that there was no ongoing risk to the public from the shooting outside the village of Maguiresbridge, about 75 miles (120 kilometers) southwest of Belfast.

Police and paramedics were called to an address in the village after 8 a.m. (0700 GMT) on Wednesday morning.

The wounded victims were being treated in two hospitals for serious injuries, the ambulance service said.

Deborah Erskine, another local lawmaker, said that the community was "stunned" by the shooting in "a rural, quiet area."

"Everyone is deeply affected by what has happened this morning," she said. "My deepest condolences are with the families of those who have been killed as a result of this incident. Their lives have been turned upside down this morning." (AP)

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Romania warns of red code alerts: Romania's National Meteorological Administration (ANM) issued multiple weather alerts on Tuesday as the country braces for a combination of extreme heat and unstable atmospheric conditions.

The national weather agency warned of red code alerts, the highest level in its color-coded warning system, for scorching heat in the capital city of Bucharest and several southern counties. Temperatures there are expected to reach 40 to 41 degrees Celsius, with high humidity leading to severe thermal discomfort.

ANM classifies weather alerts into three risk levels: yellow, orange, and red, indicating increasing severity from potential risk to extreme danger.

The orange code alert is in effect in some southeastern regions, with highs of 38 to 40 degrees Celsius. Meanwhile, several southern and eastern regions are under yellow code alerts, with daytime highs of 34 to 38 degrees and nighttime lows between 18 and 20 degrees Celsius. (Xinhua)

Japan, EU vow to deepen defense cooperation

Japanese Prime Minister Ishiba denies plans for resignation after election setback

TOKYO, July 23, (Agencies): Japan’s Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba denied again on Wednesday plans for resignation following a historic defeat of his ruling party in a weekend election despite growing calls for him to step down, saying he wanted to ensure the appropriate implementation of a new tariff agreement with the United States.

Ishiaba met with heavyweights from his ruling Liberal Democratic Party and former prime ministers Taro Aso, Fumio Kishida and Yoshihide Suga on Wednesday at party headquarters. He told reporters afterward that they did not discuss his resignation or a new party leadership contest, but only the election results, voters’ dissatisfaction and the urgent need to avoid party discord.

Despite his business-as-usual demeanor, Ishiba is under increasing pressure to bow out after his ruling party and its junior coalition partner, Komeito, lost Sunday their majority in the 248-member upper house, the smaller and less powerful of Japan’s two-chamber parliament, shaking his

grip on power.

This came after a loss in the more powerful lower house in October, and so his coalition now lacks a majority in both houses of parliament, making it even more difficult for his government to pass policies and worsening Japan’s political instability.

Ishiba had announced Monday he intended to stay on to tackle pressing challenges, including tariff talks with the U.S., so as not to create a political vacuum despite calls from inside and outside his party for a quick resignation.

Japanese media said he is expected to soon announce plans to step down in August.

The conservative Yomiuri newspaper said in an extra edition on Wednesday Ishiba had decided to announce his resignation by the end of July after receiving a detailed report from his chief trade negotiator, Ryosei Akazawa, on the impact of the U.S. tariffs on the Japanese economy, paving the way for a new party leader.

Ishiba denied the report and said he wants to focus on the U.S. trade deal,



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, (right), Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, (center), and European Council President António Costa, (left), join hands prior to a meeting at the prime minister’s office on July 23 in Tokyo, Japan. (AP)

which covers more than 4,000 goods affecting many Japanese producers and industries. He welcomed the new agreement, which places tariffs at 15%

on Japanese cars and other goods imported into the U.S. from Japan, down from the initial 25%.

Still, local media are already specu-

lating about possible successors for the ruling party. Among them are ultra-conservative former Economic Security Minister Sanae Takaichi, who lost to Ishiba in September. Another conservative former Economic Security Minister Takayuki Kobayashi, and Agriculture Minister Shinjiro Koizumi, the son of former popular Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, are also seen as potential challengers.

Also:

TOKYO: Japanese Defense Minister Gen Nakatani and EU foreign policy chief **Kaja Kallas** agreed Wednesday to strengthen cooperation against unilateral attempts to alter the regional status quo through force or coercion, Japan’s Defense Ministry announced.

During the meeting, both officials emphasized the inseparability of Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific security and committed to deepening collaboration in security and defense to uphold an international order based on the rule of law.

Nakatani also described increased military activity around **Japan**, in-

cluding dangerously close flights by Chinese military aircraft near Japanese Self-Defense Force planes, highlighting growing regional tensions.

The two leaders reviewed Japan-EU defense ties, with Nakatani welcoming progress in wide-ranging cooperation including maritime security, the defense industry, and Women, Peace and Security (WPS) initiatives under the Japan-EU Defense and Security Partnership.

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TOKYO: A fire broke out at a residential home in **Himi** city of Japan’s Toyama Prefecture early Tuesday, leaving two people dead and another two unaccounted for.

According to local authorities, the fire started shortly before 3 a.m. in a two-story wooden house located in the coastal **Ozakai** district of northern Himi. A resident reported seeing flames coming from the first floor and alerted emergency services.

Two people were found dead, and authorities have been unable to contact the other two believed to be living in the house.



Wang Huning, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), meets with Richard Ravalomanana, president of the Senate of Madagascar, in Beijing, capital of China on July 22. (Xinhua)

China’s top legislator meets with Madagascar’s Senate president

Zhao Leji, China’s top legislator, and Wang Huning, China’s top political advisor, each met with Richard Ravalomanana, president of the Senate of Madagascar, in Beijing on Tuesday.

Zhao, chairman of the National People’s Congress Standing Committee, said that China is willing to

work with Madagascar to implement the important consensus reached between their two heads of state and the outcomes of the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, and to promote further achievements in friendly cooperation between the two countries, contributing to the construction of an

all-weather China-Africa community with a shared future for the new era.

He called on the legislative bodies of the two countries to enhance exchange and cooperation to facilitate the continuous development of the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership between China and Madagascar. (Xinhua)

Minibus taxi-truck collision kills at least 17 people in Zimbabwe

JOHANNESBURG, July 23, (AP): A head-on collision between a minibus taxi and a haulage truck killed 17 people in northeastern Zimbabwe on Tuesday police said.

Police spokesman Paul Nyathi said all 17 victims, including some pedestrians, died at the scene of the crash, which happened near Chitungwiza, a densely populated town about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) southeast of the capital, Harare.

Nyathi said the truck veered into the opposite lane and collided with the minibus after the driver lost control. Before the impact, the truck struck two pedestrians walking on the “island of the road,” he said.

Fifteen of the 17 passengers in the minibus died instantly, while others were injured and rushed to a hospital.

The state-run Herald newspaper reported that the minibus was “completely flattened, with only fragments of its chassis visible from beneath the truck’s undercarriage.”

Twisted metal, shattered glass and debris were strewn across the road as rescuers worked to retrieve trapped passengers, the newspaper said. The accident happened in the morning, but rescuers were still recovering bodies at



People gather at the site of a road collision between a minibus taxi and a haulage truck in Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe on July 22. (AP)

noon, it reported.

Chitungwiza Mayor Rosaria Mangoma urged the government to declare the crash a national disaster, calling it “one of the most disturbing and traumatic scenes” the town had witnessed.

Deadly road accidents involving public transportation are common in

Zimbabwe, where speeding is widespread as drivers attempt to maximize daily trips. Poorly maintained roads add to the danger.

In February, 24 people were killed in a head-on collision between a bus and a truck near Beitbridge, on the border with South Africa.

Mexico arranges repatriation of 14 nationals held at US detention center

MEXICO CITY, July 23, (Xinhua): Mexico is working to secure the immediate repatriation of 14 Mexican nationals held at a US immigration detention center, President Claudia Sheinbaum said Tuesday.

“So far, 14 Mexicans have been detained, and every effort is being made to ensure their immediate repatriation,” the president said during her daily press briefing.

The detention center, known as “Alligator Alcatraz,” in the Everglades, the US state of Florida, has made headlines, she said.

Diplomatic notes have been sent “so that any Mexicans are deported immediately and do not have to spend time at this center,” she added.

With regard to allegations that migrants detained during raids ordered by US President Donald Trump’s administration are mistreated at the detention center, she said consulate officials are reviewing whether the detainees’ human rights have been violated.

Meanwhile, Sheinbaum on Monday defended her government’s decision to relocate air cargo operations



Mexico’s President Claudia Sheinbaum speaks at a Housing for Wellbeing event, a government-funded home improvement program, in Mexico City on Feb 1. (AP)

from Mexico City International Airport (AICM) to the newer Felipe Angeles International Airport (AIFA), rejecting US accusations that the move violated a bilateral aviation agreement.

Speaking at her daily press conference, Sheinbaum said the decision was based on technical and safety considerations aimed at reducing congestion at AICM.

More than 3,000 suspects arrested in Cambodia online scam raids

PHNOM PENH, July 23, (Agencies): The number of suspects arrested in crackdown operations on online scam centers in Cambodia has risen to more than 3,000, Information Minister Neth Pheaktra said Tuesday midnight.

Pheaktra, who is also a member of the Ad-Hoc Committee to Combat Online Scams, said the authorities have raided a total of 58 locations in 17 cities and provinces out of the kingdom’s 25 cities and provinces.

“A total of 3,075 suspects, including 606 women, have been detained during the raids,” he said in a text message sent to the media by telegram.

Pheaktra said the arrests had been made from June 27 to July 22, as operations are still going on.

He said some suspected ringleaders have been sent to courts for prosecution, as most of the suspects will be deported back to their birth countries.

The Southeast Asian country launched an unprecedented nationwide crackdown on cyber scam networks, aiming at maintaining and protecting security, public order, and social safety.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet has warned of firing any officials who hinder these crackdown operations. (Xinhua)

Also:

VIENTIANE: Military delegations from **Cambodia**, **Laos**, and **Vietnam** convened here to discuss and finalize



In this photo provided by state news service Agence Kampuchea Press, alleged online scammers arrested by authorities sit in a classroom on the outskirts of Phnom Penh, Cambodia on July 18. (AP)

plans for the 2025 trilateral joint disaster relief exercise.

The joint exercise focused on search, rescue, and humanitarian assistance in response to natural disasters, according to a Lao People’s Army News report on Monday.

During the session, the delegations engaged in in-depth discussions on operational procedures, coordination strategies, and logistical arrangements. Key topics covered included cross-border travel facilitation, training

schedules, and the deployment of personnel, vehicles, and equipment.

Beyond disaster preparedness, the joint exercise aims to promote solidarity, cooperation, and enduring friendship among the armed forces of the three countries, contributing to regional peace and stability.

Meanwhile, heavy storms in northern Vietnam left one person dead and another missing, police said Wednesday, as **Wipha** weakened from a tropical storm into a depression.

India extends airspace ban on Pakistani airlines, military aircraft

NEW DELHI, July 23, (Xinhua): The Indian government has extended the NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) for Pakistani flights until August 23, officials said Wednesday.

The information was shared by Murlidhar Mohol, India’s federal junior minister for civil aviation, through a social media post.

“Update on Airspace Restriction. The Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) restricting Pakistani aircraft from entering Indian airspace has been officially extended until 23rd August 2025,” Mohol wrote on social media.

According to the minister, the extension reflects continued strategic considerations and is in line with prevailing security protocols.

New Delhi’s action came days after Pakistan decided to extend the closure of its airspace for flights operated by Indian airlines by another month, until August 24.

The previous NOTAM will expire on Thursday. Earlier on June 24, the ministry had announced a month-long extension of the NOTAM restricting Pakistani aircraft from coming into India. The first NOTAM by India was in force from May 1 to May 23.

As per NOTAM issued by the federal ministry of civil aviation, no aircraft registered in Pakistan, and operated, owned or leased by Pakistani airlines or operators will be allowed to enter the Indian airspace.

The airspace ban also applies to Pakistani military aircraft as per the NOTAM.

NOTAMs on both sides were issued



Pakistan’s paramilitary soldiers stand guard at a checkpoint near Wagah, a joint border crossing point between the Pakistan and India border on April 24. (AP)

amid diplomatic tensions between New Delhi and Islamabad in April this year over the attack in which 26 people were killed by gunmen at Baisaran area of Pahalgam town, about 89 km east of Srinagar city, the summer capital of Indian-controlled Kashmir.

Kalat district of the province on reported presence of terrorists, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistan Army, said in a statement.

During one of the operations, four terrorists were killed by security forces in the Kalat district, said the ISPR statement, adding that earlier, another four terrorists were also successfully neutralized in an intelligence-based operation.

It said that the terrorists’ hideouts were also busted, and a large quantity of weapons, ammunition and explosives were recovered during the operations.

Lat/Am

Argentine mayor dies in plane crash: The mayor of Reduccion, a town in central Argentina’s Cordoba province, died Tuesday after his plane crashed, provincial authorities said.

The aircraft carrying **Jorge Grazziano**, the mayor, crashed into a field between Villa Mercedes and Justo Daract in San Luis, about 700 km northwest of the capital Buenos Aires.

Martin Llaryora, governor of Cordoba, expressed his “heartfelt condolences to the family and friends” of the victim.

“I also extend my warmest greetings to his entire community, the one for which Jorge worked with tireless commitment and dedication. He will be remembered for his dedication to public service, for his constant drive for the development of Reduccion, and for his firm commitment to the progress of the



Grazziano

south of the province,” the governor said.

Civil Defense, firefighters, and the provincial police took part in the assistance operation, securing the perimeter to facilitate the necessary investigations.

A federal court intervened in the case, with the aim of determining the circumstances that led to the crash. (Xinhua)

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Puerto Rico sues private power company: Puerto Rico’s government filed a lawsuit Tuesday against a private power company, claiming it is responsible for damages to customers’ appliances caused by chronic power outages in the US territory.

The civil lawsuit by the consumer affairs department says the Luma company, which oversees power transmission and distribution in Puerto Rico, was “negligent” and is responsible for damages caused to consumer appliances by outages and power fluctuations.

It said the department has the authority to take cases to court to protect those affected by the company’s “inefficiency and lack of adequate service.”

The action was filed against the company as a whole since the law exempts Luma’s employees and contractors from claims filed by customers under an immunity granted in 2021 by Puerto Rico’s Energy Bureau. (AP)

Kuwait oil price drops to \$71.01

KUWAIT CITY, July 23, (KUNA): Kuwait oil price dropped 28 cents to USD 71.01 per barrel, on Tuesday compared to Monday's USD 71.29 pb, reported Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Wednesday. Globally, Brent crude dropped 82 cents to USD 68.39 pb, while West Texas intermediate decreased USD 1.05 to USD 66.15 pb.

Business

EU recession risk seen as threat to Kuwaiti oil exports

Experts warn US tariffs could lower oil prices, impact Kuwait's economy

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: A number of oil and economic experts shed light on whether or not the tariffs that America imposed on the European Union and many other countries around the world affect oil prices; as well as the repercussions for the Kuwaiti economy and other countries in the region that rely primarily on oil as a primary source of income, and the action that the Kuwaiti government must take to avoid the repercussions of any looming global economic crisis.

The experts stressed the need for the Kuwaiti government to fully prepare for dealing with the repercussions of the increased US tariffs on most countries. They also emphasized the importance of reducing reliance on imported goods by expanding industry, agriculture and all other sectors related to economic growth.

Oil expert Kamel Al-Harami asserted that the Trump-like increase in US tariffs on imports from European Union countries and many other countries will impact global inflation, resulting in higher commodity prices. "This could continue for at least two years until the world adjusts to these conditions. Higher prices will lead to a decline in purchasing power in European Union countries and those affected by the tariff increase, with the expected result being a drop in the price

of a barrel of oil -- ranging from \$65 to \$70," he explained.

He said Kuwait should use the proceeds from the sale of its stake in two companies to cover the budget deficit, while investing these funds in investment projects with good financial returns for the State budget. At the same time, he warned against becoming accustomed to borrowing.

Economic expert Ahmed Al-Sadhan believes that the United States' imposition of tariffs on the European Union will inevitably lead to a decline in trade between the two sides, which will in turn lead to global economic instability. "One of the negative repercussions of this move is the global commodity price hike, which negatively affects the economies of importing countries, including Kuwait and other Gulf states; particularly through increased import costs and a decline in global demand for oil. If the global economy slows down due to these tariffs, oil prices will decline because of low global demand," he explained.

He suggested that in order to avoid these economic crises in light of the escalating economic conflict among the United States, the European Union and other countries; Kuwait must diversify its imports, support local industry, expand its trade partnerships, and stop total dependence on oil in the long term.

Dr. Manal Al-Kandari said that Trump's announcement of a new 30 percent tariff on European Union countries has intertwined global and regional economic dimensions. "This could lead to a decline in European exports to the US, which will result in higher prices of European products in the US market, and a decline in demand for such products. She pointed out that this will cause enormous economic damage to European companies; especially the export-dependent industries like automobiles, aircraft, electronics and technology industries, ultimately leading to an economic recession in the European Union countries. She explained that the repercussions of this recession will spill over to global markets, including Kuwait, other Gulf states and Arab countries; considering this potential recession could reduce the European Union countries' consumption of oil, gas and all petroleum derivatives they import from Kuwait and other Gulf states. "This is especially true given that trade between Kuwait and the European Union is steadily increasing. The trade between Kuwait and the rest of Europe is significant, as international data issued by the European Statistical Office (Eurostat) showed that Kuwaiti exports to the European Union some years ago amounted to 3.5 billion euros (\$3.6 billion), compared to imports of 5.5 billion euros (\$5.8 billion). Therefore, a European economic recession will affect the Gulf and Kuwaiti economies," she added.

