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HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince



HH the Prime Minister

HH Amir receives Crown Prince, PM

KUWAIT CITY, July 27, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Al-Seif Palace on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received His

Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

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



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

The exploitation of the Palestinian cause must end

THE horrific scenes of starvation, mass killing, and systematic destruction in Gaza are unbearable. Any rational person should have considered the consequences of the so-called 'Operation Al-Aqsa Flood' on October 7, 2023 before it was launched. It is difficult to comprehend how anyone who has experienced Israeli brutality could carry out such an action.

Since 1948, the Palestinian cause has been the main source of losses because Arab approaches were illogical and based on ill-considered reactions.

Therefore, after the United Nations issued the resolution to partition Palestine, neither the Arabs nor the Palestinians realized that the world after World War II was no longer the same as before.

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Morocco, Kuwait ... advanced, developed strategic partnership

— See Page 2 —

AI, sciences priority in new education strategy

Failures must reimburse gov't funds: Al-Badr

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: The acting Secretary-General of the Private Universities Council Adel Al-Badr confirmed that the General Secretariat is implementing a comprehensive strategy aimed at regulating academic specializations, enhancing the quality of graduates, and establishing a strong, complementary relationship between private uni-

versities and the labor market.

In an interview with the daily, Al-Badr revealed fundamental amendments to the internal scholarship regulations, most notably the introduction of a financial obligation for students who withdraw, fail, or are academically dismissed, indicating that these students will be required to reimburse the expenses incurred during their scholarship period.

He affirmed that scholarships are not granted randomly but are governed by strict criteria and well-defined standards, in line with labor market demands and the state's educational strategy.

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KFAED opens Velana int'l airport expansion in Maldives



KUNA photo

Dr. Mohamed Muizzu, President of the Maldives, alongside Mr. Waleed Shamlan Al-Bahar, Acting Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, as well as senior government officials and representatives of the Arab Coordination Group.

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: As part of the longstanding development partnership between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Maldives, the Velana International Airport Expansion Project in the capital, Malé, was officially inaugurated today. The ceremony was attended by His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Muizzu, President of the Maldives, alongside Mr. Waleed Shamlan Al-Bahar, Acting Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, as well as senior government officials and representatives of the Arab Coordination Group.

In his address at the inauguration ceremony, His Excellency President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu expressed his deep appreciation and gratitude for the generous financial support provided by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, the Saudi Fund for Development, the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, and the OPEC Fund for International Development. He praised the pivotal role these institutions played in bringing this national milestone to fruition.

The President also extended his sincere appreciation to the leaders of the countries behind these development

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Citizenship pulled from 82 persons

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: Two decrees and a Cabinet resolution have been published in the official gazette "Kuwait al-Yaum" that revoke the Kuwaiti citizenship of 82 individuals and those who acquired it through dependency, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Decree No. 124/2025 stipulates the revocation of Kuwaiti citizenship from 68 individuals and those who obtained it through dependency.

Decree No. 125/2025 stipulates the revocation of Kuwaiti citizenship from four individuals and those who acquired

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Day by Day

THE recent government measures, particularly to green the desert, inspired by the Chinese experience, are of great importance. We need to accelerate implementation and reduce the time frame, even if it requires higher cost.

Equally important is avoiding any procedures that could hinder the project's progress. In parallel, there is a pressing need to develop coastal areas and establish recreational facilities, allowing people to enjoy these spaces while also boosting tourism.

... Yet tomorrow is another day

Zahed Matar

44 illegals held in housing project

Mol arrests 192 residency law violators in nationwide raids

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: In implementation of the directives of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, and under the direct supervision of the acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Major General Ali Al-Adwani, the General Department of Residency Affairs Investigations carried out a large-scale security campaign in all governorates of Kuwait, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The campaign resulted in the arrest of 192 violators of the residence law and wanted individuals. It targeted several densely populated areas, including Jahra, Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Mahboula, Al-Qurain Markets, Ahmadi, and Fahaeel.

The Ministry of Interior, represented by the

General Department of Residency Affairs Investigations, confirmed its ongoing commitment to apprehending violators of residency and labor laws, emphasizing that both workers and employers will be held accountable.

In another development, the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), represented by the joint tripartite committee, conducted an intensive inspection campaign at one of the construction sites in Al-Naeem Housing Project; leading to the arrest of 44 illegal workers.

In a press statement on Sunday, PAM confirmed that this campaign is in compliance with the directive of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef; and in line its commitment to regulate the labor

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Kuwait oil company in biggest ever reshuffle

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) CEO Ahmad Al-Eidan issued a decision to implement the largest organizational and administrative changes in the history of the company.

The decision includes promotions to senior and middle management positions, reshuffling, secondment, restructuring of some directorates and departments, and the elimination of work groups and teams.

This is part of the comprehensive restructuring of the sectors and directorates in order to inject new, highly qualified personnel to guarantee the development of production plans, as well as rapid and flexible decision-making to achieve the goals of the company.

As per the decision, Najib Mustafa Al-Zaid was promoted as Head of the Planning and Support Team in the Planning and Innovation Directorate, Osama Abdullah Al-Rahmani was appointed as

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Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Media and Think Tank Summit has emerged as a powerful platform for shaping a more interconnected peaceful, and prosperous future among member and partner states. Inset: Heba Abbas.

SCO summit charts bold course for shared prosperity and unity

By Marlon Aquino Malino

Managing Editor, Arab Times

ZHENGZHOU, China, July 27: With the ancient city of Zhengzhou as its backdrop, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Media and Think Tank Summit has emerged as a powerful platform for shaping a more interconnected, peaceful, and prosperous future among member and partner states.

Held in the heart of central China's Henan Province from Wednesday through Sunday, the summit drew over 400 delegates representing nearly 200 media outlets, think tanks, government agencies, and international organizations across the SCO family. Under the banner, "Upholding the Shanghai Spirit to Build a More Beautiful Home," participants engaged in robust exchanges that culminated in the Zhengzhou Consensus – a collective call to action that highlights the central role of media and academic institutions in fostering regional collaboration, cultural understanding, and sustainable development.

Kuwait's Arab Times English newspaper was present at the summit, represented by Managing Editor Marlon Aquino Malinao. His presence at the summit

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SCO offers unique chance: Al-Mannai

'Shared visions in evolving media field'

ZHENGZHOU, July 27, (Xinhua): Acting Director-General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Mohammad Al-Mannai stated that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Media and Think Tank Summit, held in Zhengzhou, Henan Province, central China, presents a unique opportunity to develop shared visions that contribute to restoring balance in the rapidly evolving media field.

In an interview with Xinhua News Agency



Al-Mannai

during his participation in the summit, Al-Mannai explained that in an era where news and information are deeply intertwined, facts and data are competing, the fake news industry is expanding, and tools of deception are proliferating, posing a serious threat to media credibility and eroding public trust. These realities on the ground place a dual responsibility on media outlets and think tanks, starting with the need to strengthen international partnerships, of which the SCO is a prominent example.

The media plays a vital role in building bridges between civilizations. The road ahead is long and there still is significant scope to develop and strengthen media cooperation.

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Newswatch

ISTANBUL: The General Consulate of the State of Kuwait in Istanbul called on the citizens currently in Bursa, to be cautious and avoid areas affected by or near fires.

In a statement published on X platform, the Consulate stressed the importance of adhering to the instructions and guidelines issued by the competent Turkish official authorities in Bursa, to maintain their safety.

The Consulate also called on the citizens to contact the following numbers when necessary: General Consulate Istanbul Emergency: 00905306902097, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs Emergency Department: 00965-159. (KUNA)



KUNA photo

Acting Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Mohammad Al-Mannai and his team during the Huawei visit.

'Digitech vital in media field'

SHENZHEN, China, July 27, (KUNA): Acting Director General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Mohammad Al-Mannai, visited Sunday the headquarters of Chinese tech giant Huawei in Shenzhen during his official trip to China.

The visit aligns with KUNA's efforts to integrate digital solutions and adopt new technologies to enhance media content production.

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| Prayer Timings | | | |
|----------------|-------|------------|-------|
| Fajr | 03:35 | Asr | 15:30 |
| Sunrise .. | 05:05 | Maghrib .. | 18:44 |
| Zohr | 11:54 | Isha | 20:11 |

Local

| Weather | | | |
|---|---------|---------|-------------|
| Expected weather for next 24 hrs: | | | |
| By Day: Very hot and relatively humid especially over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 06-30 km/h. | | | |
| By Night: Hot to rather hot and relatively humid over coastal areas | | | |
| with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 06-32 km/h and some high clouds will appear. | | | |
| Station | Max Exp | Min Rec | |
| Kuwait City | 48 | 35 | Abdaly 50 |
| Kuwait Airport | 49 | 29 | Bubyan 39 |
| | | | Jahra 50 |
| | | | Salmiyah 42 |
| | | | Ahmadi 40 |
| | | | Nuwaib 46 |
| | | | Wafra 49 |
| | | | Salmiya 47 |
| | | | 29 |
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| | | | 31 |

Embassy celebrates 26th anniversary of King Mohammed VI's accession to the throne on Wednesday

Morocco and Kuwait ... advanced and developed strategic partnership in all areas

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: Morocco commemorates the 26th anniversary of His Majesty King Mohammed VI's accession to the throne of his glorious ancestors on Wednesday.

In an official statement, the Embassy of Morocco in Kuwait disclosed this is a precious annual occasion, through which the Moroccan people proudly recall the strength of their bond with the glorious Alaouite throne and renew their allegiance and loyalty to their beloved King -- a descendant of the noble Alaouite Dynasty.

This year's celebration of the glorious Throne Day coincides with the continuation of major development projects within the framework of a modernization plan formulated under the wise leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI (may Allah protect him).

A number of structural projects have brought about profound transformations in Morocco at the economic, social, cultural, sports and institutional levels; thanks to the dynamic reforms that encompassed vital sectors throughout the Kingdom.

Thus, the Kingdom of Morocco now has a modern infrastructure in various fields; including a road network extending more than 2,000 kilometers, which is expected to reach 3,000 kilometers by 2030.

This infrastructure includes Africa's first high-speed train line, extending from Tangier to Casablanca, with the second phase to Marrakech scheduled for completion within a few years.

Tangier Med Port, ranked among the top 20 container ports in the world and the first in the Mediterranean and Africa, as well as the ambitious projects for the ports of Nador West Med and Dakhla Atlantic, constitute further building blocks in strengthening the maritime connectivity of the Kingdom.

Given the importance of air connectivity, Morocco has engaged in developing major airports and improving logistics services to facilitate passenger traffic.

Investments in these projects will reach 42 billion Moroccan dirhams by 2030 and include the development and capacity expansion of Casablanca Airport, Rabat Airport, Salé Airport, Fez Airport, Tetouan Airport, Tangier Airport, Marrakech Airport and Agadir Airport. Royal Air Maroc's investment program includes quadrupling its fleet from 50 aircraft to 200 by 2037.

Morocco has become a leading hub in the field of



Ali bin Issa, Ambassador of Morocco to Kuwait

renewable energy in Africa and the world. It boasts of solar power plants, wind power plants, and ambitious green hydrogen production projects. It has taken one of the largest steps on the continent by announcing the launching of six major green hydrogen projects with investments totaling \$32.6 billion.

To diversify its economy, Morocco has become a globally recognized industrial and logistics hub; particularly in sectors of high strategic value, such as the automotive, aviation and food industries. It is now well positioned to join the top 50 countries in the World Bank's 'Business Management' rankings.

It continues to improve its business climate by implementing the provisions of the new investment charter, simplifying administrative procedures, and offering financial and tax incentives. This contributes to attracting new investors and enhancing the competitiveness of businesses.

The government, in coordination with regional investment centers and the private sector, is working hard to encourage foreign companies that contribute to technology transfer and the development of skilled local expertise, focusing on creating job opportunities and added value.

This tremendous effort is accompanied by significant social and human development reforms, which underscore the humanitarian and social sensitivities of His Majesty the King, who has consistently put emphasis on this area with the aim of enabling disadvantaged social groups to benefit from the fruits of

development.

These transformations, thanks to the wise vision of His Majesty King Mohammed VI -- may Allah protect him -- have strengthened Morocco's position as a preferred destination for foreign investment. Foreign reports ranked it as the top African country for foreign businessmen in 2025. Globally, it ranked 34th out of 68 countries. This advanced ranking is attributed to a number of integrated factors, most notably its stable political climate, which is a fundamental pillar for attracting investors; its strategic geographic location -- a vital link between Africa, Europe and the Atlantic Ocean, giving it a strong competitive edge in connecting markets; and its modern infrastructure, including major ports likes Casablanca and Tangier Med, as well as road and railway networks and industrial zones capable of receiving major investments.

In addition to its international partners, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries are among the Kingdom's most important partners, including the sisterly State of Kuwait, which has contributed significantly to establishing a strategic partnership to build effective cooperation.

The leaders of the two countries, His Majesty King Mohammed VI and his brother, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, attach great importance to establishing an optimal framework for an advanced and developed partnership between the two brotherly countries at various levels. The volume and increasing pace of Kuwaiti investments in Morocco indicate the strong cooperation between the two brotherly countries.

In 2023, Kuwaiti investments accounted for 0.4 percent of total foreign direct investment in Morocco. Direct investment revenues related to the capital market accounted for 63.7 percent of total Kuwaiti investments. The value of Kuwaiti direct investments in Morocco currently amounts to approximately \$1.5 billion. The trade and real estate sectors are attractive for Kuwaiti investors. This trend reflects the deep-rooted relations between Kuwait and Morocco at the political leadership and popular levels.

On this occasion, it is necessary to commend the cooperation and coordination between the two countries in international forums and the firm and unwavering position of the State of Kuwait in support of

the territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Morocco. Kuwait adheres to this noble position, which has been proven on all occasions and in various regional and international forums.

Meanwhile, the officials of both countries are exerting tremendous efforts to develop relations in various fields.

Aside from visits made by delegations from both countries to participate in various events, First President of the Court of Cassation and President-Delegate of the Supreme Council of the Judicial Power in the Kingdom of Morocco Mohamed Abdennabaoui visited Kuwait in February 2025.

The visit included discussions with his Kuwaiti counterpart, President of the Court of Cassation and President of the Supreme Judicial Council Adel Majed Buresli and a number of Kuwaiti judicial senior officials. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah welcomed Abdennabaoui during the visit.