Main market dips

Boursa Kuwait All Share Index increases slightly

KUWAIT CITY, July 23, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed trading on Wednesday with modest gains in its main indices. The All Share Index advanced by 9.10 points (0.11 percent) to reach 8,613.77 points, with 465.8 million shares changing hands across 29,438 transactions, totaling a value of KD 90.8 million (USD 297.5 million).

The Main Market Index declined by 12.39 points (0.16 percent), settling at 7,586.88 points. This index saw a trading volume of 328.1 million shares through 20,502 transactions, amounting to KD 44.9 million (USD 147.1 million).

Conversely, the Premier Market Index gained 14.92 points (0.16 percent) to close at 9,295.62 points. Trading activity included 137.6 million shares exchanged in 8,936 transactions, with a value of KD 45.9 million (USD 150.4 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index edged up by 1.01 points (0.01 percent), ending at 7,532.55 points. This segment recorded 221.3 million shares traded over 12,042 transactions, with a turnover of KD 32.2 million (USD 105.5 million).

Empowering Kuwait's financial sector

KIBS launches 2025–2026 Annual Training Calendar

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: Ms. Rana A. Al-Nibari, Director General of the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies (KIBS) proudly announced the launch of 2025–2026 KIBS Annual Training Calendar, developed to advance the capabilities of professionals in Kuwait's banking and financial services sector.

Created in close collaboration with KIBS' stakeholder banks, the calendar reflects the industry's evolving needs and focuses on building technical expertise, leadership capacity, and regulatory readiness. This year's programs have been designed with flexible and diverse training modalities; these approaches align with modern work patterns and the demands of professional life.

Highlights of the 2025–2026 training calendar include:

This year's calendar covers the most critical topics shaped by rapid global changes, foremost among them risk management, digital transformation, compliance, ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance), credit, and leadership. It also places emphasis on emerging areas such as Well-being at the Workplace and Managing Change and Uncertainty in Times of Crisis. Additionally, the Institute continues to uphold its long-standing partnerships with prestigious international organizations to deliver top-tier programs that meet global standards and accreditations.

Al-Nibari also highlighted that KIBS also operates a full-service Exam Center offers comprehensive assessment and testing solutions to support employee selection, promotions, training needs analysis, and skill evaluation. These services can be integrated with other offerings or used independently to ensure precise and effective workforce development. KIBS' Exam Center offers a suite of Specialized Testing Categories that contains Professional Certification Tests including but not limited to GMAT, GIAC, PMI, and CMA exams, Cambridge English placement Tests, Specialized Skills Tests, Psychometric and Behavioral Tests.

Ms. Rana A. Al Nibari, Director General of KIBS, commented: "KIBS remains committed to supporting the sector with high-impact training rooted in quality, relevance, and innovation. This calendar reflects our role as a strategic partner in building human capital for a resilient and future-ready banking industry."

With over 50 years of expertise, KIBS continues to play a pivotal role in advancing Kuwait's banking and financial sectors. KIBS offers an extensive portfolio of programs, including professional certifications, executive development, and training in diverse fields. Its commitment to knowledge dissemination is evident through its e-learning platforms, and finance research publications.

The training calendar is available online only via the KIBS website: www.kibs.edu.kw

For inquiries, please contact: cs@kibs.edu.kw

Event showcases heritage and sustainability

Warba Bank sponsors 'Thura' eco exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: Reaffirming its steadfast commitment to sustainability and social responsibility, Warba Bank announced its sponsorship of the "Thura" exhibition, organized by SEEDS for Green Building and Sustainability Consultancy. The initiative aligns with the bank's vision to support local efforts that reflect environmental and societal values and empower entrepreneurs and national talents.

The "Thura" exhibition brought together elements of Kuwaiti heritage and modern sustainable living through an interactive experience that featured eco-friendly brands, artistic installations and workshops aimed at raising environmental awareness and promoting cultural appreciation. The event served as a dynamic platform for fostering interaction between visitors and local creators while highlighting success stories in entrepreneurship and sustainability.

Commenting on the initiative, Ayman Salem Al-Mutairi, Director of Marketing and Corporate Communications at Warba Bank, stated: "Our sponsorship of the 'Thura' exhibition stems from our deep-rooted commitment to supporting community-based initiatives that champion sustainability and empower local entrepreneurs. We believe such initiatives play a vital role in driving sustainable economic growth and fostering innovation within Kuwaiti society. Through



Warba Bank supports sustainability and empowers entrepreneurs at Assima Mall.

this sponsorship, we aim to provide local creators and artisans with a platform to showcase their unique, eco-friendly products and build networks that support their growth and development."

He added that the exhibition offered an important opportunity to reinforce the sustainability values that Warba Bank embraces: "By supporting initiatives like 'Thura,' we aim to encourage environmentally conscious practices and raise awareness across all segments of society, especially among youth and children. We firmly believe that building a sustainable future begins with awareness and support for creative initiatives that preserve the environment and advance sustainable development."

Al-Mutairi continued: "At Warba Bank, we take pride in our active role in supporting Kuwaiti youth and enabling them to achieve their ambitions. Through our diverse programs like 'Rowad' and other initiatives, we are committed to building a new generation of innovative entrepreneurs capable of

contributing to national economic diversification and sustainable development. Investing in youth is an investment in the future of Kuwait and we remain dedicated to this mission in alignment with Kuwait's economic vision."

Empowerment Through Initiatives

Warba Bank continues to drive positive, lasting impact through community investment in education, the environment, health and cultural heritage. The bank places a strong focus on youth empowerment through innovative training and awareness programs. It also supports sustainability through strategic partnerships and initiatives that aim to achieve comprehensive and lasting development in Kuwait.

The bank's sponsorship of the "Thura" exhibition falls under its broader ecosystem of community partnerships that promote environmental awareness, support the local economy and embed sustainability as a key pillar of social development—fully aligned with Kuwait's vision and Warba Bank's enduring

slogan, "Let's Own Tomorrow."

"Thura": A Unique Experience Bridging Heritage and Sustainability

The "Thura" exhibition offered visitors a one-of-a-kind experience where they could connect with passionate creators, explore unique eco-friendly products and engage with a vibrant community that values both tradition and progress. Through Warba Bank's sponsorship, local entrepreneurs, artisans and sustainable businesses were given a platform to present their products and services, supporting economic growth, innovation and sustainable entrepreneurship.

Warba Bank is recognized as one of Kuwait's fastest-growing Islamic digital banks. With one of the largest shareholder bases among local banks, it remains close to all segments of society. This accomplishment further underscores the bank's position as a trusted financial partner that merges innovation with social responsibility to deliver outstanding Sharia-compliant services and products.

Kuwait: Investment segment leads real estate rebound in Q2 2025

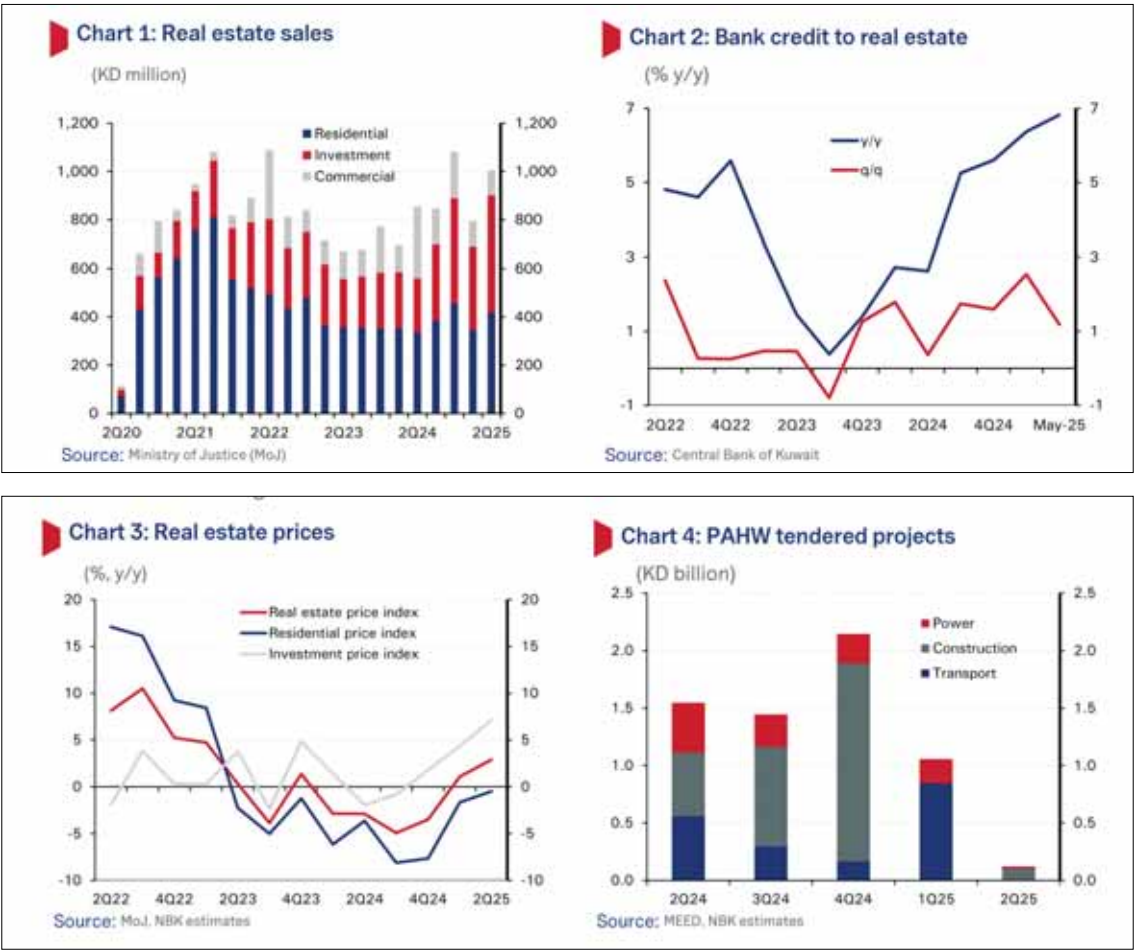
By National Bank of Kuwait

Real estate activity witnessed a rebound in Q2 2025, supported by fading seasonal factors from Q1 and optimism about market reforms. The rise was driven by a surge in investment sector sales to an 11-year high while the residential segment lagged behind, still constrained by affordability issues and a lack of fresh supply. However, the multi-year fall in prices in the residential sector seems to have abated, with prices now almost flat year-on-year. Looking ahead, aside from the anticipated summer lull in Q3, we see developer sentiment benefitting from amendments to the real estate developer law and changes to investment regulations, while the expected approval of the housing finance law will improve access to home financing. These dynamics, in conjunction with decent non-oil economic growth and potential interest rate cuts, will underpin property market activity ahead.

Investment sales anchor the broader recovery

Total real estate sales surged to KD1.0 billion in Q2 2025, marking a 15.5% increase compared to the 2024 quarterly average. This upswing follows a seasonal contraction in Q1 and was driven primarily by robust performance in the investment (i.e. apartments and buildings) segment, while the residential and commercial segments contributed more modestly. Strong investment sales were supported by robust credit growth to the real estate sector, higher demand in inner urban districts and recent changes to investment housing regulations aimed at advancing the country's urban development model.

Residential sales rebounded in Q2 following Q1's sharp contraction while the number of transactions rose to its highest level since Q2 2022. Despite the rise in Q2 and a mildly improving trend, residential sales in H1 2025 were well below the levels seen during the same period of 2021 & 2022. The increase in Q2 was also likely aided by the fading impact of seasonal factors in Q1, which could go into reverse in Q3. Other headwinds facing the sector include the potential release of idle lands due to the vacant residential lands law coming into effect (January 2026 – although this might boost transactions levels in the near term, it may have a negative impact on prices), ongoing discussions for utility fee adjustments and lingering affordability pressures. But on the upside, the potential approval of the real estate financing law over the coming months could provide a big boost to home financing availability and demand in the medium term.



Real estate prices mixed in Q2 but maintain an overall positive trend

The overall price index edged up by 0.2% q/q in Q2, supported by a 1.2% q/q increase in residential prices—higher than the 0.5% recorded in Q1. On an annual basis, real estate prices rose by 2.9% y/y as investment prices led the way, up by 7.1%. Residential prices showed signs of stabilization, declining by just 0.5% y/y compared with a 1.7% contraction in Q1. The divergence in the price trends has helped to narrow the price gap between the two segments with investment properties showing upward momentum but residential prices relatively flat. While the residential segment still suffers from affordability constraints, the quarter-on-quarter price hikes for the past three consecutive quarters suggests that these pressures are abating – helped perhaps by anticipation of the approval of the real estate financing law that would ease borrowing bottlenecks.

Public sector initiatives target housing supply bottlenecks

In response to the long-standing housing backlog – now at 103,110 applicants in July 14 – the Public Authority for Housing & Welfare (PAHW) is pushing ahead with its development agenda by initiating tenders for the design and infrastructure planning of three residential cities: Al-Khiran, Nawaf Al-Ahmad, and Al-Sabriyah, collectively providing 170,000 units. The cabinet has also approved amendments to the real estate developer law to allow the private sector to help resolve the housing crisis by developing new residential cities and to attract foreign and local investors. However, PAHW's project awards slowed notably in Q2 to a two-year low of KD121 million, as reported by MEED.

A follow-up report by the Supreme Council for Planning and Development for FY24/25 (April-December) indicated that Jaber Al-Ahmad and South Abdullah Al-Mubarak cities are nearing completion, with progress rates of 94.7% and 90.4%. Other major projects, however, continue to face execution delays with completion rates in the Al-Mutla' (76.9%), affordable housing (37%), and South Sa'ad Al-Abdullah (20.3%) projects remaining behind schedule. That said, there are signs of progress in infrastructure works in South Sabah Al-Ahmad and South Sa'ad Al-Abdullah. On the financing front, the Kuwait Credit Bank reported a 48% q/q increase in approved housing loans in Q2, totaling KD47.6 million. This marks a modest recovery from the four-year low observed in Q1. However, disbursed loan volumes fell by 3.7% q/q to KD109.4 million, continuing the downward trend from Q1, likely due to the suspension in plot distributions.

Recording a growth of 23 percent

KIB Group reports net profit of KD 14.8 mln for H1 of 2025

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman of Kuwait International Bank (KIB), announced the Group's financial results for the first half (H1) ended 30 June 2025. KIB Group achieved net profit attributable to shareholders amounting to KD 14.8 million, compared to KD 12 million in H1 2024, reflecting a growth of 23%. Earnings per share (EPS) stood at 7.11 fils, compared to 5.70 fils for the same period last year. Total operating income was almost KD 46.3 million, registering a growth of 10% compared to the first half of 2024.

Commenting on the latest financial results, Al-Jarrah emphasized that this outstanding performance marks a starting point towards achieving the Bank's ambitious goals under its new five-year strategy, which aims to strengthen its position in the banking sector through continued innovation in services and products, expansion of the operational base, and a focus on delivering added value to both shareholders and customers.

Al-Jarrah also affirmed that KIB is focused on developing digital banking solutions to provide customers with a seamless and innovative banking experience. This goes hand in hand with expanding the customer base and targeting new segments, while placing emphasis on sustainability and social responsibility as integral components of the Bank's comprehensive growth strategy, ensuring strong and sustainable long-term returns.

Regarding the Bank's financial statements for the first half of 2025, Al-Jarrah stated that KIB's total assets grew by 20% to reach KD 4.19 billion, compared to KD 3.50 billion as of 30 June 2024. This growth was driven by an increase in the financing portfolio, which rose by 23% or KD 572 million as of end of June 2025 to reach KD 3.09 billion, compared to KD 2.52 billion for the same period of 2024. Meanwhile, its investment and high-quality Sukuk portfolio grew by KD 117 million, reaching almost KD 522 million as of end of June 2025, compared to KD 405 million as of 30 June 2024.

Moreover, Al-Jarrah stated that the Bank places strong emphasis on human capital by attracting and developing talent and grooming future leaders, in parallel with its firm commitment to social responsibility.

On his part, Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, Vice Chairman and CEO of KIB, expressed his pride in KIB's performance during the first half of 2025, noting that the



Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman of KIB



Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, Vice Chairman and CEO of KIB

bank have strong capital base, and improvement in assets quality and profitability along with balanced growth in financing and deposits, reflecting successful implementation of the strategy and improvement in sustainable performance indicators.

He added that KIB is making strides in strengthening its institutional foundation and developing a more flexible business model that can adapt to market dynamics, ensuring an effective response to customer needs and ongoing developments in the banking sector. He emphasized that KIB places customer experience at the core of its priorities and plays an active role in delivering value by adopting a customer-centric approach and striving for operational excellence. He also noted that the Bank is intensifying its efforts to support the local and national economy, as well as the wider community, through strategic social responsibility initiatives grounded in inclusion and sustainability.

Bukhamseen provided a detailed overview of the key financial results for the

first half of 2025 compared to the same period of last year, where fees and commission income, reaching KD 9.3 million compared to KD 7.8 million in the previous period, reflecting a growth rate of 20%. The Bank also recorded an increase in investment income, reaching KD 2.9 million compared to KD 1.9 million in the previous period, reflecting a growth rate of 51%. This contributed to a rise in total operating income, which reached almost KD 46.3 million, marking a growth of 10%.

Regarding the Bank's financial position, Bukhamseen said that KIB's customers' deposits grew by 34% to reach KD 2.84 billion as of 30 June 2025 compared to KD 2.12 billion as of 30 June 2024. In addition, the total shareholders equity grew 6% to reach KD 358 million as of 30 June 2025 compared to KD 336 million for the same period of last year. He noted that KIB continues to maintain high levels of total capital adequacy ratio, in accordance with Basel III instructions, of 21.96% as of 30 June 2025.

In a related context, Bukhamseen emphasized KIB's strong commitment to its social role, reaffirming its continued support for the 'Let's Be Aware' (Diraya) banking awareness campaign for the fifth consecutive year. This commitment to the initiative, launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait in collaboration with the Kuwait Banking Association and local banks, is an integral part of the Bank's strategy to foster a more financially aware and educated society, thereby contributing to economic stability and supporting comprehensive development efforts in Kuwait.

In their concluding remarks, Al-Jarrah and Bukhamseen expressed their appreciation to the Central Bank of Kuwait for its exceptional regulatory and supervisory roles, as well as its consistent support. They also expressed their gratitude to the Capital Markets Authority for its supportive role in fostering an attractive and competitive investment environment in Kuwait. In addition, they praised the tireless efforts of all KIB teams, highlighting their contributions to achieving these results. They also expressed their profound appreciation to the Board of Directors and Executive Management for their ongoing support and wise guidance, which have been crucial in enhancing KIB's financial standing and meeting all environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) requirements.



talabat brings back air-conditioned rest stations for riders.

As part of its dedicated riders' summer campaign under the company's CSR strategy

talabat launches summer rest stops for riders in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: As part of its annual summer campaign for riders, talabat, the leading on-demand online ordering and delivery platform in the MENA region, is bringing back its rest stop initiative, with four strategically located, air-conditioned buses across Kuwait. This initiative aligns with the company's corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy and commitment to providing riders with a safe working environment where their health and wellbeing remains the top priority, especially during summertime.

Building on the initiative's success for four consecutive years, talabat continues to extend its welcome this year to all riders across Kuwait. Including those from outside its network, to rest and replenish at any of its bus stop rest areas. These stations are well-equipped with comfortable seating, water, and first-aid essentials, reinforcing talabat's role in promoting inclusivity and accessibility for all.

Commenting on the revival of the initiative, Bad-er Al-Ghanim, Vice President and Managing Director of talabat Kuwait, said: "Our role in the communities we serve extends beyond delivery. We are invested in the wellbeing of every individual who contributes to keeping our ecosystem running, starting with the riders. These rest stations, launched as part of our summer campaign for the fourth year in a row, reflect our continued efforts to ensure safe and comfortable working conditions for riders all year long."

He added: "As part of our day to day operation, which is powered by a wide network of riders, logistics partners, and support teams, we remain deeply aware of the unique challenges they face on the ground every day. This understanding drives us to provide meaningful support that responds to the nature of their work, with a strong focus on health, wellbeing and improving the overall work environment."

Although talabat riders are hired through logistics partners, Al-Ghanim confirmed that the talabat remains responsible for ensuring they receive insurance coverage, summer kits, and regular access to road safety workshops and health screenings. He emphasized that riders are core contributors to the reliable, high-quality service that talabat delivers to its customers, and as such, remain a top priority within the company's wellbeing efforts.

It's worth noting that the fully equipped rest station initiative rolled out across Kuwait is just one of several efforts talabat has launched during the summer to support rider wellbeing and promote safer, more comfortable working conditions on the road. Through initiatives like these, talabat continues to lead by example, demonstrating how companies can adopt a people-first approach rooted in long-term commitment to those at the heart of the delivery ecosystem.

In collaboration with Dr. Mohammad Albloushi

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait highlights injury prevention & advances in orthopedic surgery during exclusive workshop for female clients

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) organized an awareness lecture for a group of its female clients in collaboration with Dr. Mohammad Albloushi, an orthopedic surgeon specializing in hip and knee joint replacement, knee arthroscopy, and sports injuries at Al Salam Hospital. This initiative is part of ABK's ongoing plans to enhance interaction with its clients and engage with them through exclusive events, reinforcing its presence and role as a responsible banking institution in

Kuwait.

The lecture aimed to increase the attendees' health and medical awareness. Dr. Mohammad Albloushi presented on injury prevention methods, the latest developments in orthopedic surgery, hormones and maintaining knee health. He answered questions from ABK's clients on the topics covered, with significant interaction from participants regarding the health information presented during the event.

The workshop provided ad-



Johair Marafi, General Manager - Retail Banking

Johair Marafi:
■ The event reflects our interest in raising our clients' awareness of key topics

vice and solutions to improve the quality and style of healthy living adopted by clients to maintain their health and avoid diseases and injuries. It also encouraged healthy behaviors and habits, emphasizing that prevention is fundamental to preserving health and safety.

On this occasion, Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, stated, "The lecture reflects our strong interest in raising our clients' awareness of various key topics in daily life, especially health-related matters, which are a priority for the well-being of all community members. It also underscores our commitment to collaborating with many partners across different sectors to achieve mutual benefits for all parties."

Marafi praised the valuable information provided by Dr. Moham-

med Albloushi to the female clients, noting that ABK will continue to hold more awareness activities and workshops in the future to enhance women's role in society, as part of its key role in Kuwait, and to increase the knowledge of all clients on various essential topics.

Marafi concluded with an invitation to follow the Bank's social media accounts to remain up to date with the latest marketing initiatives and to benefit from the promotions offered throughout the year.



Part of the speech.



ABK team.



Part of the audience.



Secretary General of the Arab Energy Organization (AEO) Jamal Al-Loughani

AEO states produce 24% of global oil, report shows

KUWAIT CITY, July 23, (KUNA): Crude oil production by member states of the Energy Organization reached 21.6 million barrels per day, accounting to 24 percent of the global crude output that amounted to 88.7 million bpd, said Jamal Al-Loughani, the AEO Secretary General, on Tuesday.

Al-Loughani, citing the organization's annual report (2024) and speaking at a ceremony on the occasion attended by diplomats in Kuwait, said the organization's member states have currently marketed 561 billion cubic meters of Gas, a 14 percent quota of the world's overall gas production.

The combined wind energy, produced by the Arab

states, has reached 2.4 gigawatts, 0.5 percent of the global production, the combined solar energy exceeded 17 gigawatts, 1.1 percent of the global record, while hydroelectricity recorded 9.15 gigawatts, 0.5 percent of the world's output.

Al-Loughani, marking release of the 51st report of the AEO (formerly the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries, OAPEC), added that the number of refineries in the Arab countries reached 54, with a total refinancing capacity of 10.47 million barrels a day, 10.9 percent of the global record (96.23 million bpd).

As to natural gas, the member states exported 185.9

billion cubic meters, 16.3 percent of the globe's record, while the nominal output capacity of the liquefied natural gas was recorded at 120.3 million tons per year in the end of 2014, 24.6 percent of the globe's record.

The AEO's exports of crude and non-conventional oil, dropped by 163,000 bpd (in 2024 compared to 2023) reaching 32.4 million bpd while those from producers outside the organization rose by 630,000 bpd reaching 70.2 million bpd, Al-Loughani said.

Al-Loughani said the report sheds light on the member states' efforts to overhaul the petroleum industries by launching various key ventures, adding that oil and gas discoveries reached 34 in 2024.

More ‘Americans’ shift cash into investment accounts, study says

WASHINGTON, July 23, (AP): New research finds that more Americans are shifting their money from checking and savings accounts into financial vehicles that pay an investment income - a trend that helps to explain the resilience of the U.S. economy after a bout of high inflation and recent uncertainty due to tariffs.

The analysis by JPMorganChase Institute examined the accounts of 4.7 million households and found that people's total cash reserves are increasing when including new amounts going into brokerage accounts, money market funds and certificates of deposit to assess people's well-being.

Inflation-adjusted cash balances in checking and savings accounts "remain low with a flat-growth trajectory," but since the middle of 2024 total cash reserves have been increasing and approaching historical growth trends once the additional accounts are included, the analysis said.

"Families across many income bands are now seeing a turnaround in their total cash," said Chris Wheat, president of the institute.

Wheat said it had been "hard to square the circle" of consumer spending staying strong despite the lack of growth in checking and savings accounts, an issue that can now be explained by people in a higher-interest rate environment shifting more money into accounts that yield investment returns. He said people appear to be using the other accounts to manage their cash, rather than simply making long-term investments.

Wheat cautioned, however, that the trend might be short term and that the institute doesn't have a basis yet as to whether it will continue.

The analysis also found that households with incomes generally lower than \$35,000 had their total cash balances increase at an annual rate of 5% to 6%. The lowest income quartile tend to have checking and savings account balance of just over \$1,000, while the median balances of the highest income quartile are above \$8,000.

Miami crash revives safety concerns

Tesla autopilot faces legal challenges on two coasts

MIAMI, July 23, (AP): Elon Musk fought court cases on opposite coasts Monday, raising a question about the billionaire that could either speed his plan to put self-driving Teslas on U.S. roads or throw up a major roadblock: Can this wildly successful man who tends to exaggerate really be trusted?

In Miami, a Tesla driver who has admitted he was wrong to reach for a dropped cell phone moments before a deadly accident, spoke of the danger of putting too much faith in Musk's technology - in this case his Autopilot program.

"I trusted the technology too much," said George McGee, who ran off the road and killed a woman out stargazing with her boyfriend. "I believed that if the car saw something in front of it, it would provide a warning and apply the brakes."

In unusual coincidence, regulators arguing an Oakland, California, case tried to pin exaggerated talk about the same Tesla technology at the center of a request to suspend the carmaker from being able to sell vehicles in the state.

Musk's tendency to talk big - whether it's his cars, his rockets or his government costing-cutting efforts - have landed him in trouble with investors, regulators and courts before, but rarely at such a delicate moment.

Social media

After his social media spat with President Donald Trump, Musk can no longer count on a light regulatory touch from Washington. Meanwhile, sales of his electric cars have plunged and so a hit to his safety reputation could threaten his next big project: rolling out driverless robotaxis - hundreds of thousands of them - in several U.S. cities by the end of next year.

The Miami case holds other dangers, too. Lawyers for the family of the dead woman, Naibel Benavides Leon, recently convinced the judge overseeing the jury trial to allow them to argue for punitive damages. A car crash lawyer not involved in the case, but closely following it, said that could cost Tesla tens of millions of dollars, or possibly more.

"I've seen punitive damages go to the hundreds of millions, so that is the floor," said Miguel Custodio of Los Angeles-based Custodio & Dubey. "It is also a signal to other plaintiffs that they can also ask for punitive damages, and then the payments could start compounding."

That Tesla has allowed the Miami case to proceed to trial is surprising. It has settled at least four deadly accidents involving Autopilot, including payments just last week to a Florida family of a Tesla driver. That said, Tesla was victorious in two other jury cases, both in California, that also sought to lay blame on its technology for crashes.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs in the Miami case argue that Tesla's driver-assistance feature, called Autopilot, should have warned the driver and braked when his Model S sedan blew through

flashing lights, a stop sign and a T-intersection at 62 miles-an-hour in an April 2019 crash. Tesla said that drivers are warned not to rely on Autopilot, or its more advanced Full Self-Driving system. It says the fault entirely lies with the "distracted driver" just like so many other "accidents since cell-phones were invented."

Driver McGee settled a separate suit brought by the family of Benavides and her severely injured boyfriend, Dillon Angulo.

McGee was clearly shaken when shown a dashcam video Monday of his car jumping a Key West, Florida, road and hitting a parked Chevrolet Tahoe which then slammed into Benavides and sent her 75 feet through the air to her death. Asked if he had seen those images before, McGee pinched his lips, shook his head, then squeaked out a response, "No."

Tesla's attorney sought to show that McGee was fully to blame, asking if he had ever contacted Tesla for additional instructions about how Autopilot or any other safety features worked. McGee said he had not, though he was heavy user of the features. He said he had driven the same road home from work 30 or 40 times. Under questioning, he also acknowledged he alone was responsible for watching the road and hitting the brakes.

Summarizing the testimony, Tesla said in a statement after the court adjourned that McGee had "stated the simple truth that we all know: If he had just paid attention to the road instead of searching for his dropped cell phone and pressing the accelerator -which he was doing for over a minute before the crash - this tragic accident would never have happened."

But lawyers for the Benavides family had a chance in the courtroom at parrying that line of argument, asking McGee if he would have taken his eyes off the road and reached for his phone had he been driving any car other than a Tesla on Autopilot.

McGee responded, "I don't believe so."

The case is expected to continue for two more weeks.

In the California case, the state's Department of Motor Vehicles is arguing before an administrative judge that Tesla has misled drivers by exaggerating the capabilities of its Autopilot and Full Self-Driving features. A court filing claims even those feature names are misleading because they offer just partial self-driving.

Musk has been warned by federal regulators to stop making public comments suggesting Full Self-Driving allows his cars to drive themselves because it could lead to overreliance on the system, resulting in possible crashes and deaths. He also has run into trouble with regulators for Autopilot. In 2023, the company had to recall 2.3 million vehicles for problems with the technology and is now under investigation for saying it fixed the issue though it's unclear it has, according to regulatory documents.

Trump and Marcos reach trade deal, reduce US tariffs to 19%

US cuts Japan tariff to 15%

WASHINGTON, July 23, (AP): President Donald Trump said he has reached a trade agreement with Philippine leader Ferdinand Marcos Jr., following a meeting Tuesday at the White House, that will see the U.S. slightly drop its tariff rate for the Philippines without paying import taxes for what it sells there.

Trump revealed the broad terms of the agreement on his social media network and said the U.S. and the Philippines would work together militarily. The announcement of a loose framework of a deal comes as the two countries are seeking closer security and economic ties in the face of shifting geopolitics in the Indo-Pacific region.

Marcos' government indicated ahead of the meeting that he was prepared to offer zero tariffs on some U.S. goods to strike a deal with Trump. The Philippine Embassy did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment.

Marcos' three-day visit to Washington shows the importance of the alliance between the treaty partners as China is increasingly assertive in the South China Sea, where Manila and Beijing have clashed over the hotly contested Scarborough Shoal.

Washington sees Beijing, the world's No. 2 economy, as its biggest competitor, and consecutive presidential administrations have sought to shift U.S. military and economic focus to the Asia-Pacific in a bid to counter China. Trump, like others before him, has been distracted by efforts to broker peace in a range of conflicts, from Ukraine to Gaza.

Trump said on Truth Social that the U.S. would impose a 19% tariff rate on the Philippines, down from a 20% tariff he threatened starting Aug. 1. In return, he said, the Philippines would have an open market and the U.S. would not pay tariffs.

Achievement

Marcos described the lower 19% tariff rate to reporters in Washington as a "significant achievement" in real terms. He said his country was considering options such as having an open market without tariffs for U.S. automobiles, but emphasized details were still left to be worked out. When asked whether the Philippines got the shorter end of the stick, Marcos said, "that's how negotiations go."

Without further details on the agreement, it's unclear how it will impact their countries' economies.

Trump wrote that Marcos' visit was "beautiful," and it was a "Great Honor" to host such a "very good, and tough, negotiator."

Appearing before reporters in the Oval Office ahead of their private meeting, Marcos spoke warmly of the ties between the two nations.

"This has evolved into as important a relationship as is possible to have," said Marcos, the first Southeast Asian leader to hold talks with Trump in his second term.

Trump, as he does in many of his appearances, veered off topic as he fielded questions from reporters.

In response to a question about his Justice Department's decision to interview Jeffrey Epstein's former girlfriend, Trump repeated falsehoods about his loss to Democrat Joe Biden in the 2020 presidential election and the Russia investigation during his



President Donald Trump meets with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., in the Oval Office of the White House, Tuesday, July 22, 2025, in Washington. (AP)

first term, along with comments about targeting adversaries such as former President Barack Obama and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

"After what they did to me, whether it's right or wrong, it's time to go after people," Trump said.

When asked how he plans to balance his country's relationships between the U.S. and China, Marcos said there was no need to balance "because our foreign policy is an independent one."

"Our strongest partner has always been the United States," said Marcos, whose country is one of the oldest U.S. treaty allies in the Pacific region.

On Tuesday, when asked about the U.S. defense commitment to the Philippines, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said, "Whatever cooperation the U.S. and the Philippines have, it should not target or harm any third party, still less incite confrontation and heighten tensions in the region." China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have been involved in long-unresolved territorial conflicts in the South China Sea, a busy shipping passage for global trade.

The Chinese coast guard has repeatedly used water cannons to hit Filipino boats in the South China Sea. China accused those vessels of entering the waters illegally or encroaching on its territory.

Marcos also met Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth this week. At the Pentagon on Monday, Marcos told Hegseth that the assurance to come to each other's mutual defense "continues to be the cornerstone of that relationship."

He said the cooperation has deepened since Hegseth's March visit to Manila, including joint exercises and U.S. support in modernizing the Philippines' armed forces. Marcos thanked the U.S. for support "that we need in the face of the threats that we, our country, is facing."