Director of the Higher Judicial Institute Abdel Haneen Touzani also visited Kuwait in April 2025, during which he met with his Kuwaiti counterpart, Director of Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies, Hani Mohammad Al-Hamdan. A memorandum of understanding was signed to enhance cooperation in the fields of judicial training, exchange of expertise, and the organization of joint courses and academic meetings between the two institutions.

On the economic level, through the coordinated efforts of the Embassy and the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Moroccan Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests received a Kuwaiti economic delegation in January 2025. This visit was an opportunity to explore the potentials available to both countries to increase their trade volume.

As part of strengthening economic relations between the two countries, the Moroccan Embassy in Kuwait -- in cooperation with the Moroccan Agency for Investment and Export Development and the Moroccan Confederation of Exporters in Morocco, and in coordination with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs -- intends to organize a trade forum in Kuwait in September. Representatives of Moroccan companies operating in the food, textile, leather, cosmetics and medical equipment sectors will participate in the forum.

'The Aesthetics of Arabic Language' draws over 300 participants at Central Library

Al-Babtain Foundation concludes season with rhetoric, poetry course



KUNA photo

A number of participants at the Arabic Language Aesthetics course.

KUWAIT CITY, July 27, (KUNA): The Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain Cultural Foundation concluded its 2024-2025 season with a training course titled "The Aesthetics of the Arabic Language - Lessons in Rhetoric" at the Al-Babtain Central Library for Arabic Poetry.

In a press statement issued Saturday, the Foundation said the course, held from July 13 to 23, attracted 326 participants, of whom 130 graduated. It added that this season featured several training courses, including "Grammar and Morphology," "Literary Criticism and Poetry Appreciation," "Arabic Writing Skills," "Prosody and Poetry Music," and "Arabic Language Skills."

The statement quoted the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Saud Al-Babtain, as saying:

"The conclusion of this free, integrated training program for the 2024-2025 cul-

tural season embodies the Foundation's unwavering belief in its mission to serve the Arabic language and prepare future generations to deepen their knowledge and appreciation of it."

He stressed the Foundation's "keenness to ensure that these courses are more than just educational - they are a window into the beauty of the language and a space to explore its boundless expressive potential."

Al-Babtain noted that the program reflects the Foundation's ongoing efforts to promote Arabic linguistic sciences and strengthen the language's standing in the cultural consciousness. He added that the Foundation reaffirms its deep-rooted commitment to the Arabic language and actively translates this into action through a steady and confident journey to reinforce cultural identity and embed the presence of Arabic in the minds of future generations.

Artificial intelligence integrated into science at DDI

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI) that was founded by Kuwait Foundation for Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), has always been a leader in the region and a pioneer in diabetes and its complications research. Its scientists have always proven to beat time by using the latest technologies to come up with the most innovative contributions to science and medicine.

Dr. Anwar Mohammed Head of Precision Health Analysis Unit /Senior Scientist at DDI took advantage of the latest research features used in Artificial Intelligence to better understand precise scientific areas in diabetes mellitus.

He recently conducted a research that demonstrated the potential of AI in structural biology to generate high-accuracy biomolecular models. These applications can help understand disease mechanisms and design targeted therapies which are anticipated to yield

advancements in healthcare and drug discovery.

The recent advancements in AI-driven structural biology have unlocked insights into protein-DNA molecular mechanisms. This study was published in the Journal of "Cellular and Molecular Medicine".

By using A.I. "Google DeepMind AlphaFold 3" to model the interaction between the KLF15 zinc finger domain and DNA. The accuracy of "AlphaFold 3" was performed by comparing the modeled structure with experimental X-ray crystallography data. In combination with molecular dynamics (MD) simulations and binding energy calculations, the study has identified hotspots that could be involved in drug development for type 2 diabetes (T2DM).

Dr. Anwar expressed his gratitude for DDI's and KFAS' for their continuous support for Kuwaiti scientists in the field of research, science and medicine.



Dasman Diabetes Institute. (Inset): Dr. Anwar Mohammed, Head of Precision Health Analysis Unit /Senior Scientist at DDI.

Other Voices

Ziad has passed ... but he will always be present

By Ahmad alsarraf

I LOVED Ziad Rahbani, the man and the artist, firstly because he was the eldest son of the iconic Lebanese singer Fairuz, and secondly because he embodied the cultural and intellectual soul of the Rahbani family, who often chose to keep their personal lives out of the spotlight.

From this perspective, I came to understand the depth of Ziad's intelligent and creative personality.

On Saturday, July 26, we lost an unmatched artist, composer, playwright, and writer. Ziad's art and politically charged, thought-provoking plays brought him closer to the minds and hearts of his fans not only in Lebanon but throughout the Arab world.

Ziad was deeply melancholic, sharply sarcastic, and his work reflected an even greater depth. His unapologetic leftist views, which he never attempted to conceal, alienated many, but Ziad was never overly concerned with the opinions of his critics.

He was born on the first day of 1956, the same year I first arrived in Lebanon. He passed away yesterday at the age of 69, after a long struggle with illness. His personal and social life was marked by a series of disagreements, sometimes escalating into conflicts with those closest to him.

He was socially withdrawn, perhaps a result of the relentless pressures of creativity, which never allowed him even a moment of rest. Ziad carried a deep unhappiness born of personal suffering, which may have fueled his creative energy that will live on for decades, if not forever.

Ziad was always a controversial figure, both in his personal life and through his melodies, plays, statements, and poems.

He could have become a poet, but the artistic environment at home, with the towering presence of his father, uncle, and mother, steered him away from poetry and channeled his talents toward music and theater.

Ziad's first composition "Lauza My Ever Love" was written in 1971 when he was just 15 years old.

At 17, he composed his first song "Saalouni el-Nas" (People asked me) for his mother Fairuz. The lyrics were written by his uncle, Mansour Rahbani, while his father, Assi, was in hospital.

Ziad's theatrical debut came with "The Station," followed by "Miss Al-Raym," for which he composed the opening music, leav-



alsarraf

ing audiences astonished.

His artistic journey continued with works that took on a deeply realistic and political tone that touched on the daily lives of the people, in stark contrast to the more idealistic style of traditional Rahbani plays.

Ziad was a child of the civil war, a war that shattered both spirits and bodies. It only deepened his commitment to socialist-communist ideals, pushing him toward a more radical stance.

Among Ziad's most famous songs are "Ana Mesh Kafir" (I'm not an infidel), "Isma Ya Reda" (Listen, Reda), and "Ala Hadeer El Bosta" (On the roar of the bus), in which he says:

I am promised by your eyes,
For which I have traveled distances and climbed mountains.
Your eyes are black,
And you have no idea how black eyes affect me.
With the roaring sound of the bus
That carried us from Himalaya to Tannourine,
I remembered you, Aliya,
And I remembered your eyes, how beautiful they were.
One of the passengers was eating lettuce,
Another was eating figs.
A man sat with his wife,
But she was ugly.
If he had been you,
He would have left her.
You and I rode the bus,
And we didn't pay for tickets.
Among his sayings, which will live long in the memory are -
"I am torn between starting the wedding and not starting it... for fear that it will end."

"In our world, mother, there is no ugly dress, as long as every dress has someone who loves to wear it."

"If speech were like bread that could be bought, no one would be able to speak... unless they bought speech...!"

"How can I make you understand, O bird of our cage, that I don't like to own cages or birds? I'm not like my family."

And perhaps he finally said, "If only they knew that the final moment of life could come suddenly while we're at odds!"

Maybe that's exactly what happened to Ziad... after all the loved ones around him had drifted away, grown old, or simply ceased to matter to him, as he may have ceased to matter to them.

□ □ □

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What’s next after the Chief Justice’s ruling?

“THE Chief Justice of the Iraqi Federal Court, considered the head of the country’s highest judicial authority, had no choice but to stand firm against mounting political pressure and deliver a message that all Iraqi legal professionals and prospective parliamentary candidates needed to hear and accept”, Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“The Chief Justice realized that as Election Day gets closer, the political noise would only grow louder, marked by shouting, one-upmanship, defamation of Kuwait, and accusations of treason against Iraqi officials. This escalation came despite the clarity of the matter, with the Chief Justice delivering the final word, “The Khor Abdullah Agreement is legal and binding.”



Hassan Ali Karam

“The Chief Justice went to great lengths to explain the matter and ensure that even those without a legal background could understand it. However, the issue was never about legal expertise. Politicians, whether or not they have legal training, are expected to know legal and constitutional provisions by heart. Yet many continue to play political games until the very last moment, under the slogan - “Against me and my enemies.”

“The Chief Justice, Judge Faiq Zidane, did not write, nor did he need to write, his article and publish it in a widely read newspaper to demonstrate his legal or rhetorical abilities. He has no need for publicity, as he occupies the highest position in the Iraqi judiciary. For those unfamiliar, the Iraqi judiciary remains one of the most impartial institutions compared to many courts around the world.

“The baseless campaign led by Amer Abdul-Jabbar against Kuwait, particularly his claim that Khor Abdullah belongs to Iraq, became even more problematic when he used the Zar ceremony as a platform to spread accusations and insults. Anyone who acknowledged, based on historical and legal facts, that Khor Abdullah belongs to Kuwait, or even demonstrated a basic understanding of the law, was met with slander, accusations of treason, collaboration, and being driven by financial motives.

“It makes no difference whether the person is a turbaned sheikh, a lawyer, or an ordinary citizen. What matters is that some have staked their electoral ambitions and path to parliament on launching yet another round of unjust attacks against Kuwait. A few have even gone beyond the Khor Abdullah issue entirely, reverting to the same tired rhetoric of the past . But none of this matters to Kuwait. Rights are not seized through chaos or brute force. History has offered enough bitter lessons for any reasonable person to understand their limits.

“Thankfully, in Kuwait, there are no fools or fanatics willing to be dragged into the trivialities, fabrications, and noise stirred up by the ignorant or the half-informed. This is a country once known for its culture of reading and thought, though now, sadly, many of the wise have stepped back, leaving room for the loudest and least qualified to take the stage.

“Kuwait bears no burden in defending a cause that history and documented facts have long affirmed. It does not even need to assert ownership of Khor Abdullah. References and accounts from those who visited and wrote about the region clearly establish that both Khor Abdullah and Umm Qasr are Kuwaiti. A simple review of Turkish and British records is enough to silence every pretender and liar.

“We thank God that Iraq still has wise and honorable individuals, and that the bonds of neighborly brotherhood and respect for rights still exist. As for the alarmists and those who sell their conscience in the marketplace of political gain, their obsessions hold no weight in the face of truth and moral integrity.”

Also:

“Quality is not merely a passing term, but a fundamental pillar of any work system. In health clubs, it is a necessity to ensure services meet the highest standards to enhance performance, preserve public health, and serve the interests of society”, columnist **Sheikh Eng. Fahad Dawood Al-Sabah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily

“Some may view health clubs as a luxury accessible only to the wealthy, and therefore not relevant to everyone. This perception is not entirely accurate, as exercise and physical activity play a vital role in promoting overall health and well-being.

“Sports activity requires developing a personalized training program for each participant, enabling gradual progress through clear tools, measurements, and safety standards. The program should include a detailed medical history, including heart disease, blood pressure, diabetes, medications, surgeries, and previous injuries. Important health data, such as blood pressure, pulse, and body mass index, must also be recorded, along with identification of any sports activities that require a doctor’s approval. Based on this information, specific goals and expectations are established and documented in a written agreement outlining the number of sessions and the program’s duration.

“People are drawn to gyms that prioritize cleanliness and provide high-quality service. Unfortunately, quality in this sector is often judged by superficial factors rather than true standards. Market-

ing tends to highlight popularity rather than actual performance or safety.

“When discussing the problems these facilities face, we must highlight critical issues, particularly the role of oversight by relevant authorities. For instance, is the infrastructure up to standard? Is it being upgraded to meet modern demands?”

“Is oversight of health clubs truly effective, or does it stop at issuing recommendations? Do the services offered genuinely support sports health, or are they merely forms of entertainment?”

“There is no doubt that many gyms suffer from equipment shortages or poor maintenance, both of which hinder the proper practice of certain sports. Any defect in sports equipment can have serious consequences, leading not to improved health, but to injuries and health complications.

“The lack of proper and consistent hygiene in gyms can lead to the spread of various diseases, highlighting either insufficient oversight or ineffective enforcement of health standards.

“Many gym-goers also lack adequate awareness of the importance of regular exercise, a healthy diet, and the importance of prevention to avoid illness and injury.

“To mitigate these risks, health clubs must offer sports medicine services and employ qualified trainers who can help prevent injuries and infections.

“It is the responsibility of relevant authorities to promote sports health awareness, enforce health and safety regulations, and ensure that facilities provide a safe, hygienic environment. This includes the regular maintenance and updating of equipment to meet current standards.”

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“Today marks roughly one year since the suspension of the “Afia” health insurance program for retirees. At the time, some supported the decision, citing the need to ease pressure on public funds. Others opposed it, arguing that the program significantly benefited retirees by allowing them to receive timely medical treatment without the long wait times often associated with public healthcare services”, Eng. **Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Perhaps those who supported suspending these services were viewing the situation as temporary, while those who opposed it had a broader vision for the future, most importantly recognizing that retirees require extensive care and cannot afford delays.

“The claim that the government health system’s capacity is no longer sufficient should not be a reason to abandon it.

“Ultimately, the system must manage treatment efficiently while adopting a developmental approach that keeps pace with natural population growth. The private sector should be utilized, as is common practice worldwide, with special attention given to difficult cases requiring special skill and quality. We must not overlook the need to ease the burden on citizens, especially the elderly and retirees, whose rights must be fully protected.

“Today, the repercussions of suspending the Afia program are beginning to unfold. However, I cannot hold the Ministry of Health responsible.



Adel Al-Kharafi

Everyone has the right to receive treatment without discrimination. To achieve this, a sound development plan must be implemented while ensuring that people’s health is not compromised.

“Many retirees have been adversely affected, including a citizen with cancer. I thank the government for sending him abroad for treatment. However, when the Afia services were suspended, his family volunteered to help him complete his treatment in the country where he was receiving care.

“After some time, doctors advised him to complete his treatment in Kuwait. Due to his delicate condition, they recommended transferring him to medical isolation. However, upon his return, he was admitted to a government hospital where he had no medical file, and the hospital lacked the capacity to properly monitor such cases. Instead of being placed in a private, isolated room, he was assigned to a general ward.