Hegseth told a security forum in Singapore in May that China poses a threat and the U.S. is "reorienting toward deterring aggression by Communist China."

The U.S., however, has endeavored to keep communication open with Beijing. Rubio and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met this month on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations regional forum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

They agreed to explore "areas of potential cooperation" and stressed the importance of managing differences.

When hosting Marcos, Trump said a visit to China is "not too distant," suggesting it is possible he could travel there soon. Trump touted U.S.-China relations but said Manila is independent in its dealings with Beijing.

"Do whatever you need to do," Trump told Marcos. "But your dealing with China wouldn't bother me at all."

Also:

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump announced a trade framework with Japan on Tuesday, placing a 15% tax on goods imported from that nation. "This Deal will create Hundreds of Thousands of Jobs - There has never been anything like it," Trump posted on Truth Social, adding that the United States "will continue to always have a great relationship with the Country of Japan."

The president said Japan would invest "at my direction" \$550 billion into the U.S. and would "open" its economy to American autos and rice. The 15% tax on imported Japanese goods is a meaningful drop from the 25% rate that Trump, in a recent letter to Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, said would be levied starting Aug. 1.

Early Wednesday, Ishiba acknowledged the new trade agreement, saying it would benefit both sides and help them work together.

With the announcement, Trump is seeking to tout his ability as a dealmaker - even as his tariffs, when initially announced in early April led to a market panic and fears of slower growth that for the moment appear to have subsided. Key details remained unclear from his post, such as whether Japanese-built autos would face a higher 25% tariff that Trump imposed on the sector.

But the framework fits a growing pattern for Trump, who is eager to portray the tariffs as win for the U.S. His administration says the revenues will help reduce the budget deficit and more factories will relocate to America to avoid the import taxes and cause trade imbalances to disappear.

The wave of tariffs continues to be a source of uncertainty about whether it could lead to higher prices for consumers and businesses if companies simply pass along the costs. The prob-

lem was seen sharply Tuesday after General Motors reported a 35% drop in its net income during the second quarter as it warned that tariffs would hit its business in the months ahead, causing its stock to tumble.

As the Aug. 1 deadline for the tariff rates in his letters to world leaders is approaching, Trump also announced a trade framework with the Philippines that would impose a tariff of 19% on its goods, while American-made products would face no import taxes. The president also reaffirmed his 19% tariffs on Indonesia.

The U.S. ran a \$69.4 billion trade imbalance on goods with Japan last year, according to the Census Bureau.

America had a trade imbalance of \$17.9 billion with Indonesia and an imbalance of \$4.9 billion with the Philippines. Both nations are less affluent than the U.S. and an imbalance means America imports more from those countries than it exports to them.

The president is set to impose the broad tariffs listed in his recent letters to other world leaders on Aug. 1, raising questions of whether there will be any breakthrough in talks with the European Union. At a Tuesday dinner, Trump said the EU would be in Washington on Wednesday for trade talks.

"We have Europe coming in tomorrow, the next day," Trump told guests.

The president earlier this month sent a letter threatening the 27 member states in the EU with 30% taxes on their goods to be imposed starting on Aug. 1.

The Trump administration has a separate negotiating period with China that is currently set to run through Aug. 12 as goods from that nation are taxed at an additional 30% baseline.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said he would be in the Swedish capital of Stockholm next Monday and Tuesday to meet with his Chinese counterparts. Bessent said his goal is to shift the American economy away from consumption and to enable more consumer spending in the manufacturing-heavy Chinese economy.

"President Trump is remaking the U.S. into a manufacturing economy," Bessent said on the Fox Business Network show "Mornings with Maria." "If we could do that together, we do more manufacturing, they do more consumption. That would be a home run for the global economy."

Brussels pushes for deal, merges 93 bln euro tariff list

EU, US in last-minute trade talks ahead of tariff deadline

BRUSSELS, July 23, (KUNA): The European Commission announced on Wednesday that the EU Trade Commissioner, Maros Sefcovic, is scheduled to hold a call with US counterpart later today.

EU Trade Commission spokesperson Olof Gill told reporters that "the EU's primary focus is on achieving a negotiated outcome with the US," stressing that "intensive technical and political contact is ongoing" between the two sides.

Gill explained that Sefcovic would speak with

US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick on Wednesday afternoon, ahead of the Commission's planned update to EU member states on negotiations with Washington.

He added that "while our priority is negotiations, we continue in parallel to prepare for all outcomes, including potential additional countermeasures," noting that the set of retaliatory measures agreed so far by the EU would take effect on August 7 if no agreement is reached.

Gill confirmed that the EU is working to merge

two previously prepared tariff lists, one targeting US products worth EUR 72 billion (USD 84 billion), and the other amounting to EUR 21 billion (USD 24.6 billion).

He added that "the combined list will be submitted to EU member states for their green light," and would enter into effect starting next Thursday if the talks do not yield positive results.

US President Donald Trump had threatened to impose a 30-percent tariff on European goods if a deal on tariffs is not reached by August 1.

CMA cracks down on app store dominance

UK watchdog may force changes in Google, Apple platforms

LONDON, July 23, (AP): Britain's antitrust watchdog has proposed labeling Google's and Apple's mobile ecosystems with "strategic market status," which would mandate changes at the Big Tech companies to improve competition.

The Competition and Markets Authority's announcement Wednesday follows separate investigations it opened at the start of the year into Google's Android and Apple's iOS, using newly acquired digital market regulations designed to protect consumers and businesses from unfair practices by Big Tech companies.

The watchdog said Apple and Google hold an "effective duopoly," with 90-100% of mobile devices in Britain running on either mobile platform. Its investigation found a range of concerns affecting businesses and consumers such as unpredictable app reviews, inconsistent

app store search rankings and commissions on in-app purchases of as much as 30%.

The CMA also unveiled separate "roadmaps" for each company outlining possible measures to improve competition, including "fair and transparent" app reviews and app store rankings to give British app developers "certainty."

The watchdog also recommends letting app developers "steer" users to channels outside of app stores where users can make purchases, mirroring similar efforts by the European Union.

Google called the watchdog's decision "disappointing and unwarranted," and said Android has saved app developers money because they didn't have to adapt to different operating models for each smartphone.

It's "crucial that any new regulation is evidence-based, proportionate

and does not become a roadblock to growth in the U.K.," the company's senior director of competition, Oliver Bethell, said.

Apple said it was worried the CMA's moves could pose increase risks for users and jeopardize the U.K.'s "developer economy."

"We're concerned the rules the U.K. is now considering would undermine the privacy and security protections that our users have come to expect, hamper our ability to innovate, and force us to give away our technology for free to foreign competitors," Apple said in a statement. "We will continue to engage with the regulator to make sure they fully understand these risks."

The regulator is seeking feedback on its proposal and has until Oct. 22 to make a final decision.

MTV show revealed the softer side of the ‘Prince of Darkness’

‘The Osbournes’ changed Ozzy’s image ... and reality TV

LOS ANGELES, July 23, (AP): There was Ozzy before “The Osbournes” and Ozzy after “The Osbournes.”

For much of his life, the Black Sabbath founder and legendary heavy metal frontman who died at 76 on Tuesday was known to much of the public as a dark purveyor of deeds ranging from decadent to downright Satanic.

Wild stories followed him. Clergy condemned him. Parents sued him.

But with the debut of his family reality show on MTV, the world learned what those who’d been paying closer attention already knew: Ozzy Osbourne was soft and fuzzy under the darkness.

During its relatively short run from 2002 to 2005, “The Osbournes” became a runaway hit and made stars of his wife Sharon and kids Jack and Kelly. But more than that, it made a star of the domesticated version of Ozzy Osbourne, and in the process changed reality TV.

In 2025, when virtually every variety of celebrity has had a reality show, it’s hard to see what a novelty the series was. MTV sold it as television’s first “reality sitcom.”

“Just the idea of the Black Sabbath founder, who will forever be known for biting the head off a bat during a 1982 concert, as a family man seems strange,” Associated Press Media Writer David Bauder wrote on the eve of “The Osbournes” premiere. But on the show, Osbourne was “sweetly funny - and under everything a lot like the put-upon dads you’ve been seeing in television sitcoms for generations.”

Danny Deraney, a publicist who worked with Osbourne and was a lifelong fan, said of the show, “You saw some guy who was curious. You saw some guy who was being funny. You just saw pretty much the real thing.”

“He’s not the guy that everyone associates with the ‘Prince of Darkness’ and all this craziness,” Deraney said. “And people loved him. He became so affable to so many people because of that show. As metal fans, we knew it. We knew that’s who he was. But now everyone knew.”

Reality shows at the time, especially the popular competition shows like “Survivor,” thrived on heightened circumstances. For “The Osbournes,” no stakes were too low.

They sat on the couch. They ate dinner. The now-sober Ozzy sipped Diet Cokes, and urged his kids not to indulge in alcohol or drugs when they went out. He struggled to find the History Channel on his satellite TV. They feuded with the neighbors because, of all things, their loud music was driving the Osbournes crazy.

“You were seeing this really fascinating, appealing, bizarre tension between the public persona of a celebrity and their mundane experiences at home,” said Kathryn VanArendonk, a critic for *Vulture* and *New York Magazine*.

The sitcom tone was apparent from its first moments.

“You turn on this show and you get this like little jazzy cover theme song of the song ‘Crazy Train,’ and there’s all these bright colors and fancy editing, and we just got to see this like totally 180-degree different side of Ozzy which was

just surprising and incredible to watch,” said Nick Caruso, staff editor at *TVLine*.

Like family sitcoms, the affection its leads clearly had for each other was essential to its appeal.

“For some reason, we kind of just fell in love with them the same way that we grew to love Ozzy and Sharon as like a marital unit,” Caruso said.

What was maybe strangest about the show was how not-strange it felt. The two Ozzy seemed seamless rather than contradictory.

“You’re realizing that these things are personas and that all personas are these like elaborate complex mosaics of like who a person is,” VanArendonk said.

“The Osbournes” had both an immediate and a long-term affect on the genre.

Both Caruso and VanArendonk said shows like “Newlyweds: Nick and Jessica,” which followed then-pop stars Jessica Simpson and Nick Lachey after they married, was clearly a descendant.

And countless other shows felt its influence, from “The Kardashians” to “The Baldwins” - the recently debuted reality series on Alec Baldwin, his wife Hilaria and their seven kids.

“The Baldwins” as a reality show is explicitly modeled on “The Osbournes,” VanArendonk said. “It’s like you have these famous people and now you get to see what their home lives are like, what they are like as parents, what they’re eating, what they are taking on with them on vacation, who their pets are, and they are these sort of cuddly, warm, eccentric figures.”

Immortal tunes

Ozzy’s legacy in top songs

NEW YORK, July 23, (AP): There are pioneering music figures, and then there is Ozzy Osbourne, the larger-than-life frontman of Black Sabbath, whose personal mythology is eclipsed only by the strength and immortality of his songs.

The English icon’s idiosyncratic, throaty voice launched generations of metalheads, both through his work at the reins of Black Sabbath and in his solo career. Across his repertoire, there are songs with total global ubiquity and lesser-known innovations with his unique, spooky aesthetic quality.

To celebrate Osbourne’s life and legacy, we’ve selected just a few songs that made the man, from timeless tunes to a few left-of-center selections.

1970: “Iron Man,” Black Sabbath: It would be a challenge to name a more immediately recognizable guitar riff than the one that launches Black Sabbath’s 1970 megahit “Iron Man.” It transcends the metal genre - an all-timer heard around the world and in guitar stores everywhere.

1970: “War ...,” Black Sabbath: One of the great Vietnam War protest songs, Black Sabbath’s “War ...” is a rare moment where hippies and metalheads can agree: “Politicians hide themselves away! They only started the war/Why should they go out to fight?” Osbourne sings in the bridge.

1971: “Children of the Grave,” Black Sabbath: Osbourne’s heaviest performances are at least partially indebted to Black Sabbath’s bassist and lyricist Terry “Geezer” Butler, and there is perhaps no better example than “Children of the Grave,” the single from the band’s 1971 album, “Master of Reality.” “Must the world live in the shadow of atomic fear?”

1973: “Sabbath Bloody Sabbath,” Black Sabbath: Black Sabbath were in a creative rut in the time period leading up to “Sabbath Bloody Sabbath,” the opening track from their 1973 album of the same name. It’s almost hard to believe now - the song features one of their best-known riffs, and its chorus features some truly ascendant vocals.

1980: “Crazy Train,” Ozzy Osbourne: Would the world know what a vibraslap sounds like without the immediately recognizable introduction to Osbourne’s first solo single, “Crazy Train”? To call it a classic is almost a disservice - it is an addicting tune, complete with chugging guitars and Cold War-era fears.

1980: “Mr. Crowley,” Ozzy Osbourne: Another classic cut from Osbourne’s debut solo album, “Blizzard Of Ozz” - released one year after Osbourne was fired from Black Sabbath for his legendary excesses, - the arena rock anthem “Mr. Crowley” pays tribute to the famed English occultist Aleister Crowley and features Deep Purple’s Don Airey on keyboard.

1981: “Diary of a Madman,” Ozzy Osbourne: The title track and coda of Osbourne’s second solo studio album, “Diary of a Madman,” runs over six minutes long, features big strings and a choir so theatrical it sounds like they’re scoring a medieval war film.

1991: “Mama, I’m Coming Home,” Ozzy Osbourne: It wouldn’t be inaccurate to call “Mama, I’m Coming Home” a beautiful-sounding song. It’s unlike anything on this list, a power ballad featuring lyrics written by the late Motörhead frontman Lemmy and a welcomed deviation.

1992: “I,” Black Sabbath: When Black Sabbath comes to mind, most fans jump to an unimpeachable run of albums released in the ‘70s and early ‘80s. But “I,” a cut from Black Sabbath’s too often overlooked 16th studio album, “Dehumanizer,” is worth your ear.

And not only because it is the first Sabbath album to feature singer Ronnie James Dio and drummer Vinny Appice since 1981’s “Mob Rules,” though that’s an obvious plus.

2019: “Take What You Want,” Post Malone with Ozzy Osbourne and Travis Scott: Late in life Ozzy Osbourne was generous with his time and talent, often collaborating with younger performers who idolized the metal legend.

Obituary

Black Sabbath legend died weeks after his final bow

Ozzy Osbourne, icon of heavy metal, dies at 76



Ozzy Osbourne, of Black Sabbath, performs at Ozzfest on Sept. 24, 2016, in San Bernardino, Calif. (AP)

LONDON, July 23, (AP): Ozzy Osbourne, the gloomy, demon-invoking lead singer of the pioneering band Black Sabbath who became the throaty, growling voice - and drug-and-alcohol ravaged id - of heavy metal, died Tuesday, just weeks after his farewell show. He was 76.

“It is with more sadness than mere words can convey that we have to report that our beloved Ozzy Osbourne has passed away this morning. He was with his family and surrounded by love. We ask everyone to respect our family privacy at this time,” a family statement from Birmingham, England, said. In 2020, he revealed he had Parkinson’s disease after suffering a fall.

Either clad in black or bare-chested, the singer was often the target of parents’ groups for his imagery and once caused an uproar for biting the head off a bat. Later, he would reveal himself to be a doddering and sweet father on the reality TV show “The Osbournes.”

Black Sabbath’s 1969 self-titled debut LP has been likened to the Big Bang of heavy metal. It came during the height of the Vietnam War and crashed the hippie party, dripping menace and foreboding. The cover of the record was of a spooky figure against a stark landscape. The music was loud, dense and angry, and marked a shift in rock ‘n’ roll.

The band’s second album, “Paranoid,” included such classic metal tunes as “War ...,” “Iron Man” and “Fairies Wear Boots.” The song “Paranoid” only reached No. 61 on the Billboard Hot 100 but became in many ways the band’s signature song. Both albums were voted among the top 10 greatest heavy metal albums of all time by readers of *Rolling Stone* magazine.

“Black Sabbath are the Beatles of heavy metal. Anybody who’s serious about metal will tell you it all comes down to Sabbath,” Dave Navarro of the band Jane’s Addiction wrote in a 2010 tribute in *Rolling Stone*. “There’s a direct line you can draw back from today’s metal, through Eighties bands like Iron Maiden, back to Sabbath.”

Legacy

Sabbath fired Osbourne in 1979 for his legendary excesses, like showing up late for rehearsals and missing gigs. “We knew we didn’t really have a choice but to sack him because he was just so out of control. But we were all very down about the situation,” wrote bassist Terry “Geezer” Butler in his memoir, “Into the Void.”

Osbourne reemerged the next year as a solo artist with “Blizzard of Ozz” and the following year’s “Diary of a Madman,” both hard rock classics that went multiplatinum and spawned enduring favorites such as “Crazy Train,” “Goodbye to Romance,” “Flying High Again” and “You Can’t Kill Rock and Roll.” Osbourne was twice inducted to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame - once with Sabbath in 2006 and again in 2024 as a solo artist.

The original Sabbath lineup reunited for the first time in 20 years in July for what Osbourne said would be his final concert. “Let the madness begin!” he told 42,000 fans in Birmingham.

Metallica, Guns N’ Roses, Slayer, Tool, Pantera, Gojira, Alice in Chains, Lamb of God, Halestorm, Anthrax, Rival Sons and Mastodon all did sets. Tom Morello, Aerosmith’s Steven Tyler, Billy Corgan, Ronnie Wood, Travis Barker, Sammy Hagar and more made appearances. Actor Jason Momoa was the host for the festivities.



Floral tributes are left by the Sabbath Wall on Navigation Street in Birmingham, England, following the death of Ozzy Osbourne, Wednesday July 23. (AP)



Julia Simonyan places flowers at the star for Ozzy Osbourne on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, Tuesday, July 22, in Los Angeles. (AP)



Tributes left outside The Crown public house in Birmingham, England, where the band Black Sabbath played their first gig, on Wednesday July 23. (AP)

but nothing seems to satisfy/Think I’ll lose my mind if I don’t find something to pacify.”

The *Guardian* newspaper in 2009 said the band “introduced working-class anger, stoner sludge grooves and witchy horror-rock to flower power. Black Sabbath confronted the empty platitudes of the 1960s and, along with Altamont and Charles Manson, almost certainly helped kill off the hippy counterculture.”

After Sabbath, Osbourne had an uncanny knack for calling some of the most creative young guitarists to his side. When he went solo, he hired the brilliant innovator Rhoads, who played on two of Osbourne’s finest solo albums, “Blizzard of Ozz” and “Diary of a Madman.” Rhoads was killed in a freak plane accident in 1982; Osbourne released the live album “Tribute” in 1987 in his memory.

Signed

Osbourne then signed Jake E. Lee, who lent his talents to the platinum albums “Bark at the Moon” and “The Ultimate Sin.” Hotshot Zakk Wylde joined Osbourne’s band for “No Rest for the Wicked” and the multiplatinum “No More Tears.”

“They come along, they sprout wings, they blossom, and they fly off,” Osbourne said of his players in 1995 to *The Associated Press*. “But I have to move on. To get a new player now and again boosts me on.”

Whomever he was playing with, Osbourne wasn’t likely to back down from controversy. He had the last laugh when the TV evangelist the Rev. Jimmy Swaggart in 1982 lambasted various rock groups and rock magazines as “the new pornography,” prompting some retailers to pull Osbourne’s album.

When Swaggart later was caught with a sex worker in 1988, Osbourne put out the song “Miracle Man” about his foe: “Miracle man got busted/miracle man got busted,” he sang. “Today I saw a Miracle Man, on TV cryin’/Such a hypocritical man, born again, dying.”

Much later, a whole new Osbourne would be revealed when “The Osbournes,” which ran on MTV from 2002-2005, showed this one-time self-proclaimed madman drinking Diet Cokes as he struggled to find the History Channel on his new satellite television or warning his kids not to smoke or drink before they embarked on a night on the town.

Later, he and his son Jack toured America on the travel show “Ozzy & Jack’s World Detour,” where the pair visited such places as Mount Rushmore and the Space Center Houston. Osbourne was honored in 2014 with the naming of a bat frog found in the Amazon that makes high-pitched, bat-like calls. It was dubbed *Dendropsophus ozzyi*.

He also met Queen Elizabeth II during her Golden Jubilee weekend. He was standing next to singer-actor Cliff Richard. “She took one look at the two of us, said ‘Oh, so this is what they call variety, is it?’ then cracked up laughing. I honestly thought that Sharon had slipped some acid into my conflatkes that morning,” he wrote in “I Am Ozzy.”

Thelma Riley and Osbourne married in 1971; Osbourne adopted her son Elliott Kingsley, and they had two more children, Jessica and Louis. Osbourne later met his wife, then Sharon Levy, who became her own celebrity persona, when she was running her father’s Los Angeles office.



This album cover image released by UMe shows ‘Live from the Rainbow Theatre with Ray Cooper’ by Elton John. (AP)

Variety

BERLIN: A German court on Wednesday acquitted a satirist who was charged with having approved of an assassination attempt against **Donald Trump** during last year’s U.S. election campaign in a social media post and disturbed the public peace.

In a quickly deleted post under his alias “El Hotzo” on X in July last year, Sebastian Hotz drew a parallel between Trump and “the last bus” and wrote “unfortunately just missed.” In a follow-up post, he wrote: “I find it absolutely fantastic when fascists die.”

A gunman opened fire at a rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, while Trump was campaigning for president last July, grazing Trump’s ear and killing one of his supporters in the crowd. Trump went on to win the White House in November.

Prosecutors charged Hotz with approval of offenses. At a one-day trial at the Tiergarten district court in Berlin, prosecutors called for the 29-year-old to be handed a 6,000-euro (\$7,030) fine. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: The man accused of killing an “American Idol” executive and her husband used the couple’s gun to kill them and later called the police, authorities allege.

Los Angeles police previously said they responded to a 911 call about a burglary that afternoon, July 10, but left after finding “no signs of forced entry or trouble.”

Officers found the bodies of Robin Kaye and Thomas Deluca four days later at their home in the Encino neighborhood of Los Angeles while carrying out a welfare check. They had been shot to death.

During a town hall meeting Monday, Los Angeles District Attorney Nathan Hochman told concerned residents that the man charged in the killings, Raymond Boodarian, made the initial 911 call, ABC7 reported. He said Boodarian used a gun registered to one of the victims in the attack, which authorities believe happened when they arrived home unexpectedly while he was burglarizing the place. (AP)

NEW YORK: Ian Baker-Finch is retiring after CBS ends its PGA Tour golf coverage next week after nearly 19 years of his friendly Australian voice contributing to the network’s broadcast.

Baker-Finch, best known for his British Open victory in 1991 among his 16 victories worldwide, joined CBS in 2007. He had worked the previous decade in golf announcing with ESPN and TNT.

“Golf has been an enormous part of my life,” Baker-Finch, 64, said in a statement. “I was fortunate to compete against the best players in the game and more recently work with the very best in television.”

CBS ends its 2025 coverage of the PGA Tour next week at the Wyndham Championship. (AP)

NEW YORK: The Weeknd and Shakira - two of the world’s biggest touring artists - will headline this fall’s Global Citizen Festival in New York’s Central Park, supporting campaigns to improve energy access across Africa and defend the Amazon against deforestation.

Global Citizen announced Tuesday that the pop stars behind such hits as “Blinding Lights” and “Hips Don’t Lie” will be joined by Tyla, Ayra Starr and Mariah the Scientist at the concert on Sept. 27. Hosted by actor Hugh Jackman, the annual event highlights the anti-poverty nonprofit’s selected humanitarian priorities and urges attendees to collectively tackle those issues through direct support.

“The fact that these artists have immediate proximity to communities that have either recently emerged out of extreme poverty, or are emerging out of extreme poverty, gives them amazing perspective,” Global Citizen CEO Hugh Evans told The Associated Press. “And they bring that perspective into Central Park at this moment where I think the world needs a moment of unity now more than ever.” (AP)

‘Live From the Rainbow’ highlights singer’s underrated songs

Elton John’s new concert album spotlights a rich catalog

LOS ANGELES, July 23, (AP): On Elton John’s new concert album, the songs steal the show.

Deep cuts from John’s rich catalog are given the spotlight on “Live From the Rainbow Theatre With Ray Cooper.” The 13-song set was culled from a six-show residency in London in May 1977, with John at the piano and his longtime percussionist, Cooper, joining him for the second half of the show.

The album initially received a limited release on vinyl for Record Store Day and will be available digitally and on CD for the first time beginning Friday.

While John, of course, performed his biggest hits during the residency, the album wisely focuses on often overlooked material, pointing to the astounding quantity of quality songs John produced early in his career.

That includes “Cage the Songbird,” a lilting trib-

ute to Édith Piaf from the underrated 1976 LP “Blue Moves.”

Another highlight from that album is the cabaret jazz ballad “Idol,” which shows John could have thrived in a lounge had the rock star thing not worked out.

The piano man’s playing here is closer to Liberace than Little Richard, because ballads predominate, and Cooper’s role is tastefully restrained. Even when the tempo gets brisk on “Better Off Dead,” the song is delightfully hammy operetta rather than rock ‘n’ roll.

From start to finish, John sings with relish: He knows how good these songs are. “Where To Now St. Peter?” features an especially vigorous vocal, including full-throated falsetto.

“Live From the Rainbow Theatre” underscores John’s lyricist Bernie Taupin’s vital role in their song-

writing partnership. The album opens with “The Greatest Discovery,” a pairing of sweet sentiment and a charming melody, while “Ticking” is a gripping tale set in Queens that anticipated America’s epidemic of gun violence.

John introduces “Ticking” and two other songs by noting he doesn’t perform them often, or often enough. Banter elsewhere is mostly brief and stiff, but his droll wit does surface in one exchange with a spectator.

“How are you tonight? Nice handkerchief,” John says, before telling the rest of the audience, “He hasn’t washed that in three years.”

The 1977 performances took place as punk and disco were knocking John off his pop pedestal and ending his years-long reign as a consistent hitmaker. “Live From the Rainbow Theatre” offers a reminder that not all of his superb songs were singles.

Television



Malik Heard, (from left), Landon Boyce, Shade Jenifer and Bradley Rittmann of Soulidified pose for a portrait to promote ‘Building the Band’ on Wednesday, July 16, in Los Angeles. (AP)

One Direction star’s last big moment captured on Netflix

Payne’s final encore in ‘Building the Band’

LOS ANGELES, July 23, (AP): Netflix’s new reality show, “Building the Band,” unexpectedly became Liam Payne’s last major appearance - moments the show’s hosts say they, along with contestants and viewers, are lucky to have.

The show features Payne as a guest judge, offering pointed but witty advice to young bands chasing success not unlike what he achieved as part of the culture-shifting boy band, One Direction. Payne died in October after falling from a hotel balcony in Argentina, not long after the show’s production wrapped.

“Getting to see the real, true him that the world gets to remember him for, which you’ll see on this show, is just a beautiful thing,” says the Backstreet Boys’ AJ McLean, the show’s host.

“Building the Band” flips traditional music competitions on their head, bringing together 50 up-and-coming artists who are tasked with singing for each other and forming groups based on those performances. The catch? They can’t see how anyone looks.

The first batch of episodes premiered in early July and the last few episodes, including the finale, will drop Wednesday. The show ultimately follows six bands working to develop their group sound and performances - until only one band is left standing, winning the \$500,000 prize.

The show is hosted by McLean, with Pussycat Dolls frontwoman - and newly minted Tony winner - Nicole Scherzinger mentoring the bands and Destiny’s Child star Kelly Rowland serving as a guest judge alongside Payne.

The series opened with a dedication to Payne and his family, in which McLean said they “never imagined we’d soon be saying goodbye to our friend” while filming the show.

Payne first appears in the seventh episode for the showcase, where each band performs in front of a

live audience and the judges, only about a week after they form.

“We were amazing dancers, obviously, in One Direction,” Payne joked in the episode while offering critiques to boy band Midnight ‘til Morning, whose members expressed hesitations with dancing onstage. Band member Mason Watts then revealed his family had won tickets to sit front row at a One Direction concert when he was 11, stoking applause from the crowd and a heartfelt response from Payne.

“Ever since that moment, I wanted to be in a group,” Watts, originally from Australia, said in the episode. “It’s kind of a full-circle moment to be here with a group and performing in front of you. So, thank you, man.”

Landon Boyce, a member of the show’s other boy band, Soulidified, told The Associated Press that Payne left a lasting impact and was a leading example of how he hopes to carry himself as a performer.

“I remember Liam just said, ‘Have fun,’” Boyce says. “He just told us, ‘I wish One Direction kind of, like, did what you guys were doing.’ And I kind of just took that as like, let’s just have fun and dance.”

Payne is seen nodding along with excitement during the band’s showcase performance, when they sang “Sure Thing” by Miguel. Bradley Rittmann, another Soulidified member, told the AP they were “on Cloud 9” after Payne said he would join their band.

Payne applauded their ability to own the stage and acknowledged the unconventionality of their band due to the members’ varying musical and fashion styles, saying he “wouldn’t put you guys together, but the result was amazing.”

This show mashes together the likes of “Love is Blind” with music competition shows like “The

Voice,” secluding contestants in pods, where they can only hear each other. Contestants can express interest by hitting a button during the performance, and then speak through voice chats to test their chemistry.

The initial 50 contestants dwindled to just 22, comprising two boy bands, three girl bands and one mixed-gender group. Contestants chose their bandmates without input from the host or judges.

“It formed in the most real, raw, authentic way,” says Aaliyah Rose Larsen, a member of the mixed-gender band SZN4. “I think we would have re-found each other in a million other lifetimes, in a billion other shows, because we were always meant to find each other.”

The result of this process, judges say, are bands that labels traditionally wouldn’t form, given members’ differences in style and appearance - an important pillar of the show, McLean and Rowland say, given the current state of the music industry.

“Back in the beginning of our careers, your sophomore album was the one that would make or break you. Now you get one shot,” McLean says. “To be able to give the power back to these individuals, to let them put each other together based on just raw talent and chemistry, never seeing each other, is a testament to truly what it is to be in a band.”

An audience vote determines which bands continue on after each live performance. The last episode of the first batch left viewers on a cliffhanger, as Midnight ‘til Morning and girl group Siren Society were voted in the bottom two. The next batch will reveal who was eliminated.

Rowland says Payne was fully invested in the process and checked in regarding the bands’ progress after filming. Payne had also expressed interest in mentoring the bands after the show ended, Boyce remembers.

People

Twigs settles suit

Perry’s doctor to plead guilty

LOS ANGELES, July 23, (AP): A doctor charged with giving **Matthew Perry** ketamine in the weeks leading up to the “Friends” star’s overdose death is expected to plead guilty Wednesday.

Dr. Salvador Plasencia would be the fourth of five people charged in connection with Perry’s death to plead guilty. Plasencia was to have gone on trial in August until the doctor agreed last month to plead guilty to four counts of distribution of ketamine, according to the signed document filed in federal court in Los Angeles.

He had previously pleaded not guilty, but in exchange for the guilty pleas prosecutors have agreed to drop three additional counts of distribution of ketamine and two counts of falsifying records. Plasencia’s attorneys emphasized in an email after he reached his agreement that he “was not treating Matthew Perry at the time of his death and the ketamine that caused Mr. Perry’s death was not provided by Dr. Plasencia.”

The remaining charges can carry a maximum sentence of 40 years in prison, and there is no guarantee he’ll get less, but he’s likely to. Plasencia has been free on bond since shortly after his arrest in August. He will not be sentenced until a future hearing.

The only remaining defendant who has not reached an agreement with the U.S. Attorney’s Office is Jasveen Sangha, who prosecutors allege is a drug dealer known as the “Ketamine Queen” and sold Perry the lethal dose. Her trial is scheduled to begin next month. She has pleaded not guilty.

According to prosecutors and co-defendants who reached their own deals, Plasencia illegally supplied Perry with a large amount of ketamine starting about a month before his death on Oct. 28, 2023. According to a co-defendant, Plasencia in a text message called the actor a “moron” who could be exploited for money.

Perry’s personal assistant, his friend, and another doctor all agreed to plead guilty last year in exchange for their cooperation as the government sought to make their case against larger targets, Plasencia and Sangha. None have been sentenced yet.

Perry was found dead by the assistant, Kenneth Iwamasa. The medical examiner ruled that ketamine, typically used as a surgical anesthetic, was the primary cause of death.

The actor had been using the drug through his regular doctor in a legal but off-label treatment for depression, which has become increasingly common. Perry, 54, began seeking more ketamine than his doctor would give him.

FKA Twigs and Shia LaBeouf have agreed to settle her lawsuit alleging LaBeouf was physically and emotionally abusive to her during their relationship.

An attorney for the 37-year-old English singer and actor FKA Twigs, whose legal name is Tahliah Barnett, filed a request in Los Angeles Superior Court on Monday to dismiss her case against the 39-year-old American actor with prejudice, meaning it can’t be filed again.

“Committed to forging a constructive path forward, we have agreed to settle our case out of court,” the two said in a joint statement issued Tuesday by their attorneys. “While the details of the settlement will remain private, we wish each other personal happiness, professional success and peace in the future.”

First filed in 2020, the case had several trial dates scheduled in the years since, but those were always delayed well in advance.

NEW YORK, July 23, (AP): Author Daniel O’Malley returns to the world of his series he started with “The Rook” with “Royal Gambit,” an enjoyable and sometimes unwieldy novel about the supernatural operations of a paranormal secret service investigating a string of bizarre murders.

Gambit centers around the aristocratic Lady Alexandra Mondegreen (Alix) and her investigation into the mysterious murder of her childhood friend, the Prince of Wales. Alix has the unique talent of being able to shatter bones with just a touch of her hand, but she is resented by the other members of the service for the perceived favoritism that comes with her noble title. Her youth was spent as a secret bodyguard to Princess Louise, the woman who now finds herself next in line to the throne. This connection proves useful as the agency’s way into investigating who at the palace (or outside of it) could be responsible for the death

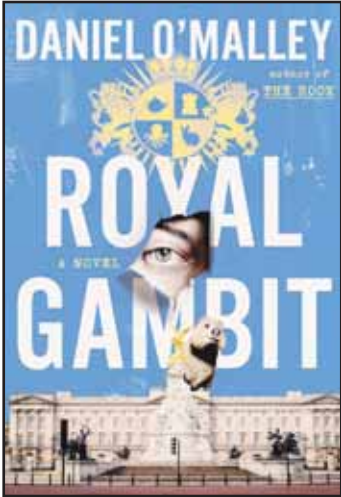
of the heir apparent and gives Alix a chance to prove her worth as an asset to the agency.