“A day later, his condition worsened, and he was transferred to a specialized hospital. Doctors requested information from the patient’s family to better understand his condition and attempt to save what they could. He was then moved to the Intensive Care Unit.

“This situation highlights how the lack of a comprehensive future vision and reliance on existing resources only created additional pressure.

“Therefore, the current capacity of healthcare services will not be able to accommodate these growing numbers. The private sector must be activated to help alleviate much of the burden. The suspension of the Afia program has resulted in a decline in healthcare services and, consequently, has caused greater harm to citizens’ health.”

— Compiled by **Mahmoud Attiyeh/ Simi K. Kutty**



The selection committee members.

KUNA photo

Mol ends interviews for cadets; professionalism eyed

KUWAIT CITY, July 27, (KUNA): The Ministry of Interior announced on Saturday the conclusion of personal interviews conducted by the Saad Al-Abdullah Academy for Security Sciences. These interviews were for applicants holding a high school diploma seeking to join the 49th batch of cadet officers at the Police College, as well as applicants for external scholarships to study at police colleges in

the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

According to the ministry’s statement, the interviews took place over three weeks during morning and evening shifts. The process was supervised by the acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Major General Ali Al-Adwani, in the presence of the academy’s Director General Brigadier General Ali Al-Wahib . A specialized

committee from various ministry sectors participated to ensure the highest standards of professionalism, accuracy, and fairness.

The ministry stressed that this phase is an essential part of the admissions process, in accordance with the strict criteria approved by the Academy Council to select the best candidates for enrollment in the security authority.

‘Costa’s’ quest for Kuwaiti nationality ends film style

Lankan woman exposed 33 years on

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: The concerned authorities have uncovered one of the strangest citizenship forgery cases; considering the story spanned 33 years, which started with the deception of a Kuwaiti citizen and ended with the revocation of the citizenship of a Sri Lankan woman and her daughter after it was proven that she lied and falsified a birth certificate in order to obtain Kuwaiti citizenship, reports Al-Rai daily.

The case dates back to 1992 when a Sri Lankan woman identified as ‘Costa’ entered the country for the first time and obtained residency as a domestic worker. Two years later, an absconding case was registered against her and she was deported in 1994. The deportation period did not last long, as ‘Costa’ returned to Kuwait in 1996, using a new passport and a different

name. Security technologies such as fingerprints and electronic identification were not yet in place, allowing her to re-enter the country undetected. Later, she met a Kuwaiti citizen working as a taxi driver and they got married.

At the time, Article Eight of the Nationality Law allowed the foreign wife of a Kuwaiti citizen to obtain citizenship if they have children. ‘Costa’ began to weave an elaborate plan. She lied to her husband and told him she was pregnant, even though she was not. To convince the authorities that she had a child with her Kuwaiti husband, she had a deal with another Sri Lankan woman. ‘Costa’ asked the woman to use her civil identification card during the hospital delivery, making it appear that the woman giving birth is the wife of a Kuwaiti citizen. The woman used ‘Costa’s’ identity and gave birth to a girl, who was legally registered as the daughter of the Kuwaiti citizen and ‘Costa’, without the husband knowing about this fraud.

In 2000, ‘Costa’ submitted a declaration of interest to obtain Kuwaiti citizenship -- the first official step to be naturalized. She obtained citizenship as she had a child registered under her name with her Kuwaiti husband. In 2008, the dispute be-

tween her and her husband escalated; leading to divorce. At that point, she surprised him with a shocking confession: the daughter was not his. Following this confession, the husband went to the relevant authorities and reported the information revealed by his ex-wife, but no official action was taken then.

In 2021, the citizen re-filed his complaint, demanding an investigation into the child’s paternity. The case was reopened by the Criminal Investigations Department, which conducted a DNA test on the girl, the citizen and his ex-wife. The results were conclusive: the child is not the daughter of the citizen and ‘Costa’.

Based on these results, the citizenship of ‘Costa’ was revoked in 2024 for providing false information, committing fraud, and making false statements in order to obtain citizenship.

At the recent meeting of the Supreme Committee, the citizenship of the girl, who was found to be biologically unrelated to her mother or Kuwaiti father, was revoked as well.

The authorities decided to obtain Sri Lankan evidence for the girl, as per the fake mother’s revelation of the name of the real mother who delivered the child in Kuwait and was deported later.



KFF photo

The fire destroyed the agricultural plot.

Fire destroys Al-Rai area agri property

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: Five firefighting teams successfully extinguished a fire that broke out on an agricultural plot in Al-Rai, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to a press statement issued by the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), firefighters from Shuwaikh Industrial, Ardiya, Salmiya, and support fire stations, along with officers from the Shadadiya Hazardous Materials Center, rushed to the location quickly, managed to contain the blaze and prevent it from spreading further. No casualties were reported.

Bid to smuggle cigarettes

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC) has announced that Abdally customs inspectors thwarted an attempt to smuggle an undisclosed quantity of cigarettes hidden inside a shipment of household furniture bound for Iraq, reports Al-Jarida daily.

KGAC revealed that the smuggling attempt was uncovered during a routine inspection at Abdally border. Inspectors got suspicious of the unusual arrangement of furniture inside a departing truck, prompting them to unload the entire shipment for a more thorough examination.

Upon detailed inspection, the inspectors discovered quantities of cigarettes expertly concealed within the furniture items. A formal report on the incident was filed and the necessary legal action was taken against those involved.

KGAC reaffirmed its commitment to protect the country’s borders and prevent all forms of smuggling, while praising the vigilance and professionalism of its inspection teams.

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Top & above: Photos during a major promotional drive to showcase Indian mangoes and agricultural goods. Al-Seyassah photos

Over \$3 million in annual exports

‘Mango Mania’ festival boosts Indian mango presence in Kuwaiti markets

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: The Embassy of India in Kuwait, in collaboration with the Agricultural and Processed Food Export Development Authority (APEDA), launched a large-scale promotional campaign to market Indian mangoes and other agricultural products. The campaign included festivals in major shopping malls and hypermarkets, as well as meetings between exporters and importers, on July 23-24. In a press statement, the embassy explained that the goal

of the event is to strengthen India’s position as a reliable source of high-quality mangoes in the Kuwaiti market; especially since Kuwait is among the top five importers of mangoes from India, with a value exceeding \$3 million last year. The campaign included a major event titled, “Mango Mania”, at Lulu Hypermarket in Al-Rai; which was inaugurated by Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Adarsh Swaika, with the participation of a delegation of 10 Indian exporters. The delegation presented

several Indian mango varieties, such as Chausa, Mallika, Amrapali, Dasherri, Fazli and Langra from Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Fazli mango received special attention due to its Geographical Indication of Origin (GI) label. Meanwhile, the embassy organized a meeting between Indian exporters and local importers at Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI); with the ambassador, KCCI director general, and representatives of major retail and hypermarket companies in attendance.

MoHE approves 160 new foreign scholarship students for 2025/’26

Total beneficiaries now at 3,167

KUWAIT CITY, July 27, (KUNA): Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Higher Education, Lamia Al-Malhem, announced on Saturday the acceptance of 160 students under the vacancy plan for foreign scholarships for the academic year 2025/2026. In a press statement, Al-Malhem noted that the total number of students accepted under both the annual scholarship plan and the vacancy plan has reached 3,167. She emphasized the importance of students’

compliance with immigration laws in their respective scholarship countries, as well as adherence to regulations governing scholarships and equivalency recognition. This, she said, is essential for academic stability and the successful attainment of educational goals. Al-Malhem urged students accepted under the vacancy plan to complete post-acceptance procedures by signing the financial pledge with their



Al-Malhem

guardians via the unified government application for electronic services (Sahl), and uploading the medical examination document to the academic system on the Ministry’s website. She also encouraged students to follow the Ministry of Higher Education’s official social media channels to stay updated on announcements and circulars relevant to scholarship recipients. She wished all students continued success in their academic pursuits. Al-Malhem further called on students to review the list of accepted applicants, available on the Ministry’s website via the following link: <https://www.mohe.edu.kw/site/assets/images/Uploads/2025726202843>

Ministries tighten oversight, vow no leniency

20 pharmacies shut down in crackdown

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in coordination with the Ministry of Health, conducted a large-scale inspection campaign recently targeting a number of pharmacies in various governorates, during which 20 pharmacies found to be in blatant violation of pharmacy practice laws were closed, reports Al-Seyassah daily. In a joint statement to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), the two ministries stated that this campaign is an extension of the campaign launched by the Ministry of Health in 2023, which have so far resulted in the closure of 60 pharmacies operated or managed by unauthorized individuals. The Court of Cassation upheld the validity of the Ministry of Health’s measures to withdraw and revoke the licenses of these violating pharmacies. According to the statement, the

campaign was closely and directly supervised by Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel and Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, following strict ministerial directives to enhance oversight of the pharmaceutical sector. All legal measures have been enforced against violating pharmacies, including immediate closure, license revocation, and referral of some cases to the Public Prosecution for further action. The joint statement emphasized that joint inspection campaigns will continue throughout Kuwait in the coming period, stressing that no leniency will be shown toward violating entities. Pharmacy owners and investors were urged to fully comply with all laws and regulations to avoid legal accountability and to ensure the continued provision of reliable and safe healthcare services to the public.

JULY

Room Promotion



KFF photo
Talal Al-Roumi discusses the details of the previous Amghara fire incident during an expanded meeting with a number of firefighting sector leaders and officers, in the presence of governorate directors and field center heads.

KFF reviews Amghara’s fire at high-level meeting, eyes strategic enhancements

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: Chief of the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) Major General Talal Al-Roumi held an extensive meeting recently with senior commanders and officers from the Firefighting Sector to review the recent Amghara fire incident. The meeting was attended by governorate directors and heads of field stations, reports Al-Seyassah daily. In a press statement, KFF explained that the meeting included a detailed technical presentation by the

field team leaders who responded to the incident. The presentation covered the response strategy, analyzed the fire’s progression, and highlighted the main challenges encountered during the operation. The meeting was part of the ongoing efforts to enhance technical capabilities and boost on-ground performance through the review of real-life experiences and the continuous development of management and incident control strategies.

Car and cash theft resolved

Farwaniya Municipality cuts power supply to 11 illegal bachelor units

KUWAIT CITY, July 27, (Agencies): The Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality announced that the Engineering Audit and Follow-up Department in Farwaniya Governorate conducted an inspection campaign targeting bachelor accommodations. The campaign led to the disconnection of electricity in 11 properties found in violation, following the issuance of 13 prior warnings, reports Al-Seyassah daily. The department stated that the inspections covered the areas of Khaitan, Andalous, Omariya, and Firdous. Meanwhile, The General Traffic Department in the Operations Sector at the Interior Ministry resolved the case of a stolen vehicle belonging to a citizen that contained cash amounting to KD1,200, reports Al-Anba daily. According to the report, a citizen went to Salmiya Police Station to report the theft of his bronze 2018 saloon vehicle by an unknown individual. He stated that he withdrew KD1,200 and

left the money inside the vehicle. The victim suspected that an unknown person followed him and seized the opportunity to steal both the car and the money, though he declined to accuse anyone. A security source disclosed that “the vehicle’s description was immediately circulated; hence, a traffic patrol located and apprehended the suspect while he was in possession of the stolen vehicle. He was referred to the Investigations Department for questioning.” During interrogation, the suspect admitted to stealing the vehicle but denied having followed the victim or being aware of the money inside. He claimed he was surprised to find the cash in the car and stated that he already spent the amount on drugs. The investigation report, which was referred to the Public Prosecution, concluded that the suspect stole the vehicle. He has a prior criminal record for both theft and drug-related offenses.

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The exploitation

There were new considerations that needed to be addressed consciously, especially since Europe was trying to wash away the shame of Nazism by fulfilling the Balfour Declaration, while the Arabs lived in a different reality.

However, the Arabs fought three wars that ended in defeat, while the fourth - the October 1973 War - was, as the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat (may God have mercy on him) said, “a war to stir stagnant waters in order to bring all parties to the negotiating table.”

Thus began the Egyptian-Israeli peace process, which was based on Palestinian autonomy as a prelude to an independent state. But what was the outcome?

The Arabs were divided between those who accused Sadat of treason and those who supported his efforts.

Nevertheless, the loudest voices prevailed, leading to the relocation of the Arab League from Cairo to Tunisia. Most Arab countries, along with several Palestinian organizations, boycotted Egypt. These organizations raised the slogan of liberation, though their true goals were different. Some Palestinian groups attempted to pressure the Arab states, while the suffering of refugees worsened and those remaining in Palestine endured oppression, killings, and displacement.

At the same time, the Iranian revolution added salt to the wound by adopting the slogan “Liberating Jerusalem,” which Tehran used as a Trojan horse to expand its influence in Arab countries through groups it established, such as Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen, the Popular Mobilization Forces in Iraq, and Palestinian factions like Islamic Jihad and Hamas.

None of these groups served the Palestinian cause or the Palestinian people. As a result, we have witnessed many battles, particularly in the Gaza Strip, all of which were launched by organizations whose leaders live in luxury hotels abroad, seemingly profiting from the blood of the Gazan people.

If these groups, which control Gaza’s decisions, had agreed to join the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), contributed to unifying the Palestinian vision, accepted the 2007 elections, and joined the Palestinian Authority, they would have spared much suffering, not only for the people of Gaza but for all Palestinians.

Backed by the international community, Israel is now attempting to annex the West Bank, having destroyed the Gaza Strip and killed more than 53,000 civilians, most of them children.

A word of truth must be spoken - the advocates of the Palestinian cause have cloaked themselves in the guise of docile lambs, but in reality they are foxes working to satisfy their own interests.

The world does not care about the ongoing killing and starvation of the people of Gaza because it will not accept groups labeled as terrorists leading a de facto authority in Gaza or in all of Palestine.

That is why Hamas and Islamic Jihad must accept the Palestinian Authority if they want to end the tragedy and stop the hunger and killing.

The best evidence of this is the statement by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, “The world agrees that what Hamas is doing is disgusting, and we must treat them like monsters.”

Finally, both Islamic Jihad and Hamas, which have seized power through deception and brainwashing since 2007, must be held accountable. They must be sued for destroying the Palestinian cause while their leaders hoard funds under the pretext of “liberating Palestine.”

SCO summit

reinforced Arab Times’ commitment to fostering international cooperation through responsible and insightful journalism.