O’Malley finds humor in showing how these agents with strange and sometimes absurd powers adhere to the same bureaucracy and hierarchies as any other government organization. Along with coming to work on time and navigating office politics, there is a chance you will be the victim of a dinosaur stampede or watch your colleague turn into a tree.

Alix also emerges as a compelling heroine, driven by her ambition to rise within the ranks of the Checquy and prove herself, yet deeply committed to uncovering the truth behind the tragedy that struck a family she has genuine affection for. A highlight of the book is her sometimes awkward, but humorous journey as a new lady-in-waiting to the princess, having to balance garden lunches with dangerous missions.

Although intended as a stand-alone

story, O’Malley assumes readers will quickly grasp the complexities of this world and how it operates without



This book cover image released by Little, Brown & Co. shows ‘Royal Gambit’ by Daniel O’Malley. (AP)

much prior knowledge. However, keeping track of the extensive rules and traditions of this secret service and upper-crust English society makes it difficult to keep engaged in the mystery at hand. The book gets bogged down in its mythology and is slow to give us plot developments. Further challenging the pacing of the novel are the constant additions to an over-large cast of characters, all with different supernatural abilities or aristocratic titles.

All of these elements lead to a clunky conclusion that too easily ties up loose ends and loses the impact of the tragedy that started the story. The book would have benefited from more clever twists and paranormal action, as opposed to heavy exposition about this super-secret agency and the people who run it. Ultimately, this makes for a fun, elevated beach read for those who enjoy their mystery novels with supernatural leanings and a dry British sense of humor.

Rise of AI ‘friends’ sparks mental health concerns for youth

Teens turn to AI for friendship, ‘to get out of thinking’

NEW YORK, July 23, (AP): No question is too small when Kayla Chege, a high school student in Kansas, is using artificial intelligence.

The 15-year-old asks ChatGPT for guidance on back-to-school shopping, makeup colors, low-calorie choices at Smoothie King, plus ideas for her Sweet 16 and her younger sister's birthday party.

The sophomore honors student makes a point not to have chatbots do her homework and tries to limit her interactions to mundane questions. But in interviews with The Associated Press and a new study, teenagers say they are increasingly interacting with AI as if it were a companion, capable of providing advice and friendship.

"Everyone uses AI for everything now. It's really taking over," said Chege, who wonders how AI tools will affect her generation. "I think kids use AI to get out of thinking."

For the past couple of years, concerns about cheating at school have dominated the conversation around kids and AI. But artificial intelligence is playing a much larger role in many



Bruce Perry, 17, demonstrates Character AI, an artificial intelligence chatbot software that allows users to chat with popular characters such as EVE from Disney's 2008 animated film, WALL-E, Tuesday, July 15, 2025, in Russellville, Ark. (AP)

of their lives. AI, teens say, has become a go-to source for personal advice, emotional support, everyday decision-making and problem-solving.

More than 70% of teens have used AI companions and half use them regularly, according to a new study from Common Sense Media, a group that

studies and advocates for using screens and digital media sensibly.

The study defines AI companions as platforms designed to serve as "digital friends," like Character.AI or Replika, which can be customized with specific traits or personalities and can offer emotional support, companionship and conversations that can feel human-like. But popular sites like ChatGPT and Claude, which mainly answer questions, are being used in the same way, the researchers say.

As the technology rapidly gets more sophisticated, teenagers and experts worry about AI's potential to redefine human relationships and exacerbate crises of loneliness and youth mental health.

"AI is always available. It never gets bored with you. It's never judgmental," says Ganesh Nair, an 18-year-old in Arkansas. "When you're talking to AI, you are always right. You're always interesting. You are always emotionally justified."

All that used to be appealing, but as Nair heads to college this fall, he wants to step back from using AI. Nair

got spooked after a high school friend who relied on an "AI companion" for heart-to-heart conversations with his girlfriend later had the chatbot write the breakup text ending his two-year relationship.

"That felt a little bit dystopian, that a computer generated the end to a real relationship," said Nair. "It's almost like we are allowing computers to replace our relationships with people."

In the Common Sense Media survey, 31% of teens said their conversations with AI companions were "as satisfying or more satisfying" than talking with real friends. Even though half of teens said they distrust AI's advice, 33% had discussed serious or important issues with AI instead of real people.

Those findings are worrisome, says Michael Robb, the study's lead author and head researcher at Common Sense, and should send a warning to parents, teachers and policymakers. The now-booming and largely unregulated AI industry is becoming as integrated with adolescence as smartphones and

social media are.

"It's eye-opening," said Robb. "When we set out to do this survey, we had no understanding of how many kids are actually using AI companions." The study polled more than 1,000 teens nationwide in April and May.

Adolescence is a critical time for developing identity, social skills and independence, Robb said, and AI companions should complement - not replace - real-world interactions.

"If teens are developing social skills on AI platforms where they are constantly being validated, not being challenged, not learning to read social cues or understand somebody else's perspective, they are not going to be adequately prepared in the real world," he said.

The nonprofit analyzed several popular AI companions in a "risk assessment," finding ineffective age restrictions and that the platforms can produce sexual material, give dangerous advice and offer harmful content. The group recommends that minors not use AI companions.

1,307 cholera cases in Sudan

WHO sounds alarm over global Chikungunya spike

GENEVA, July 23, (KUNA): The World Health Organization (WHO) on Tuesday sounded the alarm over a concerning global resurgence of the Chikungunya virus, warning that the current pattern mirrors the devastating outbreak that swept across the Indian Ocean region two decades ago.

"Chikungunya is a disease that is not very widely known, but it has now been detected and is being transmitted in 119 countries. About 5.6 billion people live in areas at risk for chikungunya and other mosquito-borne viruses," said Dr. Diana Alvarez, WHO Team Lead on Arboviruses, during a press conference in Geneva.

She explained that Chikungunya, transmitted primarily by Aedes mosquitoes - commonly known as the "tiger mosquito" - which also spread Zika and urban yellow fever, can trigger rapid and widespread outbreaks in areas lacking population immunity, putting immense pressure on healthcare systems.

Symptoms typically include very high fever, severe joint and muscle pain, rash, and extreme fatigue. While most cases last only a few days, "up to 40 percent of infected individuals develop long-term disabilities that may persist for months or even years," Alvarez said.

"This is where the heavy burden of Chikungunya lies; it affects countries' economies, their workforce, and the quality of life of affected populations. In rare cases, the disease can be fatal, particularly among the elderly and newborns," she warned.

Drawing parallels to the 2004-2005 epidemic, Alvarez recalled that nearly half a million cases were reported across small island territories in the Indian Ocean and parts of Southeast Asia. "In some islands, almost a third of the population was infected," she said. "After that, Chikungunya spread globally, revealing its epidemic potential."

According to Alvarez, WHO has observed a similar trend since

early 2025. "The same islands affected 20 years ago are now facing large outbreaks - Mauritius and La Reunion, for instance - where a third of the population is estimated to have been infected."

She warned that the virus is now expanding into Madagascar, Somalia, and Kenya, with epidemic transmission also occurring in South Asia, including India, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh, and imported cases emerging in Europe. "Local transmission has already been reported in France, and a new case was detected last week in Italy," she added.

Alvarez confirmed that WHO is supporting member states by enhancing laboratory diagnostics, training healthcare workers, strengthening clinical management, improving risk communication, and boosting mosquito control and surveillance systems.

"There is no specific treatment for Chikungunya," Alvarez emphasized. "Prevention is key. Avoiding mosquito bites through repellents is important."

□ □ □

Cholera: A total of 1,307 new cholera cases, including 18 deaths, were reported in Sudan over the past week, the Ministry of Health announced on Tuesday.

"Between July 12 and 18, a total of 1,307 cholera cases were recorded, including 18 deaths, across 35 localities in 12 states," the ministry said in a statement.

According to the ministry, Tawila locality in North Darfur State recorded the highest number of infections with 519 cases, while Bileil locality in South Darfur State reported the highest number of deaths.

The ministry added that since July 2024, the total number of cholera cases has climbed to 91,034, including 2,302 deaths, across 116 localities in 17 states.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs recently warned that the humanitarian crisis in Sudan is worsening amid the deadly cholera outbreak, floods, and mass returns to underserved areas.

80 children, 21 adults died from starvation

Over 1,000 aid-seekers killed in Gaza since May, as hunger worsens: UN

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip, July 23, (AP): More than 1,000 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces since May while trying to get food in the Gaza Strip, mostly near aid sites run by an American contractor, the UN human rights office said Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Israeli strikes killed 25 people across Gaza, according to local health officials.

Desperation is mounting in the Palestinian territory of more than 2 million, which experts say is at risk of famine because of Israel's blockade and nearly two-year offensive. A breakdown of law and order has led to widespread looting and contributed to chaos and violence around aid deliveries.

Israel accuses Hamas of siphoning off aid - without providing evidence of widespread diversion - and blames UN agencies for failing to deliver food it has allowed in. The military says it has only fired warning shots near aid sites. The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, an Israeli-backed American contractor, rejected what it said were "false and exaggerated statistics" from the United Nations.

Starvation

The Gaza Health Ministry, which is part of the Hamas-run government and staffed by medical professionals, said Tuesday that 80 children have died from starvation since the beginning of the war, while 21 adults have since Sunday. The ministry only recently began tracking deaths from malnutrition in adults.

The deaths could not be independently verified, but UN officials and major international aid groups say the conditions for starvation exist in Gaza. During hunger crises, people can die from malnutrition or from common illnesses or injuries that the body is not strong enough to fight.

Israel eased a 2½-month blockade in May, allowing a trickle of aid in through the longstanding U.N.-run system and the newly created GHF. Aid groups say it's not nearly enough. Dozens of Palestinians lined up Tuesday outside a charity kitchen in Gaza City, hoping for a bowl of watery tomato soup. The lucky ones got small chunks of eggplant. As supplies ran out, people holding pots pushed and



A woman holds a piece of bread, as she protests outside the Egyptian Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, Wednesday, July 23, during a demonstration against the Israeli war and what they say starvation of civilians in the Gaza Strip. (AP)

shoved to get to the front.

Nadia Mdoukh, a pregnant woman who was displaced from her home and lives in a tent with her husband and three children, said she worries about being shoved or trampled on, and about heat stroke as daytime temperatures hover above 90 F (32 C).

"I do it for my children," she said. "This is famine - there is no bread or flour."

The U.N. World Food Program says Gaza's hunger crisis has reached "new and astonishing levels of desperation." Ross Smith, the agency's director for emergencies, told reporters Monday that nearly 100,000 women and children are suffering from severe acute malnutrition, and a third of Gaza's population is going without food for multiple days in a row.

Charity

MedGlobal, a charity working in Gaza, said five children as young as 3 months had died from starvation in the past three days.

"This is a deliberate and human-made disaster," said Joseph Belliveau, its executive director. "Those children died because there is not enough food in Gaza and not enough medicines, including IV fluids and therapeutic formula, to revive them."

The charity said food is in such short

supply that its own staff members suffer dizziness and headaches.

Of the 1,054 people killed while trying to get food since late May, 766 were killed while heading to sites run by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, according to the UN human rights office. The others were killed when gunfire erupted around UN convoys or aid sites.

Thameen al-Kheetan, a spokesperson for the UN rights office, says its figures come from "multiple reliable sources on the ground," including medics, humanitarian and human rights organizations. He said the numbers were still being verified according to the office's strict methodology.

Palestinian witnesses and health officials say Israeli forces regularly fire toward crowds of thousands of people heading to the GHF sites. The military says it has only fired warning shots, and GHF says its armed contractors have only fired into the air on a few occasions to try to prevent stampedes.

A joint statement from 28 Western-aligned countries on Monday condemned the "the drip feeding of aid and the inhumane killing of civilians."

"The Israeli government's aid delivery model is dangerous, fuels instability and deprives Gazans of human dignity," read the statement, which was signed by the United Kingdom, France and other countries friendly to Israel.

Funding loss

US pulls out of UNESCO again

PARIS, July 23, (AP): With the support of international partners and the mobilization of \$115 million, the UN cultural agency UNESCO recently helped rebuild the Iraqi city of Mosul after it was devastated by the Islamic State group.

The restoration of the historic city's iconic Al-Nouri Mosque and Al-Hadba Minaret was just one of many programs run by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which is in the spotlight because the United States is leaving it once again.

The decision to pull US funding and participation from UNESCO will deal a blow to its work preserving cultural heritage around the world. U.S. President Donald Trump exited the agency during his first term, accusing it of promoting anti-Israel speech. The Biden administration had rejoined UNESCO in 2023 after citing concerns that China was filling the gap left by the U.S. in UNESCO policymaking.

Disputes

Beyond the diplomatic disputes, here's a look at the work that UNESCO does:

UNESCO names World Heritage sites, including landmarks like the Great Wall of China, the Egyptian pyramids, the Taj Mahal and the Statue of Liberty, and gives them special protection under its World Heritage Sites program.

Its World Heritage Committee each year designates sites considered "of outstanding value to humanity" and intervenes when sites are in danger of destruction or damage. The program provides countries with technical assistance and professional training to preserve the sites.

It now also includes "intangible" heritage such as folk songs and traditional dances, crafts and cooking in its lists. A World Heritage site designation is coveted and seen as a boost to tourism.

Like the rest of the U.N., UNESCO was created in response to the horrors of World War II, and particularly Nazi crimes. Amid concerns that the agency's Arab members have used UNESCO to pass anti-Israel resolutions, UNESCO has worked in recent years on Holocaust awareness projects. That includes educational materials and organizing visits to former Nazi concentration camps.

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Australia spoils Russell’s last game for West Indies

Inglis and Green sharing Australian T20 record 131-run stand

KINGSTON, Jamaica, July 23, (AP): Josh Inglis and Cameron Green combined in a record partnership for Australia to ensure “Dre Day” at Sabina Park didn’t end in a victory for West Indies Twenty20 cricket great Andre Russell.

After plundering four big sixes and scoring 36 off 15 balls before he skied a top edge that ended his last international innings, Russell had to wait and see if a total of 172-8 would be enough for West Indies to hold off Australia on Tuesday.

Not quite. The Australians reached 173-2 and completed an eight-wicket win with almost five overs to spare to take a 2-0 lead in the five-match T20 series.

Inglis was unbeaten on 78 from 33 balls and Green was 56 off 32 balls, the pair sharing a 131-run stand, an Australian T20 record for the third wicket.

Green also scored a half-century on Sunday in Australia’s three-wicket win to

open the series. The back-to-back wins at Sabina Park extended Australia’s streak to five in the Caribbean following the 3-0 test series sweep.

His last innings in international cricket was vintage Dre Rus, the kind of shot-making that helped him win two T20 World Cups and star in domestic T20 leagues around the world.

The 37-year-old allrounder went with the total at 98-5 and dominated a 41-run sixth-wicket stand with Rovman Powell.

Russell clobbered sixes on three of the first four balls off Ben Dwarshuis in the 15th over, going down the ground over the site screen, top-edging over the wicket-keeper and hitting over the midwicket boundary.

He didn’t wear a helmet when he went out to bat, so the trademark dyed blond stripe down the middle of his head was visible most of his innings.

In one over against Adam Zampa, Russell cut for four and then hoisted the next ball into the second tier of the stadium for six. The onslaught put so much pressure on Zampa that the experienced Australian spinner bowled consecutive wides. Eventually, though, Russell put on a protective helmet. Soon after, he mis-timed

a slower ball from Nathan Ellis and his edge went high into the air before it was gloved by Inglis.

Both teams had formed a guard of honor for Russell to walk onto the field before the match. The Australian players shook his hand and patted his back as he walked back to the pavilion following his innings.

“The result didn’t go my way, but I’m happy and grateful,” Russell said in a post-game TV interview. “I really appreciate the fans who turned out and showed the love. Sorry the result didn’t go our way.

“I feel like it’s time for me to hang it up and wish the guys the best of luck moving forward.”

The Australian bowlers shared the wickets in the first innings, with Zampa taking 3-29, Glenn Maxwell returning 2-15 and Ellis finishing with 2-34. For the West Indies, some sloppy fielding, including at least five dropped catches, hurt their chances of defending the total.

The series moves to St. Kitts for the next three games on Friday, Saturday and Monday.

Norrie eliminates No. 2 seed Musetti

Venus becomes the oldest woman since Navratilova to win singles match

WASHINGTON, July 23, (AP): Venus Williams wanted to send a message - to herself and to others - about coming back from a long lay-off, about competing in a sport at age 45, about never giving up. Yes, there was something special about just being back on a tennis court.

There also was this: She really, really wanted to win.

And Williams did just that, becoming the second-oldest woman to win a tour-level singles match in professional tennis, delivering some of her familiar big serves and groundstrokes at age 45 while beating Peyton Stearns - 22 years her junior - by a 6-3, 6-4 score at the DC Open.

The only older woman to win a tour-level singles match was Martina Navratilova, whose last triumph came at 47 in 2004.

The former No. 1-ranked Williams had not played singles in an official match since March 2024 in Miami, missing time while having surgery to remove uterine fibroids. She hadn’t won in singles since August 2023 in Cincinnati. Until this week, she was listed by the WTA Tour as “inactive.”



Ben Shelton returns the ball against Mackenzie McDonald during a match at the Citi Open tennis tournament in Washington. (AP)

“I’m just constantly praying for good health, so that way I could have an opportunity to play with good health,” Williams said. “A lot of this for me is being able to come back and try to play at a level (and) to play healthy.”