A spirit of unity and purpose
At the summit’s plenary session, leading voices underscored the SCO’s expanding influence in safeguarding regional security, promoting economic growth, and advancing mutual respect. Delegates emphasized that amid a rapidly shifting global landscape, SCO media and think tanks are uniquely positioned to amplify the values of peace, cooperation, and inclusivity.

“The SCO is no longer just a regional alliance – it is a global force shaping the future,” said Fu Hua, President of Xinhua News Agency. “By telling the stories of our cooperation and promoting shared development, we can build trust and deliver real impact.”

Echoing this vision, Mo Gaoyi, deputy head of the Publicity Department of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, called on participants to champion the “Shanghai Spirit” – mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for cultural diversity, and a desire for shared development.

Consensus for the future
According to the newly released Zhengzhou Consensus, SCO media and think tanks should:

- Strengthen mutual trust and understanding by promoting each country’s development path and national conditions.
- Support the Global Security Initiative, amplifying SCO’s peace-focused proposals and narratives.
- Implement the Global Development Initiative, highlighting the region’s strides in economic integration and modernization.
- Advance the Global Civilization Initiative, promoting respect for cultural diversity and mutual learning.

- Defend multilateralism, by voicing the need for inclusive, fair global governance and opposing hegemonic behavior.

The summit also unveiled two major think tank reports: one focusing on building a shared future for the SCO, and another exploring China’s modern practices in cultural heritage protection – offering both philosophical grounding and practical models for cooperation.

Voices from the region: Kuwait highlights shared momentum

In one of the summit’s most well-received addresses, Heba Abbas, Chairwoman Sustainability Committee of Kuwait Water Association delivered a powerful speech titled “Advancing Strong Momentum for Shared Prosperity and Development.” Speaking in the plenary’s second session, Abbas reflected on the symbolism of hosting the summit in Zhengzhou – where rivers merge, much like the cultures within the SCO.

“China’s rise,” she said, “is not merely an economic miracle – it is an invitation to partnership.” She hailed Chinese-led initiatives such as the Belt and Road, the Global Civilization Initiative, and the Global Development Initiative as engines for shared growth, especially through renewable energy, digital connectivity, and green innovation.

Abbas celebrated the 60-year friendship between Kuwait and China, noting milestone collaborations in energy, agriculture, and infrastructure, while calling for bolder regional cooperation through projects such as a Digital Silk Road Fund, a Youth Innovation League, and a Green Finance Accelerator.

“Prosperity,” she concluded, “is most powerful when shared. Let us stride forward as companions in the same boat, setting sail toward a shore where our children inherit not rivalry, but respect – not scarcity, but abundance.”

A united path forward
With strong endorsements from regional leaders, including a congratulatory message from Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov, the summit was a resounding affirmation of the SCO’s evolution from a security forum to a multifaceted partnership spanning economic, academic, and civil society domains.

As delegates prepare to wrap up the summit on Sunday, the message from Zhengzhou is clear: by aligning voices, sharing stories, and building trust, SCO media and think tanks are not just reporting on change – they are helping lead it.

The summit is jointly hosted by Xinhua News Agency, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and the Henan Provincial People’s Government, under the guidance of China’s State Council Information Office.

AI, sciences

Al-Badr highlighted the ongoing digital transformation within the General Secretariat, including the adoption of fully electronic registration in the new scholarship plan. He urged students to maintain the confidentiality of their electronic accounts and to avoid sharing them with others.

Al-Badr stressed that internal scholarships do not cover all 15 private universities in Kuwait, due to factors such as the nature of certain specializations, the incompatibility of some programs with the scholarship plans, or concerns regarding the quality of academic outcomes.

The following are the details of the interview:

Question: What are the current top priorities of the General Secretariat of Private Universities?

Answer: The quality of education is a central priority that we share with the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jalal. It remains the core objective that guides the efforts of the General Secretariat, along with all its committees and technical teams.

Another important priority is the establishment of medical colleges and specialties to meet the growing demands of the labor market. The criteria for launching medical programs are strict in terms of academic readiness, infrastructure, faculty qualifications, and curricula that ensure highly competent graduates, given the responsibility they will bear for people’s lives and health.

We also place strong emphasis on aligning university majors with labor market needs, particularly in fields such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, renewable energy, and digital technology, which have become fundamental pillars of the modern economy.

In brief, the General Secretariat operates under a clear strategic vision built on three main pillars - ensuring quality education, meeting labor market demands, and preparing for the future through academic programs that keep pace with scientific and technological developments.

Q: Why are medical specialties given special attention in private universities?

A: Because these specialties are directly related to human life, which makes them among the fields where there can be no compromise on quality. We carry out regular field visits for evaluation and verification, and we require the availability of modern educational equipment and appropriate clinical facilities.

Q: Is there a specific strategy currently being implemented by the General Secretariat of Private Universities?

A: Yes, we are currently working under a clear five-year strategic plan based on two main pillars. The first focuses on enhancing the performance of the General Secretariat itself by modernizing its work mechanisms and adopting a comprehensive digital transformation system.

The second pillar involves imple-

menting the Private Universities Council’s policies to restructure private higher education, improve the quality of its outcomes, and ensure alignment with labor market demands and future government strategies.

Q: What are the criteria governing the internal scholarship plan? Are scholarships granted solely based on the student’s desire?

A: Internal scholarships are not granted solely based on a student’s personal preference. Instead, they serve as a tool for directing resources toward academic specializations that are in actual demand in the labor market. We rely on official data and reports from various entities, such as the Civil Service Commission, the Ministry of Health, and the Public Authority for Manpower. The Private Universities Council does not approve the introduction of any new specialization or allocate scholarships to it without first studying the real need for it.

Q: What are the most prominent features of the new scholarship regulations?

A: The new regulations represent a significant shift, as they establish a clear legal framework for internal scholarships for the first time. These regulations include detailed provisions covering all essential aspects, such as admission age, transfers, suspension, withdrawal, and cases of academic failure.

One of the most notable provisions is the requirement for students to sign a pledge accepting financial responsibility for any expenses incurred by the state during their scholarship period, should they fail or withdraw. This measure aims to instill a sense of seriousness and accountability in students, while ensuring fairness in the use of public funds.

Q: Are private universities free to open whatever specializations they wish?

A: Of course not, that’s a misconception. Opening any new specialization follows a strict process that begins with the submission of an official application, and undergoes a comprehensive technical evaluation. We don’t just consider the academic title of the specialization but we assess the university’s readiness in terms of academic standards, availability of qualified faculty, infrastructure, and curriculum. Any specialization that fails to meet the required standards is immediately rejected.

Q: Some describe private universities as merely a temporary alternative to public universities. What is your response?

A: That description is both inaccurate and unfair. Private universities in Kuwait have evolved into strategic partners in the development of the higher education system, not temporary alternatives, as some suggest. They are an integral part of the national education field, and operate under strict oversight, offering high-quality academic programs aligned with the requirements of national development and the labor market.

We view education as a shared responsibility between the public and private sectors, with each playing a complementary, not competing, role.

Q: How many private universities are accredited? Are all of them included in the scholarship plan?

A: Currently, there are 15 licensed private universities in Kuwait. However, not all of them are included in the internal scholarship plan. Some universities do not admit scholarship students for various reasons, either because their specializations are not part of the scholarship plan, their programs do not align with labor market needs, or due to technical or academic concerns about the quality of the offered programs. It is important to stress an important principle here. Scholarships are a right of the state, not an automatic entitlement for every student.

Q: What is the approximate cost of studying at private universities?

A: Costs vary depending on the university, the field of study, and the academic level (whether diploma or bachelor’s). On average, tuition ranges between KD 4,000 and KD 5,000 per year per student.

‘Digitech vital

During the visit, Al-Mannai met with Huawei’s Vice President of Gulf North Dai Qing, to explore cooperation in digital infrastructure, media tools, and training programs aimed at enhancing KUNA’s editorial and technical team capabilities.

Al-Mannai emphasized the importance of collaborating with leading tech companies like Huawei to boost media capabilities through digital innovation, highlighting the urgent need to adopt advanced digital technologies that are transforming data analysis and audience engagement.

Al-Mannai and his delegation toured the Enterprise Business Von Neumann Exhibition Hall and Huawei Cloud Planck Exhibition Hall, as well as the Research, and Development (R&D) Center, where they were introduced to the latest innovations in automation and digital media solutions.

The visit was held on the sidelines of KUNA’s participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Media and Think Tank Forum, held in Zhengzhou, China.

The delegation includes Acting Editor-in-Chief Mohammad Al-Bahar and Director of Marketing and Public Relations Lamia Al-Farsi.

Mol arrests

market and ensure that all the concerned parties comply with the laws and regulations.

PAM revealed the campaign resulted in the arrest of a number of individuals employed by unlicensed companies or working in professions not specified in their work permits. The unlicensed companies were identified only as M.A. Company and F.G.

Company.

During the campaign, 12 workers found to have violated rules related to Article 20 visa (domestic workers) were arrested; in addition to one worker who violated the law on sheep herding, 28 individuals employed by companies not authorized to work at the site, and three workers who violated the Residency Law.

KFAED opens

funds, noting that their concessional financing made it possible to construct a modern passenger terminal aligned with the Maldives’ ambitions to enhance infrastructure and strengthen the tourism sector.

He stated that the project stands as a successful model of joint development and collaborative cooperation, adding that the new airport will not only enhance the travel experience for millions, but also help drive the national economy and accommodate the growing demand in the tourism sector.

Speaking at the inauguration, Mr. Waleed Shamlan Al-Bahar noted that development cooperation between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Maldives began in 1976, when the Kuwait Fund extended its first concessional loan of USD 5 million to finance the Hulhulé Airport Expansion Project, now known as Velana Inter-

national Airport. Since then, the Fund has continued its support by providing 15 concessional loans to the Maldives, totaling approximately KWD 61.1 million (USD 195.52 million), to support development across several critical sectors, including water and sanitation, transport, healthcare, disaster recovery, coastal protection, and fisheries.

Citizenship pulled

it through dependency. Cabinet Resolution No. 906/2025 mandates the revocation of citizenship certificates from ten individuals, as well as from anyone who obtained citizenship through dependency.

‘Shared visions

He stressed the importance of overcoming various challenges by enhancing direct communication channels between media institutions.

Al-Mannai highlighted the opportunity to establish joint media platforms and organize training programs aimed at exchanging expertise, ensuring that media professionals can fully perform their roles.

He praised the summit, stressing that it is not a casual event but a unique opportunity to develop shared visions that help restore balance to a media field that is undergoing rapid transformations.

Al-Mannai emphasized that the summit reinforces the media’s role in shaping enlightened awareness, guiding public strategies, and expanding cooperation between media outlets and think tanks in OIC member states.

He also stressed the need to adopt new initiatives that would give the OIC greater momentum in shaping the media sector.

Al-Mannai highlighted the importance of harmonizing visions to coordinate joint media policies on issues of mutual interest and to develop proposals and recommendations that support the launch of professional training programs and the exchange of expertise among journalists and researchers.

Kuwait oil

as senior specialist in the Planning Group, Faisal Hassan Shanat was promoted to Head of the Capital Programs Management Team, Shahd Adnan Al-Mutawa was appointed Head of the Strategic Planning Team, and Qutaiba Mohammad Okasha was appointed Head of the Performance Management Team.

The decision also stipulates renaming the Reservoir Development Follow up Team to the Reserves Management Team and its transfer to the Planning Group. Yousef Zaid Al-Sulaili was appointed Head of the Reserves Management Team.

Diplomats pay tribute to victims of aircraft crash

Condolence Book signed at Bangladesh Embassy in Kuwait after Dhaka tragedy

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: On Monday, 21 July 2025, a Bangladesh Air Force training aircraft tragically crashed into a school building in the capital, Dhaka. The devastating incident claimed the lives of at least 27 people, most of whom were children, and left 171 others injured, including 21 in critical condition. Considering this national tragedy, the Government of Bangladesh declared 22 July 2025 as a National Mourning Day.

As part of the official mourning and in remembrance of the victims, the Embassy of Bangladesh in Kuwait organized an event of signing a Book of Condolences on 27 and 28 July 2025. A significant number of delegates of the state of Kuwait, Diplomatic Missions and International Organizations in Kuwait visited the Embassy to sign the condolence book and expressed their deepest sympathies.

Many others, who were unable to attend in person, conveyed their message of condolences electronically via official email of the Embassy. These heartfelt gestures of solidarity reflect the deep friendship and shared humanity among nations.



A diplomat signing the Book of Condolences.

The Embassy is expressing its sincere gratitude to all dignitaries, diplomatic missions, and individuals who extended their condolences during this period of national mourning of Bangladesh.



Diplomats during the signing of the Book of Condolences.