Backed by a crowd that clearly was there to see, and support, her at the hard-court tournament in the nation’s capital, Williams showed glimpses of the talent she possesses and the skills she displayed while earning all of her Grand Slam titles: seven in singles, 14 in women’s doubles - all alongside younger sister Serena - and two in mixed doubles.

In Tuesday’s second game, Williams smacked a return winner to get things started, then delivered a couple of other big responses to break Stearns, a 23-year-old who won singles and team NCAA titles at the University of Texas and is currently ranked 35th.

Emma Raducanu handed No. 7 seed Marta Kostyuk a sixth consecutive loss Tuesday, defeating her 7-6 (4), 6-4 at the DC Open to prolong a slide that now has lasted more than two months.

This was the fifth tournament in a row where Kostyuk exited in the first round; she also lost in the fourth round at Rome, starting the current rut. She hasn’t won a match since May 11 in Rome.

The 46th-ranked Raducanu, who



Venus Williams returns the ball against Peyton Stearns during a match at the Citi Open tennis tournament in Washington. (AP)

won the 2021 U.S. Open, will face four-time major champion Naomi Osaka next. Osaka was a 6-2, 7-5 winner against Yulia Putintseva.

In men’s action at the hard-court tournament, Cam Norrie eliminated

No. 2 seed Lorenzo Musetti 3-6, 6-2, 6-3, keeping the Italian without a win since he got injured last month at the French Open and needed to quit playing in the semifinals. Musetti lost in the first round at Wim-

bledon, a year after reaching the semifinals there.

Holger Rune, who was seeded third in Washington, withdrew before his match Tuesday because of a back injury.

Sparks top Mystics for 3rd straight victory

Minnesota remains unbeaten at home with blowout win over Sky

MINNEAPOLIS, July 23, (AP): Kayla McBride and Napheesa Collier scored 19 points apiece and the Minnesota Lynx dominated the middle quarters in a 91-68 win over Chicago Sky on Tuesday night, improving to 13-0 in home games.

Down 24-18 after one quarter, the Lynx outscored the Sky 29-14 in the second for a 47-38 lead at halftime. A 23-12 scoring edge in the third quarter made it 70-50 entering the fourth.

Bridget Carlton had 11 points for the Lynx (21-4) and Alanna Sith and Courtney Williams each had 10. Back-up point guard Natisha Hiedeman injured an ankle in the third quarter and finished the game on the bench.

Kia Nurse, starting in place of the injured Ariel Atkins, scored 16 points to lead the Sky (7-16). Angel Reese had 11 points and 11 rebounds with nine turnovers, and Kamilla Cardoso added 10 points and 10 rebounds.

The Lynx scored on 11 consecutive possessions to close the first half. Chicago held Collier, coming off a 36-point MVP performance at the All-Star game, scoreless in the first period and eight points, while McBride had 12 at halftime.

Minnesota had 10 points off seven turnovers in the second quarter and finished with 20 on 23 Chicago miscues, the most the Lynx have forced this season. They also blocked eight shots, four by Collier.

Smith opened the second half with a 3-pointer to extend the lead to 50-38, and McBride followed with another as the Lynx pulled away.

Sparks 93, Mystics 86

In Washington, Dearica Hamby had 24 points and 14 rebounds for her 48th career double-double, Riquea Jackson scored 20 of her 22 points in the second half and the Los Angeles Sparks beat the Washington Mystics.

Los Angeles (9-14) has won three straight games, including back-to-back victories over Washington (11-12), before and after the All-Star break.

Los Angeles led 81-78 before scoring nine straight points, capped by Hamby’s baseline jumper with 1:54 left in the fourth quarter for a 12-point lead. Kelsey Plum sealed it on a long 3-pointer with 49.1 left.

Plum finished with 11 points and three 3-pointers for Los Angeles. Jackson made four of the Sparks’ 13 3s.

Brittney Sykes led Washington with 18 points and Shakira Austin added 17.



Las Vegas Aces forward NaLyssa Smith (3) and Atlanta Dream forward Brianna Jones (24) fight for the ball during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Las Vegas. (AP)

Kiki Iriafen scored 13. Sonia Citron, Washington’s second-leading scorer at 14.1 points per game, finished with seven points, five assists and three steals. Citron did not attempt her first field goal until midway through the third quarter.

Wings 87, Storm 63

In Seattle, Arike Ogunbowale scored 20 points including four 3-pointers, Paige Bueckers had 14 points for her 19th straight double-digit game to begin her career, and the Dallas Wings beat the short-handed Seattle Storm.

Bueckers also had six assists to tie Caitlin Clark’s WNBA record for the fastest player to reach 300 points and 100 assists.

Skyler Diggins, Seattle’s leader with 17.5 points and 5.8 assists per game, did not play due to personal reasons.

Dallas trailed 36-26 with 1:33 left in the second quarter before scoring the final eight points of the half, capped by Ogunbowale’s 3-pointer with 0.2 seconds left. The Wings also started the third on a 9-0 run for a 43-36 lead following the 17-0 run around the half-time break.

Li Yueru, the former Seattle center, made a 3-pointer from the corner to extend Dallas’ lead to 77-58 with 4:46 left. The Wings outscored the Storm 53-27 in the second half.

Luisa Geiselsoder added 13 points and Yueru had eight points and 10 rebounds for Dallas (7-17), which snapped a four-game losing streak.

Ogunbowale made her first four 3-point attempts.

Aces 87, Dream 72

In Las Vegas, A’ja Wilson had 24 points and 12 rebounds, Dana Evans provided a spark off the bench and the Las Vegas Aces won three straight games for the first time this season with a victory over the Atlanta Dream.

Evans scored the first nine points of the second quarter to give the Aces the lead for good and finished with 14 points. Jackie Young added 14 points for Las Vegas (12-11), which plays its next four on the road. NaLyssa Smith had 11 points.

Allisha Gray led the Dream (13-10) with 24 points and eight rebounds. Jordan Canada added 12 points. Atlanta is without All-Star and leading scorer Rhyné Howard due to a knee injury. She missed the last two games before the All-Star break and will miss at least four more.

A 3-pointer by Te’Hina Paopao had the Dream within 68-62 with 7:48 to play, but the Aces had a seven-point run to get the lead back to 13 points and Atlanta never threatened again.

The Dream led 27-20 after one quarter behind Gray’s 12 points and a closing 15-3 run. Atlanta was 7 of 15 overall, but 5 of 8 behind the arc and were plus-8 from the foul line. The Dream were 4 of 19 from distance over the last three quarters and shot 38.5% overall.



Minnesota Lynx forward Napheesa Collier (24) collides with Chicago Sky center Kamilla Cardoso (10) during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Minneapolis. (AP)

Host Morocco reaches final of Women’s Afcon

RABAT, Morocco, July 23, (AP): Goalkeeper Khadija Er-Rmichi blocked Comfort Yeboah’s attempt and host Morocco advanced to the championship of the Women’s Africa Cup of Nations on a penalty shootout after a 1-1 draw with Ghana.

Morocco, which prevailed 4-2 on penalties, will face Nigeria in the final Saturday. The Super Falcons defeated defending champions South Africa 2-1 in the earlier semifinal Tuesday in Casablanca.

Ghana took a first-half lead. Er-Rmichi got a hand on Josephine Bonsu’s header but it bounced off the post and skittered across the goal for Stella Nyamekye to push it into the net in the 26th minute.

Morocco equalized in the 55th when Sakina Ouzaoui bounced a pass from her chest to her feet and scored from underneath diving Ghana goalkeeper Cynthia Konlan.

Scoreless for the rest of regulation, the match went to extra time at Rabat’s Olympic Stadium.

Morocco has seen its national team rise in recent years. The team reached the WAFCON final in 2022 but fell to South Africa. Morocco also went to the Women’s World Cup for the first time in 2023 and advanced to the round of 16.

Morocco advanced to the semifinals with a 3-1 victory over Mali, while Ghana downed Algeria 4-2 on penalties after a scoreless draw.

Change Name

I, Sat Pal Ram (Current name in passport), I am a present holder of Indian Passport No. R8112591 having permanent address Village Satiana, P.O. Jonewal, Sub-tehsil koom kalan, District Ludhiana, Punjab, India Residing in Kuwait at present, I hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as under Given Name: Sat Pal Ram Jeet Ram

DFL intends to attract fans with ‘a peek through the keyhole’

BERLIN, July 23, (Xinhua): Fans of German football, both national and international, can look forward to new insights as the League Association DFL announced plans to expand its TV and social media coverage.

Association CEO Steffen Merkel called the initiative “a peek through the keyhole,” aimed at drawing more attention and boosting the league’s international revenues.

To bring fans closer to the action, clubs and players will be expected to provide additional content

such as interviews, locker-room footage, and behind-the-scenes clips filmed on mobile phones by coaching staff and players.

The new package includes coverage from inside team buses and hotels, the players’ walk into the stadium, and the locker room.

TV crews will receive expanded access, including live broadcasts from the field and interviews from the center circle shortly after full time.

They will also be able to cover post-match team meetings and capture audio of speeches by coaches

or players in more than 50 games per season.

League official Merkel described the project as “closer to the game.” The format is expected to launch with the 2025-26 second division season and debut around the German Supercup final on August 16, when 2025 Cup winner VfB Stuttgart faces 2025 League champion Bayern Munich.

Schalke 04 will host Hertha BSC on August 1 in the second division’s opening match.

The DFL official called the plan an “innovative top-media product with world-class standards.”

Merkel said the decision is intended to boost the global appeal of German football and meet evolving customer demands, particularly among younger audiences.

International revenues have stagnated in recent years, seeing only a slight increase to 217 million euros annually.

Players and coaching staff will be responsible for contributing content, while team buses will be fitted with cameras to document their journey from hotel to stadium.

Pogaar maintains lead

Italian sprinter Milan powers to 2nd stage win at Tour de France

VALENCE, France, July 23, (AP): Sprint specialist Jonathan Milan pounced at the finish to win the 17th stage of the Tour de France after a crash in the last kilometer derailed rivals' hopes on Wednesday.

Italian rider Milan, the green jersey holder, consolidated his lead in the points classification with an explosive finish to get his wheel just over the line ahead of Jordi Meeus, Tobias Lund Andresen, Arnaud De Lie, Davide Ballerini and others in a rain-soaked sprint finale.

It's Milan's second stage win of the Tour after his victory in similar fashion in Laval on Saturday.

But it was arguably more dramatic with rival

sprinter Tim Merlier and others involved in a crash under the "flamme rouge" - the triangular red banner over the road signaling the final kilometer.

"The last 25 kilometers were really, really, fast," said Merlier, who finished 25th, more than a minute behind. "I think I did a mistake. I took one roundabout on the wrong side and I lost a lot of positions. And then I knew I needed to move up. The moment I wanted to move up, I crashed."

There was no significant change in the overall standings with three-time Tour champion Tadej Pogaar maintaining his lead of 4 minutes, 15 seconds over main rival Jonas Vingegaard.



Italy's Jonathan Milan, second left, celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the seventeenth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 160.4 kilometers (99.7 miles) with start in Bollene and finish in Valence, France. (AP)

Walaza sprints to 100m title



Gold medalist Ouyang Yu (center) of China, silver medalist Wang Yi (left) of China and bronze medalist Avery Grace Giese of the United States pose after the women's 1m springboard final of diving at the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games in Berlin, Germany. (Xinhua)

US continues swimming dominance at Universiade

BOCHUM, Germany, July 23, (Xinhua): Bayanda Walaza sprinted to the men's 100m title to give South Africa its third gold medal at the Rhine-Ruhr World University Games, while Team USA continued to dominate the swimming pool with four more golds.

The Paris 2024 Olympian and world junior champion crossed the line in 10.16 seconds, edging Thailand's Puripol Boonson (10.22), the same rival he beat at last year's under-20 global competition in Peru. Asian champion Hiroki Yanagita finished third, just 0.01 seconds behind Boonson.

"I feel glorified. I believe in winning. As soon as I was on that [start] line, I was looking at that finish line. My mind was there. I need to cross it before everyone," said Walaza, who, at just 18, ran the leadoff leg in the men's 4x100m relay final to help South Africa claim silver at Paris 2024.

Walaza became just the ninth South African to break the 10-second barrier in the 100m when he clocked 9.94 in Zagreb in May. Weeks earlier, he set a national junior record of 20.08 in the 200m.

Australia's Georgia Harris won the women's 100m in 11.44, ahead of Poland's Magdalena Stefanowicz (11.49) and South Africa's Gabriella Marais (11.51).

Germany claimed a one-two finish in the men's discus, with Mika Sosna winning gold with a throw of 64.26 meters and Steven Richter taking silver at

61.77. Ukraine's Mykhailo Brudin posted a season-best 60.71 to earn bronze.

The women's long jump podium was separated by just three centimeters. Portugal's Agate Sousa leaped 6.60 meters, two centimeters ahead of China's Asian Games champion Xiong Shiqi, who finished one centimeter ahead of Spain's Natalia Gonzalez.

"It's a pity to miss the top place by just two centimeters," said Xiong, who earned China's first athletics medal at the Games. "But the result is compatible with my capability and my expectation. I want to inspire my teammates in the upcoming track and field competitions with this very first medal in the stadium for China." Swedish Olympian Axelina Johansson won the women's shot put with a throw of 18.45 meters. American top qualifier Abria Smith followed with 17.38, while South Africa's Colette Uys claimed bronze at 17.34, narrowly ahead of compatriot Mine de Klerk by one centimeter.

Seven finals were contested in the pool, with Team USA winning four. The American men continued their relay dominance with a record-breaking win in the 4x200m freestyle, finishing in 7:04.51 to break the previous Games mark of 7:05.49 set by Russia in 2013.

Cavan Gormsen surged from eighth to first on the back half of the women's 200m freestyle, winning gold for the U.S. in 1:57.21. She closed the final 50 meters in 29.13 to pass three swimmers and edge China's Ai Yanhan by 0.3 seconds.

Leah Shackley broke her own day-old meet record to win the women's 50m backstroke in 27.31 seconds,

trimming 0.3 off her semifinal time of 27.66.

In the women's 200m individual medley, another American, Leah Hayes, won gold in 2:09.48, improving on her Games record from the semifinal.

Competing as a neutral athlete, Aleksandr Stepanov won his second freestyle distance title of the meet with victory in the men's 800m in 7:46.51, finishing nearly four seconds ahead of Italy's Tommaso Griffante.

Italy's Gianmarco Sansone claimed gold in the men's 100m butterfly with a personal-best 51.40. Germany's Bjorn Kammann finished second in 51.70, followed by Uzbekistan's Eldorbek Usmonov (51.84).

Federico Rizzardi earned Italy's second gold of the session, winning the men's 50m breaststroke in 27.14, nearly 0.2 seconds ahead of the field.

In diving, China's Zhang Wenao won gold in the men's 1m springboard with 425.85 points, followed by teammate Hu Yukang (368.75). Germany's Tim Axur took bronze with 354.80.

South Korea claimed its fifth fencing gold by edging France 45-43 in the women's sabre team event. Italy secured its third fencing title with a commanding 45-20 win over Poland in the men's foil team final.

The top three on the medal table remained unchanged after the sixth day of competition. The U.S. leads with 21 golds (20 in swimming), 12 silvers and 20 bronzes, followed by China (12-17-4) and South Korea (11-5-13). Host Germany sits fourth with seven golds, six silvers and eight bronzes.

Liverpool signs Egyptian talent Karim Ahmed to first pro deal

LONDON, July 23: Liverpool, the reigning Premier League champion, announced on its official website that Egyptian youngster Karim Ahmed has signed his first professional contract with the club.

Ahmed, who joined the club's academy at the age of six, made an instant impression when he scored on his debut for the U-18 side in an FA Youth Cup clash against Bournemouth in December 2022.

A versatile player capable of operating as a forward or an attacking

midfielder, Ahmed is praised for his creativity and ability to unlock defenses. Last season, he enjoyed a strong campaign with the U-18s, recording seven goals and five assists, and also appeared in UEFA Youth League matches against Bologna and RB Leipzig.

Looking ahead, Ahmed will step up to Liverpool's U-21 squad for the 2025-26 season under the guidance of newly appointed head coach Rob Page, continuing his development within the club's youth structure.



Egyptian youngster Karim Ahmed

Best of the Rest

Mosquera joins Arsenal squad: Valencia's Spain Under-21 defender Cristhian Mosquera is on the verge of signing for Arsenal after joining up with the squad on the club's Asian tour in Singapore.

Mosquera has reportedly agreed a five-year contract, with an option to extend his stay for a further year, with Arsenal paying Valencia an initial fee of 13 million pounds (17.6 million US dollars).

21-year-old Mosquera has been one of the few bright spots as Valencia has struggled to avoid relegation from La Liga in the past two seasons, with the youngster missing just two games in the 2023-24 campaign and just one last season, with his power in the air and pace vital factors in keeping the club in the elite.

He will be Arsenal's fifth signing of the summer as the club aims to go one better than last season's second place in the Premier League, with goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga and forward Noni Madueke signing from Chelsea, midfielder Christian Norgaard coming in from Brentford and Martin Zubimendi joining from Real Sociedad.

Arsenal is also believed to be close to finalizing a deal for Swedish striker Viktor Gyokeres, with talks reportedly at an "extremely advanced stage." Meanwhile Zubimendi gave an interview on the club website explaining that Arsenal coach Mikel Arteta was one reason he had decided to join the north-London outfit. (Xinhua)

Athletic Bilbao signs right back Areso: Right back Jesus Areso completed a return to Athletic Bilbao when he joined the club from Osasuna for the second time in his career.

Areso joins for a fee close to his 12-million-euro (14 million US dollars) release clause and has signed a six-year contract until the end of June 2031, with Athletic holding off interest from Atletico Madrid.

The transfer marks the 26-year-old's second move from Osasuna to Athletic Bilbao, following his initial transfer in 2017, when Athletic paid 450,000 euros for his services.

He spent three seasons in the club's B-team making 55 appearances, but rejected offers of a new contract to return to Osasuna in 2021 and after overcoming a serious leg injury, he has been first choice for the Pamplona-based club in the last two seasons, making 76 appearances in La Liga. (Xinhua)

Commissioner Phillips sees stable years ahead

ACC has moved past lawsuits and uncertainty

CHARLOTTE, N.C., July 23, (AP): Jim Phillips stood in the same spot Tuesday morning that he did exactly one year earlier as he officially opened the Atlantic Coast Conference's preseason football media days.

Only now, the message and tone is far different.

The league has successfully quelled a rebellion in the form of the lawsuits by member schools Clemson and Florida State, which represented a threat fueling doomsayers' chatter about the league's long-term stability. Instead, the settlement that ended the legal fight spawned a new revenue-distribution model set to benefit the league's biggest brands. There was also ESPN's extension on its long-running partnership with the league.

And that sends the ACC into the 2025-26 sports season with the closest thing to peace as a college landscape churning with constant change can muster.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Phillips described recent months as "the restabilization of a great league that went through a very bumpy period." He also talked about working to "make this a league that teams want to be in, not have to be in" at the start of the revenue-sharing era.

"We're as healthy of a league as we've ever been based on having to go through some really tough moments," Phillips told the AP.

"I give our presidents/board credit for it, and I give our ADs a ton of

credit for it as well. ... So we've moved away from some of the legal issues that we've had and now we've been able to work on things that I think have been put on the backburner."

A summer earlier, FSU, Clemson and the league were entangled in a crossfire of lawsuits over the ACC's ability to charge hundreds of millions of dollars in exit fees for schools that leave for another league.

That came amid the backdrop of the ACC's financial conundrum. The league annually posts record revenue hauls (\$711.4 million for 2023-24, with football-playing members receiving nearly \$45 million).

It also keeps lagging behind the Big Ten (\$928.1 million revenue, \$63.1 million payout) and Southeastern Conference (\$839 million, \$52.6 million), though it ranks firmly third among the Power Four leagues ahead of the Big 12 (\$493.8 million, \$39.5 million).

Had the Clemson or FSU lawsuits proceeded, there was potential a ruling might defang the league's exit fees. Or its grant-of-rights deal, signed by all ACC schools to give the conference control of their media rights - and the TV money that comes with them - as a deterrent to moving elsewhere.

Either could have triggered more teams to exit and chase revenue elsewhere, with the 2024 disintegration of the Pac-12 offering a worst-case harbinger.

The stakes were clear last summer when Phillips took an assertive stance that was downright pugilistic by his own measured-tone standards in promising the league would fight "as long as it takes." He now touts a successful "reconciliation" and what he calls "a really good story about the ACC."

"People had various opinions about how unstable it was - I never felt ever that it was going to lose its way or anything like that," Phillips said. "It was never going to have the demise that I had heard that may happen. I never believed that for a second."

"But you have a staff that you're dealing with. You have other schools

that you're dealing with. So to me, part of my responsibility was to be incredibly level and strong and unwavering about (how) we would get to the place that we're experiencing now, where we have stability."

ESPN's decision in January to pick up its base-rights option through 2035-36 provided a key perception boost, aligning that deal's timeline with a second covering the partnership for the ACC Network. The legal settlement followed in March, featuring a revised revenue-distribution model incorporating TV viewership as a way for top programs to make more money.

Throw in the last season's implementation of a "success initiative" allowing teams to keep money generated by their own postseason success, and big-brand names like Clemson and FSU in football, or Duke, North Carolina and Louisville in basketball, have avenues to offset the gap with Big Ten or SEC peers.

That said, it didn't sound like the legal fight produced constant stress at the team level.

Miami coach Mario Cristobal said he never focused on uncertainty surrounding the conference's future, while linebacker Wesley Bissainthe and offensive lineman Francis Mauigoa said they essentially knew nothing about the lawsuits.

"I live in a cave," Mauigoa said with a grin.

Still, reaching resolution was a welcome sign all the same.



In this file photo, Atlantic Coast Conference Commissioner Jim Phillips answers a question during an NCAA college football news conference at the ACC media days in Charlotte, N.C. (AP)

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AC Milan's Davide Bertesaghi, right and Arsenal's Kai Havertz fight for the ball during a friendly match for the Singapore Festival of Football at the National Stadium in Singapore. Milan won 6-5 on penalties. (AP)

Sports

Kazma and Yarmouk complete foreign signings as Arabi wraps up first preparation phase

Kuwait Club prepares for new season after historic treble

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 23: Kuwait Club kicks off its training sessions this evening as it gears up to defend its remarkable treble from last season. The new campaign will officially start on September 12 with the opening of the Zain Premier League, under the guidance of Montenegrin coach Nebojsa Jovovic.

Last season, Kuwait Club dominated domestic soccer by winning the Zain Premier League, Crown Prince Cup, and Super Cup titles. The team also reached the Amir Cup

final, initially scheduled for June 16 but postponed due to unforeseen circumstances.

The squad will continue training until mid-August, when it is scheduled to depart for an overseas training camp.

Following last season, the club prioritized squad stability by renewing contracts with key foreign players: Mohammed Marhoon (Bahrain), Arsen "Malik" Zola (Congo), and Yassine Khenissi (Tunisia). Contract extensions were also signed by local stars including Faisal Zayed, Ahmed Al-Dhafiri, Mohammed Farih, Redha Hani, Saud Al-Hoshan, and Mohsen Faleh (who has since been

loaned to Al-Nasr). Additionally, the club secured the signing of veteran goalkeeper Khaled Al-Rashidi, who brings extensive experience from his previous stints with Qadsia, Arabi, Salmiya, and the Kuwait national team.

Kuwait Club is also close to signing Sam Morsy, the English-Egyptian captain of Ipswich Town, who is expected to replace Ameen Abu Al-Fath after agreeing on most contract terms.

Arabi will conclude the first phase of its preparation program this evening under the leadership of Portuguese coach Marco Alves.

The team will begin its second phase tomorrow, heading to an

overseas training camp in the UAE lasting until August 8. During this period, Arabi will participate in three friendly matches before traveling to the Maldives to face Maziya Sports Club on August 12 in a decisive AFC Challenge League playoff match. The winner will advance to the group stage of the competition.

Kazma has completed its foreign player roster by signing 27-year-old Algerian defender Idris Chaabi, joining fellow foreign recruits Jordanian players Ali Azaizeh and Yousef Abu Al-Jazar. The club also renewed contracts with striker Samson Akinyoola (Benin) and winger Anas

Al-Awadat (Jordan).

Yarmouk signed goalkeeper Mohammed Ajaj from Al-Nasr to bolster its squad for the upcoming Zain First Division League, which will commence on September 14.

Ajaj becomes the third local player to join Yarmouk, alongside Mohammed Abdulhadi and Othman Al-Dossari, all recommended by head coach Dhafer Al-Adwani.

The club also finalized its foreign contingent, signing Syrian defender Abdullah Al-Shami, Tunisian striker Hazem Haj Hassan, Malian midfielder Moriba Diallo, Ghanaian winger Rubin Akwa, and Congolese midfielder Lusuku.



A file photo of Nebojsa giving instructions to a player.

Kuwait arrives in Bahrain for the 26th Arab Basketball Championship opener

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

MANAMA, July 23: The Kuwait national basketball team arrived in Bahrain to begin final preparations for the 26th Arab Basketball Championship, which tips off tomorrow in Manama. Kuwait is set to face the United Arab Emirates in its opening match of the tournament, which runs until August 2.

The team recently wrapped up its overseas training camp in Istanbul, where it played several friendly matches aimed at building cohesion and evaluating player readiness in pursuit of a strong showing in the regional event.

This year's tournament features seven teams: UAE, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Bahrain, Qatar, and Kuwait.



The team preparing for the opening match against UAE.

Hosted at Khalifa Sports City Hall, the championship follows a single-

round league format, with the title awarded to the team that accumulates the highest number of points.

Head coach Oliver Kostic of Serbia and assistant coach Khaled Al-Qallaf ensured all players received match time during friendlies against Algeria, Saudi Arabia, and Azerbaijan, allowing the coaching staff to gauge the overall readiness of the squad ahead of competitive play.

Kuwait will be without several standout players for the tournament, including Hamad Adnan, Turki Hamoud, Alexander Al-Ghais, and Imran Jawhar. The final 12-man roster features a mix of promising young talent and seasoned veterans, including Ahmed Al-Balushi, Abdulaziz Al-Hamidi, and Abdulrahman Al-Sahou.

Bayern legend Müller set for MLS move: Reports

BERLIN, July 23, (Xinhua): While official information is still pending, several media reports indicate that Bayern legend Thomas Muller is set to continue his career in Major League Soccer in the United States.

Having to leave the German record champion after 25 years due to his age of 35, turning 36 this September, the two-time UEFA Champions League winner (2013/2020) is said to be heading for a final adventure.

According to reports from the TV station Sky, the tabloid Bild, and the sports magazine Kicker, Muller has decided to add another chapter in the MLS.

The most likely club to sign the striker appears to be Bayern Munich's affiliate, Los Angeles FC.

The 2014 FIFA world champion would be the 19th German player employed in the MLS.

After 756 games and 33 titles in Bayern's shirt, the former German international had extended his contract with the reigning German champion until the end of the newly formed FIFA Club World Cup.



Muller

He made his last appearance in the Bavarians shirt on July 5th, when the side was knocked out in the quarterfinals by Paris Saint-Germain (2-0).

The attacker recently stated that joining a German first-tier club isn't an option. Similarly, it seems unlikely to move to Australia after rumors spread that Sydney FC made an offer.

Bayern officials said they favor a move to Los Angeles, as the German side has increased its efforts over the past few months to expand its engagement in the United States.

Muller joined Bayern at the age of ten in 2000 and progressed to the professional team, making his debut in the first team in August 2008; not to mention an unprecedented career in the German national team.

He made his last appearance in the German shirt at the 2024 UEFA Euro, when Germany lost to Spain in the quarterfinals.

Due to his unorthodox game style, the forward earned the nickname "space invader" as he regularly turned up in unusual spots between opponents' lines.

Over the past two seasons, his playing minutes decreased, while Muller said he accepted his new role as a mentor for younger players, mostly sitting on the bench.

England 'breaks' Italy's heart, advances to Champ'ship final



England goalkeeper Hannah Hampton makes a save during the Women's Euro 2025 semifinals soccer match between England and Italy at Stade de Geneve in Geneva, Switzerland. (AP)

Kelly scores decisive goal in 119th minute

GENEVA, July 23, (AP): England is living on the brink and survived another near-inevitable elimination all the way to another Women's European Championship final.

The defending champion broke Italy's hearts - twice - in a 2-1 win after extra time in their semifinal.

Chloe Kelly scored the decisive goal in the 119th minute, shooting home the rebound only after Italy goalkeeper Laura Giuliani saved her penalty kick.

Italy was forced into extra time because another substitute, Michelle Agyemang, leveled the game deep into stoppage time.

Kelly and Agyemang also were crucial for England in another great escape in the quarterfinals against Sweden.

England will now defend its title in Sunday's final in Basel against either world champion Spain or Germany. Their semifinal is Wednesday in Zurich.

"When it finishes like this I am enjoying it but it's a little bit dramatic," said England coach Sarina Wiegman, who has never been eliminated from the tournament. She led her native Netherlands to the

2017 title before joining England.

It was all so cruel on unheralded Italy, which had led since Barbara Bonansea's rasping volleyed shot in the 33rd minute.

"It's a bitter defeat because we were one minute away from the final," Italy coach Andrea Soncin said in translated comments. "But we have to be proud."

Either potential opponent is a title rematch for England, having beaten Germany in the Euro 2022 final - also decided by a Kelly goal in extra time - and lost the 2023 World Cup final to Spain.

For the second time in six days, England had stared down what looked a sure exit and survived into extra time.

Italy would have been a worthy winner just for the immense defending of central backs Elena Linari and Cecilia Salvai as England pressed intensely in the second half.

But Agyemang fired in a low shot after Giuliani spilled a cross in a rare handling error. The ball arrowed toward the net cruelly through the legs of both Linari and Giuliani.

After the final whistle blew, Giuliani lay flat out and face down against the turf all alone in the middle of Italy's half of the field.

The penalty was conceded by substitute Emma Severini for tangling with Beth Mead. Severini had a clear chance in the 86th to lift Italy into a two-goal lead but her close-range shot after a corner was smothered by England goalkeeper Hannah Hampton.

The defending champion is taking a bumpy road to a second straight title match.

It started with a humbling 2-1 loss to France in the opening game that was Wiegman's first defeat at a Women's Euros in her third tournament. It did, however, after routing the Netherlands and Wales by a combined score of 10-1, keep England out of Spain's half of the knockout bracket.

England then trailed 2-0 to Sweden after 78 minutes of their quarterfinal, and twice in the penalty shootout would have been out had the Swedes not failed with their next spot-kick.

At age 19, Michelle Agyemang is making an incredible start to her England career just a few years after she was a ball girl for the team.

Her third goal in just her fourth national-team game also was her second crucial equalizer in the Euro 2025 knockout rounds. The Arsenal forward almost won the game before Kelly, but her deft lob in the 117th rebounded off the Italy crossbar.

Kuwait drawn into balanced group for Arab Championship

MANAMA, July 23: The 17th Arab Junior Volleyball Championship, scheduled to take place in Jordan from August 14 to 26, will feature Kuwait's junior national team in Group B alongside Bahrain, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq.

Meanwhile, Group A consists of Egypt, the UAE, Libya, Lebanon, and host nation Jordan. The official draw was conducted at the Arab Volleyball Federation headquarters in Bahrain, with proceedings streamed virtually via the "Teams" platform.

Kuwait's squad, coached by Mohammed Abdulrazzaq and assistant Mishal Al-Subaie, is currently undergoing local training. Preparations may include an overseas training camp either at the end



Arab Volleyball Association logo.

of this month or in early August, ahead of the team's departure to Amman.

Best of the Rest

Wiley again loaned to Watford: American defender Caleb Wiley was again loaned from Chelsea to second-tier Watford after spending the second half of last season with the Hornets.

The 20-year-old left back joined Chelsea from Major League Soccer's Atlanta United last July and was loaned to Strasbourg for the 2024-25 season. He made three starts and three substitute appearances for the Ligue 1 club. His last appearance was Nov. 24, when he dislocated a shoulder during a collision against Nice.

Wiley had surgery, the loan was cut short and he was loaned to Watford, where he debuted on March 8.

He has made three appearances for the U.S. and also was on the American team at last year's Olympic soccer tournament. (AP)

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Jannik Sinner rehires the fitness coach: Wimbledon champion Jannik Sinner has rehired Umberto Ferrara as his fitness coach nearly a year after firing him for his role in the top-ranked player's doping case.

The move comes after Sinner recently removed fitness coach Marco Panichi and physiotherapist Ulises Badio from his team.

"Umberto has played an important role in Jannik's development to date, and his return reflects a renewed focus on continuity and performance at the highest level," a statement from Sinner's team said Wednesday.

Last year, Sinner tested positive twice for a trace amount of an anabolic steroid in March; the case wasn't made public until August, shortly before the U.S. Open, which he ended up winning for the second of his four Grand Slam titles.

He initially was completely cleared, based on the defense that he accidentally was exposed to the banned substance, Clostebol, via a massage from his then-physiotherapist, Giacomo Naldi. Sinner said his fitness trainer at the time, Ferrara, purchased a product in Italy and gave it to Naldi for a cut on Naldi's finger. Naldi then treated Sinner while not wearing gloves. (AP)

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Yin headlines star-studded field: The Buick LPGA Shanghai will return to the Shanghai Qizhong Garden Golf Club from October 9-12, organizers announced on Wednesday.

As the first event of the 2025 LPGA Fall Asia Swing, it will bring together the world's top female golfers for a thrilling showdown, delivering an elite competition and reigniting golf's momentum.

Jointly sanctioned by the LPGA (Ladies Professional Golf Association) and the China LPGA (CLPGA), the Buick LPGA Shanghai has established itself as a global stage for champions.

Featuring 81 top players competing for a 2.2 million U.S. dollars purse under a no-cut format, the Buick LPGA Shanghai will see defending champion Yin Ruoning headline the world-class lineup. The Chinese star, a former world No. 1 and major winner, aims for back-to-back victories on home soil.

In the autumn of 2024, Yin Ruoning delivered a career-defining performance at the Buick LPGA Shanghai, carding eight birdies in a blistering final round to shoot 8-under par and finish at a record-breaking 25-under par, claiming the title and etching her name into the tournament lore. (Xinhua)