Final List of Debts of the Debtor

Each of the following: 1. Promix Sanitary Ware Co. W.L.L. 2. Ayad Faraj Aayed Al-Daihani 3. Awatif Fahid Hiras Al-Mutairi As per the decision issued by His Honour the Bankruptcy Judge in Case/Request No. 96 / 2022 Bankruptcy Declaration dated 28 /12 / 2023 at the Bankruptcy Department, and registered under the digital reference number 224383880, it was ruled to initiate bankruptcy proceedings for:

1. Promix Sanitary Ware Co. W.L.L. 2. Ayad Faraj Aayed Al-Daihani 3. Awatif Fahid Hiras Al-Mutairi
And to consider 01 / 07 / 2019 as the provisional date of suspension of payment. Dr. Faleh Al-Azmi was appointed as the bankruptcy trustee, and the concerned parties were duly notified. The decision was published in the Official Gazette “Kuwait Al-Youm” on 21 / 01 / 2024, Issue No. 1671. A ruling declaring the debtor bankrupt was issued on 202024/05/, in the case filed by Hassan Abdullah Al-Enezi against Promix Company, based on a certificate of no appeal issued by the Court of Appeal on 07 / 01 / 2025. After inviting the creditors to submit their claims and upon the conclusion of the debt verification process, the bankruptcy trustee prepared this list detailing the amounts deemed acceptable, as follows:

| Serial No. | Creditor Name | Type of Debt | Debt Instrument Details | Claim Amount (KWD) |
|----------------|--|--|--|----------------------|
| 1 | Mr. Mubarak Sanit Daban Al-Daihani | Commercial | Based on an enforceable court ruling | 572,171.209 |
| 2 | National Bank | Commercial | Based on an enforceable court ruling | 1,804,769.623 |
| 3 | Mr. Hassan Abdullah Obeid Al-Enezi | Commercial (Cheques) | Based on an enforceable court ruling | 96,700 |
| 4 | Mr. Nasser Bandar Al-Mutairi | Commercial | Based on two enforceable court rulings | 140,000 |
| 5 | Mr. Abdullah Khalid Nasser Al-Zuabi | Cheque No. 6082 Cheque No. 4838 | Two cheques drawn on National Bank of Kuwait | 200,000 |
| 6 | Mr. Saad Khalid Nasser Al-Zuabi | Cheque No. 2759 Cheque No. 4354 | Two cheques drawn on National Bank of Kuwait | 140,000 |
| 7 | Mr. Musleh Mohammed Hleel Al-Otaibi | Cheque No. 348 | One cheque drawn on Kuwait International Bank | 100,000 |
| 8 | Mr. Khaled Hamed Marzouq Al-Mutairi | Cheque No. 5145 | One cheque drawn on National Bank of Kuwait; enforceable by Commercial Court ruling No. 1549/2021 dated 18/5/2022 | 71,600 |
| 9 | Mr. Mishaal Hamed Marzouq Al-Mutairi | Cheque No. 3811 | One cheque drawn on National Bank of Kuwait, enforceable by Misdeamoun Funds ruling | 257,800 |
| 10 | Mr. Essa Yaqoub Yousef Bin Aoun | Cheque No. 5822 Cheque No. 2921 Cheque No. 6076 | Three cheques, drawn on National Bank of Kuwait; enforceable by ruling | 123,500 |
| 11 | Mr. Fahad Mubarak Owayed Al-Daihani | Cheques Nos. 5973 ,5974,5975,5876 ,5977,5978,5979 and 5980 | Eight cheques drawn on National Bank of Kuwait; enforceable by Shuwaikh Industrial Misdeamoun Court ruling No. 381/219 – 6624/2019 | 505,380 |
| 12 | Mr. Mohammed Bader Amesh Al-Daihani | Cheque No. 2196 | One undated cheque drawn on National Bank of Kuwait | 42,000 |
| 13 | Mr. Bader Fayez Bader Amesh Al-Daihani | Cheque No. 4738 | One undated cheque drawn on National Bank of Kuwait | 20,000 |
| 14 | Mr. Nawaf Bader Amesh Al-Daihani | Cheque No. 6077 Cheque No. 6078 | Two undated cheques drawn on National Bank of Kuwait | 56,700 |
| 15 | Mr. Fahad Mazeed Faraj Al-Daihani | Cheque No. 4636 | One undated cheque drawn on National Bank of Kuwait | 110,000 |
| 16 | Mr. Khaled Mazeed Faraj Al-Daihani | Cheque No. 2145 | One cheque dated 01/07/2019 drawn on National Bank of Kuwait | 100,000 |
| 17 | Mr. Bader Mazeed Faraj Al-Daihani | Cheque No. 4374 | One undated cheque drawn on National Bank of Kuwait | 121,000 |
| Total : | Four million, four hundred and sixty-one, six hundred and twenty dinars And eight hundred and thirty-two fils | | | 4,461,620.832 |

Total Debt : KWD 4,461,620.832 (Four million, four hundred sixty-one thousand, six hundred twenty Kuwaiti Dinars and eight hundred thirty-two fils only)
Note: Some of the claims involve cheque amounts already listed in enforcement files.
Legal Note: According to Article 111 of Law No. 71 of 2020 (Bankruptcy Law): “Any creditor or the debtor whose name appears on the debt list may file a grievance to the Bankruptcy Department within ten days from the date of the announcement of the list. The Bankruptcy Court shall have jurisdiction to decide on such grievance.”

Bankruptcy Trustee Contact Details: Dr. Faleh Rashid Al-Azmi Trustee in Bankruptcy
Address: Al-Qibla – Kuwait - Plot 11 – Parcel 18 – Building of Munira Hamoud – Al-Omairi Office – Floor 1 – Office 6
Email: Mgc_consulting@yahoo.com Phone: +965 51530012 / +965 99081109

Democrats readying a fight

White House wants more states to redraw House maps to help US Republicans

WASHINGTON, July 27, (AP): The White House is eyeing redistricting efforts beyond Texas to help Republicans hold the US House in 2026 - and Democrats are preparing to escalate in response, with one senator vowing to go "nuclear" if needed.

What's shaping up to be a multi-state redistricting battle could mark the opening round for House control ahead of next year's midterms, when Democrats see retaking the House as the party's best chance to break Republicans' hold on Congress and President Donald Trump is determined to keep the GOP's majority. Democrats, under pressure from their base to match GOP tactics, have grown more forceful in their messaging and are taking concrete steps to push back, even as the party enters at a disadvantage.

"If they're going to go nuclear, then so am I," said Sen. Elissa Slotkin. "They're forcing us into this position because they're trying to pick their voters."

At Trump's urging, Texas Republicans are looking to redraw congressional

sional maps to favor GOP candidates during a 30-day special legislative session that started this week. Trump has said he wants to carve out five new winnable GOP seats.

But Trump officials are now going beyond just Texas, looking to redraw lines in other states such as Missouri, according to a person familiar with conversations but unauthorized to speak publicly about them.

Democrats have fewer options. More of the states the party controls do not allow elected partisans to draw maps, instead entrusting groups such as independent commissions to draw fair lines.

Still, party leaders are exploring their legal options and shifting their posture. A party long known for believing it's on the moral high ground is signaling it's ready to fight dirty.

"We can't fight with one hand behind our backs," Rep. Pete Aguilar, chair of the House Democratic Caucus, told reporters Tuesday.

House Democratic Leader Ha-



Texas state Rep John McQueeney, R-Fort Worth, looks through U.S. Congressional District maps during a redistricting hearing at the Texas Capitol on July 24, in Austin, Texas. (AP)

keem Jeffries may have fewer options to match Republicans, but it hasn't stopped him from exploring them.

Earlier this month, Jeffries' team spoke with New York Gov. Kathy Hochul's office about redistricting after the

news in Texas, according to a person familiar with the conversations. Drawing new congressional lines now could run afoul of the state constitution and undoubtedly draw legal challenges - but it doesn't appear to be off the table.

"What I'm going to say is, all is fair in love and war," Hochul said Thursday, adding that she's "going to see what our options are."

"If there's other states that are violating the rules that are going to try and give themselves an advantage, all I'll say is I'm going to look at it closely with Hakeem Jeffries."

Jeffries and his advisers have also examined legal strategies in other states with Democratic trifectas, including California, where he recently met with the state's congressional delegation.

On Wednesday, the California delegation's Democrats discussed the redistricting issue during a private meeting on Capitol Hill. And on Thursday, Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi joined an emergency call with others in the

state about the effort.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Pelosi said that she is not a fan of using redistricting outside of the 10-year window, but if that's what the party needs "to win, we will do that."

"Everything is on the table," Pelosi told AP.

California's governor, Gavin Newsom, a potential Democratic contender for president in 2028, has taken a similar approach. He said on social media in response to Trump's redistricting push that "two can play this game."

An independent commission handles redistricting in his state. Newsom has floated the notion of California's Democratic-controlled legislature doing a mid-decade redistricting, arguing it wouldn't be expressly forbidden by the 2008 ballot initiative that created the commission. He's also mentioned the possibility of squeezing in a special election to repeal the popular commission system before the 2026 elections get underway, either of which would be a long shot.

'Terminations unlawful'

Immigration judges fired by Trump administration to fight back

CHICAGO, July 27, (AP): Federal immigration judges fired by the Trump administration are filing appeals, pursuing legal action and speaking out in an unusually public campaign to fight back.

More than 50 immigration judges - from senior leaders to new appointees - have been fired since Donald Trump assumed the presidency for the second time. Normally bound by courtroom decorum, many are now unrestrained in describing terminations they consider unlawful and why they believe they were targeted.

Their suspected reasons include gender discrimination, decisions on immigration cases played up by the Trump administration and a courthouse tour with the Senate's No. 2 Democrat.

"I cared about my job and was really good at it," Jennifer Peyton, a former supervising judge told The Associated Press this week. "That letter that I received, the three sentences, explained no reason why I was fired."

Peyton, who received the notice while on a July Fourth family vacation, was appointed judge in 2016. She considered it her dream job. Peyton was later named assistant chief immigration judge in Chicago, helping to train, mentor and oversee judges. She was a visible presence in the busy downtown court, greeting outside observers.



Jennifer Peyton sits for an interview in downtown Chicago on July 21. Peyton was fired from her position as Assistant Chief Immigration Judge on July 3rd, with no cause given. (AP)

She cited top-notch performance reviews and said she faced no disciplinary action. Peyton said she'll appeal through the Merit Systems Protection Board, an independent government agency Trump has also targeted.

Peyton's theories about why she was fired include appearing on a "bureaucrat watchdog list" of people accused by a right-wing organization of working against the Trump agenda. She also questions a courthouse tour she gave to

Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois in June.

Durbin blasted Peyton's termination as an "abuse of power," saying he's visited before as part of his duties as a publicly-elected official.

The nation's immigration courts - with a backlog of about 3.5 million cases - have become a key focus of Trump's hard-line immigration enforcement efforts. The firings are on top of resignations, early retirements and transfers, adding up to 106 judges

gone since January, according to the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, which represents judges. There are currently about 600 immigration judges.

Several of those fired, including Peyton, have recently done a slew of interviews on local Chicago television stations and with national outlets, saying they now have a platform for their colleagues who remain on the bench.

"The ones that are left are feeling threatened and very uncertain about their future," said Matt Biggs, the union's president.

Carla Espinoza, a Chicago immigration judge since 2023, was fired as she was delivering a verdict this month. Her notice said she'd be dismissed at the end of her two-year probationary period with the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

"I am personally committed to my career. We're not political appointees," she told AP. "I'm entitled to a reason."

She believes the firings have disproportionately affected women and ethnic minorities, including people with Hispanic-sounding surnames like hers. She plans to take legal action before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which has also shifted focus under Trump.

"There's a very strong pattern of discriminatory factors," she said.



Law enforcement officers are seen stationed outside a Walmart where 11 people were stabbed in a violent attack on July 26 in Traverse City, Michigan. (AP)

Walmart stabbing injures 11

Eleven people were stabbed at a Walmart in Traverse City on Saturday - with six in critical condition - in what a Michigan sheriff said appeared to be a random act. A suspect was in custody, authorities said.

Around 4:45 pm, a 42-year-old man entered the store and used a folding knife to stab 11 people, the Grand Traverse County Sheriff's Office said in a statement on social media. A sheriff's deputy arrived within minutes and took the man into custody, and people in the store also helped apprehend the

suspect and treat victims, the sheriff's office said.

The victims' ages weren't immediately released.

"Eleven is 11 too many, but thank God it wasn't more," Sheriff Michael Shea told reporters.

Emergency vehicles and uniformed first responders gathered in the parking lot of the shopping center that houses several other retail stores. Authorities also were seen interviewing employees, still wearing blue uniform vests and name tags, nearby as the response gave way to an investigation. (AP)



Firefighters try to extinguish the blazes in a forest as a helicopter drops water during a wildfire, in the northwestern suburb of Kryoneri, in Athens on Greece on July 26. (AP)

Greece requests assistance from European Union as wildfires rage across country

ATHENS, Greece, July 27, (Agencies): Greece on Saturday requested assistance from the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism to combat multiple wildfires raging across the country, according to local broadcaster Mega Channel.

The request includes six water-dropping aircraft to help battle five to six major wildfire fronts burning simultaneously in various regions of the eastern Mediterranean nation. The EU mechanism has reportedly approved the request, Mega Channel reported.

The most concerning blaze erupted early Saturday afternoon near Kryoneri, a village north of Athens at the foothills of Mt Parnitha. A firefighting force of 145 personnel, supported by 44 vehicles, as well as numerous volunteers and municipal water tankers, was deployed to the area. At least 17 firefighting aircraft operated until nightfall, according to Greek news outlet To Vima.

Wildfires were also reported earlier Saturday on the Aegean island of Kythira, in Messinia prefecture in the southern Peloponnese, in the central part of Evia Island, at the Temenia site in Chania prefecture on Crete, and later in the Molaios district of Laconia in southeastern Greece.

Authorities said the fire north of Athens appeared particularly threatening by dusk. The same area has experienced major wildfires in the past, most recently in August 2021.

Residents of the town of Kryoneri, 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) northeast of Athens received three SMS messages

to evacuate to safe areas, Fire Service spokesman Vassilis Vathrakoyannis told reporters.

Greek media have shown houses on fire. The spokesman said "there have been reports of damages. We will take stock when the fires have been put out."

"The real difficulties are ahead of us," Vathrakoyannis said, adding that Greece has asked for six firefighting planes from the European Union's Civil Protection Mechanism.

Temperatures reaching, or exceeding, 38 degrees Celsius (100 degrees Fahrenheit), dry conditions and high winds are fanning the flames.

Under such conditions wildfires "expand very quickly and become dangerous. These conditions are expected to prevail over the coming days," Vathrakoyannis said.

The fire service is also dealing with three other major fires in the southwest on Greece's two largest islands - Crete in the south and Evia north of Athens - and also on the island of Kythera, northwest of Crete. At least 335 firefighters, 19 planes and 13 helicopters are involved, but can only operate in daylight. In total, 52 wildfires broke out across the country over the past 24 hours, the spokesman said.

Wildfires, many of them destructive, have become a common occurrence in Greece in recent years. Several have broken out in the past month.

Also:
THESSALONIKI, Greece: A bomb explosion targeted the home of the presi-

dent of the **Greek** association of prison guards early Saturday morning in the country's north.

The guard, named **Konstantinos Varsamis** on the association's website, was left unharmed after about 3 kilograms (about 6.6 pounds) of explosives went off at 2:10 a.m. local time, police said. Two people suffered minor injuries from shattered glass.

The explosives were placed outside his apartment building's front door in **Sykies**, a suburb in the northern city of Thessaloniki, where he lives on the first floor, according to authorities. The blast damaged three apartment buildings, shattering their windows and collapsing a shared wall, according to an Associated Press reporter on-site.

"I woke up because of the very loud bang of the explosion," **Tzeto Kelo**, 52, who lives in an adjacent apartment building, said. "Shattered glass from a window fell on my bed and I was covered in blood." He was treated at a hospital before being discharged.

Police said a witness saw a man walking in the densely built street shortly before the explosion.

Varsamis has worked for many years at **Diavata** prison, west of Thessaloniki, known for housing many criminal gang members as well as convicted terrorists.

Two police officers said they are focusing their efforts on criminal gangs rather than terror groups. Both spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not supposed to comment on an ongoing investigation. The police have already deposited Varsamis, they said.

Russia scales down celebrations honoring its navy as Ukraine launches drone attacks

MOSCOW, July 27, (AP): Russia on Sunday scaled down the festivities honoring its navy citing security concerns as continuing Ukrainian drone attacks posed a challenge to the Kremlin.

Russian authorities canceled the parades of warships in St. Petersburg, in the Kaliningrad region on the Baltic and in the far-eastern port of Vladivostok that are usually held to mark the annual Navy Day celebrations.

Asked about the reason for the cancellation of the parade in St. Petersburg even as President Vladimir Putin arrived in his home city to visit the navy headquarters, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that "it's linked to the overall situation, security reasons, which are above all else."

The Russian Defense Ministry said that air defenses downed 99 Ukrainian drones over several regions overnight. Later in the day, officials reported more drones shot down near St. Petersburg. A woman was injured by drone fragments in the Lomonosov region, according to the local authorities.

St. Petersburg's Pulkovo airport suspended dozens of flights early Sunday because of the drone threat.

On a trip to St. Petersburg, Putin visited the historic Admiralty building to receive reports on four-day naval maneuvers that wrapped up Sunday. The



Russian President Vladimir Putin, (third from left), stands aboard the Raptor boat during his visit to St. Petersburg on Navy Day, Russia, on July 27. (AP)

July Storm exercise involved 150 warships from the Baltics to the Pacific.

Putin vowed to build more warships and intensify the navy's training, adding that "the navy's strike power and combat capability will rise to a qualitatively new level."

Reducing the scale of the Navy Day celebrations reflects Moscow's wor-

ries about Ukraine's sweeping drone attacks across the country.

In a series of strikes earlier in the war now in its fourth year, Ukraine sank several Russian warships in the Blacks Sea, crippling Moscow's naval capability and forcing it to redeploy its fleet from Russia-occupied Crimea to Novorossiysk.

Tusk announces government reshuffle

Poland and US sign defense financing deal

WARSAW, July 27, (Xinhua): Poland signed an agreement with the United States on Friday to secure a four-billion-US-dollar credit guarantee aimed at accelerating the modernization of the Polish Armed Forces.

Polish Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz said Poland is ready to make effective use of the funds to boost defense and security.

According to the Polish Ministry of National Defense, the credit guarantee will help finance both current and future arms procurement agreements with the United States.

Meanwhile, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk announced a sweeping government reshuffle, which includes the creation of two new ministries and a significant reduction in the size of the Council of Ministers.

Under the reorganization, a new Ministry of Finance and Economy will be established, to be headed by current Finance Minister Andrzej Domanski. A separate Ministry of Energy will also be formed, with Milosz Motyka, currently deputy minister of climate and environment, appointed as its leader.

Wojciech Balczun will take the helm of the Ministry of State Assets,



Poland's Prime Minister Donald Tusk addresses the Polish parliament on June 11, in Warsaw, Poland. (AP)

while Stefan Krajewski, deputy minister of agriculture and rural development, will be promoted to lead the Ministry of Agriculture.

Two existing ministries, the Ministry of Development and Technology, and the Ministry of Industry, will be dissolved as part of the restructuring.

Tusk said the reshuffle aims to improve efficiency and streamline the executive branch. "We will go from having one of the largest governments in Europe to one of the smallest in terms of structure," he said. The total number of ministers and deputy ministers will be reduced to below 100.

Asia

Philippine troops kill 7 communist rebels: Philippine troops killed seven communist guerrillas in an offensive Sunday in a central province and were pursuing several others in the latest flare-up of the decades-long insurgency that the military says is on the brink of collapse.

Army forces killed two New People's Army guerrillas in a clash last week in Masbate province and then caught up with the fleeing insurgents early Sunday in the hinterlands of Uson town, where they killed seven of them in a 30-minute gunbattle, Maj Frank Roldan of the army's 9th Infantry Division said.

Seven assault rifles and two grenade launchers were recovered by troops at the scene of the battle. At least eight rebels managed to flee in different directions and were being pursued, Roldan said.

"We're in the final push," Roldan told The Associated Press by telephone, saying a few dozen armed guerrillas remain in the island province, a poverty-stricken agricultural region of more than 900,000 people.

"This successful operation delivers a major blow to the already weakening insurgency," Roldan said, and asked the remaining rebels to surrender and support the government's peace efforts.

Armed Forces of the Philippines chief Gen **Romeo Brawner Jr.** said last week that less than 900 rebels remain, mostly in eastern rural regions, from the estimated 25,000 insurgent force at the peak of the 56-year insurgency, one of Asia's longest-running rebellions.

Saddled by battle defeats, surrenders and factionalism, the guerrilla forces "are on the brink of collapse," said Brig Gen Medel Aguilar, deputy commander of the military's Civil Relations Service. (AP)



Brawner

The accident occurred at around 1:55 pm on Saturday at an intersection in the city of Hejin. Traffic police rushed to the scene and relevant investigations are underway. (Xinhua)

☐ ☐ ☐

Vietnam floods kill 2 and 2 missing: Torrential rains and flooding in northern Vietnam's Son La province left two people dead and two others missing from Saturday through Sunday, local daily newspaper Nhan Dan (People) reported.

The downpours were triggered by the impact of Vietnam's third tropical storm this year, and caused flash floods and landslides across the province, according to the report.

Flooding damaged homes, infrastructure and crops, forced the urgent relocation of at least 25 households, and caused power outages affecting more than 3,000 homes.

Local authorities have been evacuating residents, moving property to safe areas and clearing flooded zones to ensure public safety, the state-run media added. (Xinhua)

☐ ☐ ☐

Police probes shootings at 2 Sydney homes: Sydney police are investigating separate shootings at two residences in the city's western suburbs on Friday night.

Police in the state of New South Wales (NSW) said on Saturday that officers were called to reports of gunshots being fired into the first home in Croydon Park, 10 km west of central Sydney, around 8 p.m. on Friday.

One man, three women and two children were inside the premises at the time but there were no reported injuries.

Officers were told that a man was seen on foot firing two shots from a pistol into the home before entering a nearby vehicle and fleeing the scene.

Police believe the incident was targeted.

Hours later, emergency services were deployed to reports of shots being fired into a unit in Prairiewood, 28 km west of central Sydney, around 11:25 pm.

An 80-year-old female occupant was uninjured.

A police statement said that the second incident is believed to be a case of mistaken identity and that there is no evidence to suggest it was linked to the earlier shooting.

Crime scenes were established at both locations and separate investigations into the two shootings have commenced. (Xinhua)



Chinese Vice President Han Zheng meets with Pakistani Chief of Army Staff Asim Munir in Beijing, capital of China on July 25. (Xinhua)

China, Pakistan vow to strengthen security cooperation

Zhang Youxia, vice chairman of the Central Military Commission, on Friday expressed hope that Pakistan will continue to take all necessary measures to ensure the safety of Chinese personnel, projects and institutions in the country.

Zhang made the remarks while meeting with Pakistani Chief of Army Staff Asim Munir.

Noting that military-to-military relations between China and Pakistan serve as a crucial pillar of bilateral ties, Zhang called for efforts to strengthen strategic communication, deepen exchanges and cooperation, and work together to foster peace and development in the region.

Munir said Pakistan stands ready to deepen and expand practical cooperation with China in all fields.

He also stressed that Pakistan will make every effort to combat terrorism and protect the Chinese nationals in the country. (Xinhua)

Countries thank Trump for mediation

Thai and Cambodian leaders to meet in Malaysia for talks to end border dispute

BANGKOK, July 27, (AP): Thai and Cambodian leaders will meet in Malaysia for talks to end hostilities, a spokesperson of the Thai prime minister's office said on Sunday.

This came following mediation efforts by US President Donald Trump to end the deadly border dispute. The fighting, now in its fourth day, has killed at least 34 people and displaced more than 168,000.

Jirayu Huangsap said Acting Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai will attend Monday's talks in response to an invitation from Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim "to discuss peace efforts in the region."

The spokesperson also said Phumtham's Cambodian counterpart Hun Manet will also attend the talks, though this was not immediately confirmed by the Cambodian side. He added that Anwar was acting in his capacity as chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which is held on an annual rotating basis by its 10 members.

Trump posted on Truth Social on Saturday that he spoke to the leaders of Thailand and Cambodia and suggested he would not move forward with trade agreements with either country if the hostilities continued. He later said both sides agreed to meet to negotiate a ceasefire.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet said Sunday his country agreed to pursue an "immediate and unconditional ceasefire." He said Trump told him that Thailand had also agreed to halt attacks following the US president's conversation with Acting Thai Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai.

"This is positive news for the soldiers and people of both countries," Hun Manet said in a statement.

He said he tasked his deputy, Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn, to coordinate next steps with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and to engage directly with Thailand's foreign minister to implement the ceasefire.

Thailand expressed cautious support. Phumtham thanked Trump and said that Thailand agreed in principle to a ceasefire but stressed the need for "sincere intention" from Cambodia, the Thai Foreign Ministry said. Phumtam called for swift bilateral talks to discuss concrete steps toward a peaceful resolution, it said.

The fighting flared Thursday after a land mine explosion along the border wounded five Thai soldiers. Both sides blamed each other for starting the clashes.



Cambodians evacuating villagers check their health at a health clinic, as they take refuge in Wat Phnom Kamboar In Oddar Meanchey province, Cambodia on July 27, as border fighting between Thailand and Cambodia entered its fourth day. (AP)

Both countries recalled their ambassadors and Thailand closed its border crossings with Cambodia. Despite the diplomatic efforts, fighting continued Sunday along parts of the contested border, with both sides refusing to budge and trading blame over renewed shelling and troop movements.

Col Richa Suksowanont, a Thai army deputy spokesperson, said Cambodian forces fired heavy artillery into Surin province, including at civilian homes early

Sunday. He said Cambodia also launched rocket attacks targeting the ancient Ta Muen Thom temple claimed by both countries, and other areas in a bid to reclaim territory secured by Thai troops. Thai forces responded with long-range artillery to strike Cambodian artillery and rocket launchers.

Richa said Trump's efforts to mediate were a "separate matter." The battlefield operations will continue and a ceasefire can only happen if Cambodia formally initiates negotiations, he added.

"Any cessation of hostilities cannot be reached while Cambodia is severely lacking in good faith and repeatedly violating the basic principles of human rights and humanitarian law," Thailand's Foreign Ministry said separately.

Cambodian Defense Ministry spokesperson Lt. Gen. Maly Socheata accused Thai forces of escalating the violence with bombardment of Cambodian territory early Sunday, followed by a "large-scale incursion" involving tanks and ground troops in multiple areas.

"Such actions undermine all efforts toward peaceful resolution and expose Thailand's clear intent to escalate rather than de-escalate the conflict," she said.

Thailand on Sunday reported a new death of a soldier, bringing the total number of fatalities to 21, mostly civilians. Cambodia said 13 people have been killed. More than 131,000 people in Thailand have evacuated to safe locations and over 37,000 people fled from three Cambodian provinces. Many border villages are mostly deserted, with many schools and hospitals shut. Pichayut Surasit, an air-conditioning technician in Thailand, said the sudden outbreak of fighting meant leaving his work in Bangkok to return home to protect his family.

"I didn't have the heart to continue with my work when I heard the news. I wanted to come back as soon as possible, but I had to wait until the evening," he said. Now at a shelter in Surin housing some 6,000 evacuees, Pichayut worries for his wife and twin daughters, hoping the conflict will end soon so they can return to their home in Kap Choeng district, one of the hardest hit by shelling.

Bualee Chanduang, a local vendor who moved to the same shelter Thursday with her family and pet rabbit, is counting on swift negotiations to end the violence. "I pray for God to help that both sides can agree to talk and end this war," she said.

Crowd surge at temple in India leaves six people dead, say local authorities

LUCKNOW, India, July 27, (AP): A crowd surge at a popular temple in northern India left at least six people dead and dozens injured, local authorities said Sunday.

The incident in the pilgrimage city of Haridwar occurred after a high-voltage electric wire reportedly fell on a temple path, triggering panic among the large crowd of devotees.

Vinay Shankar Pandey, a senior government official in Uttarakhand state where the incident happened, confirmed the deaths and said worshippers scrambled for safety following the incident.

Some 29 people were injured, according to Haridwar city's senior police official Pramendra Singh Doval.

Thousands of pilgrims had gathered at the Mansa Devi hilltop temple, which is a major site for devotees, especially on weekends and festival days, local officials said.

Someone in the crowd shouted about an electric current on the pathway around 9 a.m.

"Since the path is narrow and meant only for foot traffic, confusion and panic spread instantly," said local priest Ujjwal Pandit.



An injured from temple stampede is carried inside a hospital in Haridwar, India on July 27. (AP)

"A wall along the path is also suspected to have worsened the crowd bottleneck," he added.

Police and emergency services rushed to the scene and launched a rescue operation. The injured were transported to a nearby hospital, officials said.

"The situation is now under control," Pandey told the Associated Press by phone from Haridwar. "But the panic led to tragic consequences."

Authorities are investigating what caused the overhead wire to collapse, and whether proper crowd management protocols were in place.

The town of Haridwar draws millions of visitors each year. The Mansa Devi temple, which is accessible by cable car or foot, is a major pilgrimage site that draws thousands of visitors daily during Shraavan.

34 killed in attack on east Congo church by Islamic State-backed rebels: civil leader

GOMA, Congo, July 27, (AP): The death toll from an attack on a church in eastern Congo by Islamic State-backed rebels has risen to 34, according to a civil society leader.

"The bodies of the victims are still at the scene of the tragedy, and volunteers are preparing how to bury them in a mass grave that we are preparing in a compound of the church," Dieudonne Duranhabo, a civil society coordinator in Komanda, in the Ituri province, told The Associated Press.

At least five other people were killed in an earlier attack on the nearby village of Machongani, from where a search is ongoing.

"They took several people into the bush; we do not know their destination or their number," Lossa Dhekana, a civil society leader in Ituri, told the AP.

Both attacks are believed to have been carried out by members of the Allied Democratic Force (ADF) armed with guns and machetes.

The military has confirmed at least 10 fatalities, while local media reports put the total death toll at more than 40.

Duranhabo said attackers stormed the church in Komanda town at around 1 a.m. Several houses and shops were



UN troops deploy outside Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo on Jan 24. (AP)

also burnt.

Lt Jules Ngonzo, a Congolese army spokesperson in Ituri province, confirmed 10 killed in the church attack.

Video footage from the scene shared online appeared to show burning structures and bodies on the floor of the church. Those who were able to identify some of the victims wailed while others stood in shock.

A UN-backed radio station said

43 people were killed, citing security sources. It said the attackers came from a stronghold around 12 kilometers (7 miles) from the center of Komanda and fled before security forces could arrive. Duranhabo condemned the attack "in a town where all the security officials are present." He added: "We demand military intervention as soon as possible, since we are told the enemy is still near our town."

Group asks El Salvador top court to strike down contentious 'foreign agents' law

SAN SALVADOR, July 27, (AP): A labor rights group in El Salvador asked the country's Supreme Court to strike down a contentious "foreign agents" law promoted by President Nayib Bukele, which critics have said is intended to silence dissent.

The law, passed in May, imposes a 30% tax on funds or donations received from foreign organizations, often a crucial source of funding for human rights, news and watchdog organizations that have repeatedly challenged the government.

The passing of the law comes amid a wider crackdown by the government on dissent, which has forced more than a hundred people to flee the country in political exile in recent months.

In addition to the steep tax, the law requires all organizations operating in the country that receive foreign funding to register with a new government body, which would have broad authority to determine compliance requirements.

Critics say that would make it easier



In this photo released by El Salvador's Presidential Press Office, President Nayib Bukele greets a US citizen who was released by the Venezuelan government, in San Salvador, El Salvador on July 18. (AP)

for the government to shut down civil society groups and criminalize dissenters and mimics legislation used by governments like Russia, Venezuela and Nicaragua.

On Thursday, leaders of the Move-

Sudan paramilitaries announce parallel government, deepening country's crisis

CAIRO, July 27, (AP): A notorious paramilitary group and its allies in Sudan said they formed a parallel government in areas under the group's control, which are located mainly in the western region of Darfur where allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity are being investigated.

The move, which was announced Saturday, was likely to deepen the crisis in Sudan, which plunged into chaos when tensions between the country's military and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, or RSF, exploded into fighting in April 2023 in the capital, Khartoum and elsewhere in the country.

The RSF-led Tasis Alliance appointed Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, the commander of the paramilitary group, as head of the sovereign council in the new administration. The 15-member council serves as head of the state.

The RSF grew out of the notorious Janjaweed militias, mobilized two decades ago by then-president Omar al-Bashir against populations that identify as Central or East African in Darfur. The Janjaweed were accused of mass



People prepare local crops of sugar cane and watermelons for sale, at Abu Shouk refugee camp, where they live on the outskirts of El Fasher, North Darfur, Sudan on Oct 8, 2010. (AP)

killings, rapes and other atrocities.

In the current war, the RSF has been accused of numerous atrocities. The Biden administration slapped Dagalo with sanctions, saying the RSF and its proxies were committing genocide. The RSF has denied committing genocide.

The alliance spokesman Alaa al-Din Naqd announced the new administration in a video statement from the Darfur city of Nyala, which is controlled by the RFF and its allied Janjaweed.

Mohammed Hassan al-Taishi, a civilian politician who was a member of a military-civilian sovereign council that ruled Sudan following the 2019 overthrow of al-Bashir, was named as prime minister in the RSF-controlled government.

Boursa Kuwait All Share Index dips 0.22%

KUWAIT CITY, July 27, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Sunday's session with the All Share Index declining by 19.23 points (0.22%) to end at 8,573.03 points, following active trading in which about 421.3 million shares changed hands across 23,190 transactions, reaching a value of KD 72.7

million (USD 237.8 million). Meanwhile, the Main Market Index advanced by 32.14 points (0.42%) to 7,601.43 points on the back of 268.4 million shares traded in 15,993 transactions, totaling KD 33.4 million (USD 109.2 million).

Business

Operating income hits KD 91.8 mln

Gulf Bank reports KD 24 million Net Profit for H1 2025

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: Gulf Bank K.S.C.P. announced its financial results for the first half ending 30 June 2025. The Bank reported a net profit of KD 24.0 million, a decline of KD 4.2 million or 14.8% compared to 2024 first half net profit of KD 28.2 million.

In addition, Gulf Bank recorded an operating income of KD 91.8 million for the first half of 2025, representing a decline of 5.3% compared to the same period of last year. Moreover, operating profit before provisions and impairments was KD 44.9 million, representing a decline of 14.7% compared to the first half of 2024.

As for the second quarter ending 30 June 2025, Gulf Bank reported a net profit of KD 14.7 million and an operating income of KD 47.8 million, both representing a slight decline of 4.3% and 1.7% respectively, when compared to the same period of the prior year. However, when compared to the first quarter of 2025, net income has increased from a reported KD 9.4 million in the first quarter to KD 14.7 million for the second quarter, a significant improvement of KD 5.3 million or 57.0%. Similarly, operating income increased by KD 3.8 million or 8.7% in the second quarter when compared to the first quarter of 2025.

Financial Performance

The decline in net profit for the first half of 2025 is attributed to the decline in net interest income of KD 4.9 million or 6.3%, coupled with an increase in operating expenses of KD 2.6 million or 5.8%, compared to the same period of 2024. However, these declines were partially offset by an improvement in total provisions, which declined by KD 3.4 million or 14.7% year-on-year, reaching KD 19.6 million in the first half of 2025.

As for asset quality, the non-performing loans (NPL) ratio was 1.4% as of 30 June 2025, compared to the prior year level of 1.2%. Additionally, the Bank continues to have significant non-performing loans coverage ratio of 317% including total provisions and collaterals.

Total credit provisions as of 30 June 2025 reached KD 275 million whereas IFRS 9 accounting requirements (i.e., ECL or expected credit losses) were KD 180 million. As a result, the Bank has a healthy excess provision level of KD 96 million, above and beyond what is required by the IFRS 9 accounting requirements.

Compared to 31 December 2024, total assets declined by 2.4% to KD 7.3 billion, whereas net loans and advances increased by 3.8% to KD 5.7 billion. On the other hand, total deposits stood at KD 5.4 billion and total Shareholders' equity reached KD 825 million.

The Bank's regulatory Tier 1 ratio of 14.6% was 2.6% above the regulatory minimum of 12% and the Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) of 16.8% was 2.8% above the regulatory minimum of 14%.

Strategic Clarity

Commenting on the financial results for the first half of 2025, Gulf Bank Chairman **Mr. Ahmad Mohammad Al-Bahar** stated: "Gulf Bank's performance during the first half of 2025 demonstrates resilience and clarity in the face of a complex operating environment. Rising geopolitical tensions and oil price fluctuations have added volatility to regional markets and shifted fiscal priorities. Despite these headwinds, Gulf Bank has maintained its solid fundamentals and strategic direction, enabling us to remain adaptive and forward-looking.

He continued: "One of the most significant initiatives under consideration is the potential conversion of Gulf Bank into a fully Sharia-compliant institution. This transformation aligns with our long-term vision and would allow us to expand our reach, diversify our offerings, and better serve the evolving needs of our clients. Moreover, we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Warba



Ahmad Mohammad Al-Bahar, Chairman of Gulf Bank.

Al-Bahar:

- Gulf Bank delivered resilient performance with strategic clarity despite a complex operating environment.
- The Bank's potential conversion to Sharia-compliance aligns with our vision of expanding and diversifying our reach and offerings.
- We look ahead to the second half of the year with confidence in our strategic direction and the strength of our team.



Waleed Khaled Mandani, Acting Chief Executive Officer of Gulf Bank.

Mandani:

- Our results reflect strong execution and a prudent approach to managing our operations.
- We continued to maintain a balanced approach between credit expansion and asset quality, ensuring the resilience and integrity of our loan book.
- Recent Government debt issuances could provide banks with added flexibility to manage their balance sheets and capture emerging financing opportunities.

Bank stating the basis of cooperation in assessing the proposed merger between both banks independently ensuring the best interest of all the Bank's shareholders in line with regulatory controls."

Mr. Al-Bahar concluded: "We look ahead to the second half of the year with confidence in our strategic direction and the strength of our team. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend my appreciation to our shareholders, employees, and customers for their continued trust and support. We also thank the Central Bank of Kuwait and regulatory authorities for their guidance. Gulf Bank remains committed to delivering high-quality banking services and supporting Kuwait's financial future."

Operational Discipline

Gulf Bank Acting Chief Executive Officer, **Mr. Waleed Khaled Mandani**, stated: "Despite persistent pressure on margins across the sector, our second quarter results reflect strong execution and a prudent approach to managing our operations. We continued to maintain a balanced approach between credit expansion and asset quality, ensuring the resilience and integrity of our loan book. Our low

Global gold prices drop to \$3,337 amid strong dollar

KUWAIT CITY, July 27, (KUNA): Global gold prices posted a marked decline at the close of last week, falling to around USD 3,337 per ounce, as economic and geopolitical developments weighed on the market. This represents the third consecutive week of decline, reversing earlier gains.

A report from the Kuwaiti Dar Al-Sabayek Company attributed the ongoing drop in gold prices to an improvement in US economic indicators and a stronger US dollar index, alongside a reduction in geopolitical risks – factors which have diminished gold's appeal as a safe-haven asset. For August delivery, gold futures settled at USD 3,335.6 per ounce, down USD 37.9 for the week, equating to a loss of 1.12% for the day.

Trading was highly volatile, with gold reaching a weekly peak of USD 3,433 per ounce in early sessions before gradually dropping to as low as USD 3,325 on Friday, influenced by a series of financial developments. Notably, positive US labor market data – evidenced by a sixth consecutive weekly decline in unemployment claims, the longest streak since 2022 – boosted optimism regarding US economic resilience and increased investor confidence.

Additionally, while US durable

goods orders dropped by 9.6% in June, primarily due to a steep fall in aircraft orders, orders for basic goods excluding transportation edged up by 0.2%, signaling continued stability in core business investment. The US dollar index climbed to 97.68 against major currencies, and although 10-year Treasury yields slipped to 4.386%, real yields fell to 1.936%, further eroding gold's comparative attractiveness.

The report noted that improved sentiment in global markets following progress in US-EU trade negotiations and the signing of a new trade deal with Japan also contributed to a reduced preference for gold. The easing of geopolitical tensions – particularly regarding Iran and the broader Asian region – further decreased demand for the metal as a hedge.

Looking ahead, global markets are anticipating the US Federal Reserve's decision next Tuesday, with futures pricing in a likely hold in interest rates within the 4.25% to 4.50% range.

On the local level, gold prices in Kuwait mirrored these global trends. The price per gram of 24-karat gold stood at approximately 32,830 dinars, with 22-karat gold at about 30,100 dinars. The price for a kilogram of silver was reported at 419 dinars.

US dollar rises to KD 0.305

KUWAIT CITY, July 27, (KUNA): The US dollar rose against the Kuwaiti dinar on Sunday by 0.08% to KD 0.305, while the euro remained stable at KD 0.358 compared to Thursday's rates. According to the

Central Bank of Kuwait's daily report, the British pound decreased by 0.97% to KD 0.409, and the Swiss franc dropped by 0.27% to KD 0.383, while the Japanese yen held steady at KD 0.002.

New headquarters to anchor growth, innovation, and expansion

Warba Bank acquires property for HQ in Kuwait City

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: Warba Bank announced the acquisition of a property in Kuwait City, marking a strategic move to transform it into its new headquarters. The initiative comes as part of the bank's expansion plans and its commitment to strengthening its infrastructure to support its long-term growth.

Centrally located in the heart of the capital, the tower consists of 33 floors above ground and two basement levels, served by six elevators. The building spans a plot of 1,500 square meters, with a total built-up area of 22,206 square meters, making it a new headquarter that embodies the bank's institutional identity and vision.

Commenting on the acquisition, **Mr. Hamad Musaed Al-Sayer**, Chairman of Warba Bank, stated: "The acquisition of this new tower is a key milestone in Warba's sustainable growth strategy. It is part of our deliberate investment in strategic assets that support the bank's future objectives, while enhancing our local presence and readiness for broader regional expansion."

Al-Sayer further emphasized that this step is aligned with the bank's strategy to solidify its institutional presence and affirm its position as a leading Islamic financial institution that blends local expertise with a forward-looking vision. He noted: "Our goal is to create a modern, flexible work environment that inspires innovation and meets the aspirations of future generations of Kuwaiti talent."

He added: "This acquisition reaffirms Warba Bank's founding purpose as a government initiative to support the Kuwaiti economy. Our expansion is steady and purposeful, ensuring we grow in a way that benefits both our people and the wider community."

"We are not only expanding our operations; we are expanding our workspace and horizons to offer our teams and clients the space they deserve to



Hamad Musaed Al-Sayer

achieve their ambitions and elevate their experience. Every step we take, including the establishment of a new headquarters, aims to create a unified and seamless banking environment where departments work in synergy to serve customers and enhance sustainable growth."

"Warba is moving forward with confidence toward building a more agile and future-ready bank. This real estate acquisition represents a tangible translation of our vision, built on innovation, transparency, and deep connection to the Kuwaiti community, a community that values progress and believes in forward-looking, responsible banking services."

In preparation for this transformation, Warba Bank has appointed an international project management office with expertise in large-scale real estate development to oversee the building's full renovation. The project will incorporate state-of-the-art architectural design, sustainability, and smart technologies, in line with Warba's institutional vision and commitment to excellence.

The tower will undergo a comprehensive upgrade to transform it into a modern work environment that fosters

non-performing loan ratio and high coverage levels underscore the effectiveness of our risk management framework and our ongoing commitment to financial stability."

He added: "We are also advancing our internal readiness for a potential Islamic Sharia-compliant conversion subject to being granted with the necessary regulatory and shareholders' approvals. The essential systems, governance frameworks, and talent are being explored for a smooth transition. At the same time, we continue to deliver practical banking solutions and maintain the agility needed to respond effectively to changing market conditions."

Mr. Mandani further noted: "Recent government debt issuances, estimated at KD 600 million locally and another potential USD 6 billion internationally are expected to support government spending on capital development projects across vital sectors including infrastructure, housing, and logistics, thus accelerating economic activity and enabling faster participation by banks in financing national initiatives. Moreover, such instruments could provide banks with added flexibility in managing their balance sheets and capturing emerging financing opportunities. We remain opportunistic in utilizing these tools to support our growth plans."

Credit Ratings and Recognitions

Gulf Bank's financial strength and operational resilience were affirmed by leading credit rating agencies. Fitch Ratings assigned a Long-Term Issuer Default Rating (IDR) of 'A' with a Stable Outlook, while Moody's rated long-term deposits at 'A3' with a Positive Outlook. Capital Intelligence affirmed a Long-Term Foreign Currency rating of 'A+' with a Stable Outlook, further highlighting the Bank's stability and sound risk management practices.

Reinforcing its position as a digital leader in the region, Gulf Bank has been awarded the "Best Mobile Banking Application and Experience" by MEED business intelligence platform during the Middle East and North Africa Banking Excellence Awards ceremony. This prestigious recognition highlights Gulf Bank's ongoing commitment to delivering an advanced, exceptional digital banking experience to meet customer expectations and enhance ease of access to banking services.

Responsible Banking

During the second quarter of 2025, Gulf Bank advanced its ESG agenda through impactful environmental and social initiatives aligned with its 2030 Sustainability Strategy. A key milestone during the quarter was the official launch of the Bank's Sustainable Finance Framework and internal Sustainability Risk Management Policy, aimed at integrating ESG considerations into lending decisions, operations, and risk oversight. In parallel, the Bank remained active across various community initiatives, with an emphasis on youth development, financial literacy, and education. These programs reflect Gulf Bank's ongoing commitment to supporting inclusive growth, empowering the next generation, and contributing to Kuwait's broader sustainable development goals.

Key Financial indicators for the first Half 2025:

1. First half 2025 net profit of KD 24 million.
2. First half 2025 operating income of KD 91.8 million.
3. Net loans and advances grew by 3.8% year-to-date to reach KD 5.7 billion.
4. Non-performing loan ratio as of 30 June 2025 was 1.4%, with a solid non-performance loan coverage ratio of 317% including total provisions and collaterals.
5. Capital ratios as of 30 June 2025, Tier 1 ratio was 14.6% and Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) was 16.8%.



Warba Bank plans modern headquarters to support long-term growth.

productivity and innovation while delivering a superior experience for both employees and customers. This step is aligned with the Bank's vision to build a dynamic and human-centric infrastructure for the future.

It is noteworthy that earlier this year, Warba Bank announced its acquisition of Alghanim Trading Company previously (Warba Strategic Company today), which holds a 32.75% stake in Gulf Bank, a move that reflects Warba's strategy to diversify its investments and strengthen its presence in the banking sector. The Bank also successfully completed its third capital

increase since inception, achieving the highest subscription value in Kuwait's financial history, in support of its ongoing expansion plans and long-term growth.

Warba Bank has achieved remarkable success in a short span of time, earning a leading position in the Islamic digital banking sector in Kuwait. With one of the largest shareholder bases among local banks, Warba Bank continues to be a trusted partner that brings together innovation and social responsibility to deliver best-in-class Sharia-compliant products and services.

Smart call analysis drives superior customer service

KFH adopts advanced AI technologies to enhance customer experience

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: As part of its ongoing leadership in digital transformation and the adoption of AI and technology innovation, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has launched a suite of advanced smart solutions in its Contact Center that leverage AI technologies. This initiative aims to enhance customer experience, boost operational efficiency, and improve service quality according to the highest global standards.

KFH Deputy General Manager Digital and Alternative Channels, **Meshal Alobad**, said that this step is part of KFH's continuous efforts to provide a state-of-the-art and an intelligent banking environment that caters to customers' aspirations. He stressed the significance of investing in modern technologies as a key element in KFH's digital leadership journey.

He added: "At KFH, we remain steadfast in adopting the best technological solutions that allow us to gain deeper understanding of customers' experience and elevate perfor-

mance quality within the contact center. This ensures prompt and professional handling of all inquiries and services."

Speech Analytics

Alobad pointed out that KFH implemented Speech Analytics, an advanced solution that converts telephone calls into accurate, searchable text. This offers precise insight into calls by evaluating keywords, categorizing topics, and analyzing the dominant sentiment of customer emotions and tone (positive, negative, or neutral) to assess satisfaction or frustration levels, in addition to providing automatic call summaries.

He explained that the system monitors frequent topics like complaints and inquiries and evaluates employees against approved procedures, supporting a comprehensive digital service quality assessment. Alobad added, "It also accurately covers all customer interactions, providing deeper insights for decision-makers."



Meshal Alobad

Automated Quality Management

Alobad further noted that KFH has also rolled out the Automated Quality Management system. "This system evaluates calls automatically and comprehensively according to pre-approved standards," he explained.

"It ensures efficient coverage of all calls, enabling the detection of trends and more in-depth performance analysis compared to traditional methods."

He added that this system fosters a culture of continuous improvement by enhancing the First Call Resolution process. It empowers employees to address customer inquiries more efficiently through precise, targeted feedback. Consequently, the system reduces the need for repeated calls and boosts overall customer satisfaction.

Digital leadership and advanced banking experience

These initiatives highlight KFH's commitment to providing a comprehensive banking experience driven by innovation and technology, always placing the customer at the core of its operations. This proactive strategy acknowledges the rapid shifts within the banking sector and reinforces the bank's dedication to sustained excellence.

It serves to note that KFH has recently launched a comprehensive update to its KFHOnline app. The new update features a sleek modern design with smart banking features, aligning with the Bank's commitment to offering integrated digital solutions that meet customer expectations. In 2024 alone, over 400 million banking transactions were carried out through KFH's various digital channels.

KFH's smart branches (KFH Go) and e-channels offer innovative solutions including electronic payments, account opening, instant card printing, and self-service devices. They even facilitate gold buying and selling, showcasing KFH's commitment to providing unlimited, highly efficient, and flexible electronic services.

KFH is steadfast in its investment in cutting-edge digital solutions. These initiatives are pivotal for optimizing operational efficiency, enriching customer experiences, and reinforcing its standing as a leader in providing intelligent banking services of global standards.

Trump meets EU chief von der Leyen in Scotland to discuss tariffs

EDINBURGH, July 27, (AP): President Donald Trump was meeting Sunday with European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen, taking a break from golfing in Scotland to discuss trade as both sides seek an agreement on tariff rates with the White House’s deadline to impose stiff import taxes looming this week.

Trump continued his golfing weekend at his course in Turnberry on the south-west coast of Scotland with a group that included sons Eric and Donald Jr. and their wives.

The Republican president waved at reporters and listened to shouted questions about the prospect of reaching a European Union deal during his private afternoon meeting with von der Leyen, but he offered no comment. Trump’s five-day visit to Scotland is built around golf and promoting properties bearing his name.

A small group of demonstrators at the course waved American flags and raised a sign criticizing British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who plans his own Turnberry meeting with Trump on Monday. Other voices could be heard cheering and chanting “Trump! Trump!” as he played nearby.

On Tuesday, Trump will be in Aberdeen, in northeastern Scotland, where his

family has another golf course and is opening a third next month. The president and his sons plan to help cut the ribbon on the new course.

Trump for months has threatened most of the world with steep tariffs in hopes of shrinking large U.S. trade deficits with many key trading partners. The EU has been no exception.

Trump has said “we have a 50-50 chance, maybe less than that, but a 50-50 chance of making a deal with the EU.” He also suggested that any deal would have to “buy down” the currently scheduled tariff rate of 30% on the bloc of 27 member states.

Scheduled to join von der Leyen were Maros Sefcovic, the EU’s chief trade negotiator; Björn Seibert, the head of von der Leyen’s Cabinet; Sabine Weyand, the commission’s directorate-general for trade, and Tomas Baert, head of the trade and agriculture at the EU’s delegation to the U.S. They planned a news conference after the talks.

The U.S. and EU seemed close to a deal earlier this month, but Trump instead threatened a 30% tariff rate. The deadline for the Trump administration to begin

imposing tariffs has shifted in recent weeks but is now set for Friday.

“No extensions, no more grace periods. Aug. 1, the tariffs are set, they’ll go into place, Customs will start collecting the money and off we go,” U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick told “Fox News Sunday.” He added, however, that even after that “people can still talk to President Trump. I mean, he’s always willing to listen.”

Lutnick said the EU “needs to make a deal and wants to make a deal and they are flying to Scotland to make a deal with President Trump. The question is do they offer President Trump a good enough deal that is worth it for him to step off of the 30% tariffs that he set.”

Without an agreement, the EU says it is prepared to retaliate with tariffs on hundreds of American products, ranging from beef and auto parts to beer and Boeing airplanes.

If Trump eventually makes good on his threat of tariffs against Europe, it could make everything from French cheese and Italian leather goods to German electronics and Spanish pharmaceuticals more expensive in the United States.

Bessent presses China on overcapacity

US-China trade talks: Can China reduce its export dependence?

BEIJING, July 27, (AP): China’s high dependence on exports will likely be a key focus of a new round of U.S.-China trade talks this coming week in Stockholm, but a trade deal would not necessarily help Beijing to rebalance its economy.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has said he hopes the negotiations can take up this issue, along with China’s purchases of oil from Russia and Iran, which undercut American sanctions on those two countries.

Hopes rose for a breakthrough in talks after U.S. President Donald Trump announced deals with Japan, Indonesia and the Philippines this week.

The U.S. wants China to do two things: Reduce what both the U.S. and the European Union see as excess production capacity in many industries, including steel and electric vehicles. And secondly, to take steps to increase spending by Chinese consumers so the economy relies more on domestic demand and less on exports.

“We could also discuss the elephant in the room, which is this great rebalancing that the Chinese need to do,” Bessent told financial news network CNBC. He said China’s share of global manufacturing exports at nearly 30%, “can’t get any bigger, and it should probably shrink.”

The issues are not new, and China has been working to address them for years, more for domestic reasons than to reduce its trade surpluses with the U.S. and other countries.

Bessent’s predecessor as treasury secretary, Janet Yellen, made industrial policy a focus of a trip to China last year. She blamed government subsidies for flooding the global market with “artificially cheap Chinese products.” The European Union, whose top leaders met their Chinese counterparts in Beijing on Thursday, has cited subsidies to justify EU tariffs on electric vehicles made in China.

In the 1980s, the U.S. pressured Japan to boost consumer spending when American manufacturing was overwhelmed by exports from the likes of Toyota and Sony. Economists have long argued that China likewise needs to transform into a more consumer-driven economy. Consumer spending accounts for less than 40% of China’s economy, versus close to 70% in the United States and about 54% in Japan.

Chinese leaders have spoken about both factory overcapacity and weak consumer spending as long-term problems and have sought over the past 20 years to find ways to rebalance the economy away from export manufacturing and massive investments in dams, roads, railways and other infrastructure.

Fierce price wars have prompted critical reports in official media saying that companies are “racing to the bottom,” skimping on quality and even safety to reduce costs.

With strong government support, they’ve also expanded overseas, where they can charge higher prices but still undercut local competitors, creating a political backlash.

All that competition and price cutting has left China battling deflation, or falling prices. When companies receive less for their products, they tend to invest less. That can lead to job cuts and lower wages, sapping business activity and spending power - contrary to the long-term goal of increasing the share of consumer spending in driving overall growth.

To counter that, the government is spending billions on rebates and subsidies for people who trade in their cars or appliances for new ones.

But acknowledging a problem and solving it are two different things. Economists say more fundamental changes are needed to boost consumption and rein in overcapacity. Such changes can only come incrementally over time.

Private Chinese companies and foreign-invested companies create the most jobs, but they’ve suffered from swings in policy and pressures from the trade war, especially since the pandemic.

Demographic changes are another challenge as China’s population shrinks and ages.

Many experts advocate expanding China’s social safety net, health insurance, pensions and other support systems, so that people would feel freer to spend rather than save for a medical emergency or retirement.

Yan Se, an economist at Peking University’s Guanghua School of Management, warned at a recent forum that deflation will become a long-term issue if China doesn’t step up its welfare benefits.

“Chinese people deserve a better life,” he said.

One possibility, put forward at the same forum by Liu Qiao, the dean of the business school, would be to change incentives for local government officials, rewarding them for raising consumption or household incomes instead of meeting an economic growth target.

He doesn’t see that happening nationwide but said it could be tested in a province. “That would send out a message that China needs a different approach,” he said.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping has made transforming the country into a technology superpower a top priority. It’s a goal that has gained urgency as the U.S. has tightened restrictions on China’s access to high-end semiconductors and other advanced knowhow.

Output in high-tech manufacturing is growing quickly, adding to potential overcapacity, just as what happened with the government’s encouragement of “green” technologies such as solar panels and wind turbines.

Various industries, including EV makers, have pledged to address the issue, but some local governments are striving to keep money-losing enterprises afloat, reluctant to lose tax revenues and jobs, or to fail to meet economic growth targets.

Going forward, the government is calling for more coordination of economic development policies in fields such as artificial intelligence so that not every province champions the same industry. But government moves to counter the impact of higher tariffs tend to support sectors already in overcapacity, and the share of consumption in the economy has fallen in recent years.

“A sustained improvement in household consumption will require greater reform ambition,” the World Bank said in its most recent update on China’s economy.”

By National Bank of Kuwait

Global markets experienced a volatile yet resilient week, underpinned by significant trade developments, mixed economic data, and central bank caution. Equity markets posted new record highs early in the week, driven by robust tech sector earnings and optimism surrounding the new U.S.-Japan tariff agreement. In commodities, oil prices remained subdued amid expectations of stable supply conditions, while gold held steady as investors balanced risk appetite with geopolitical uncertainty. In FX markets, the U.S. Dollar index (DXY) edged lower against major peers. U.S. treasuries slipped midweek, with the 10-yr notes dropping to 4.336% before rebounding back to levels of close to 4.424%, while the 2-yr note climbed slightly to 3.914%.

United States

U.S. – Japan Trade Deal: Tariff Cuts Fuel Optimism

U.S. President Donald Trump signed a trade agreement with Japan that reduces tariffs on Japanese car imports from 25% to 15% and avoids new tariffs on other Japanese goods. In return, Japan pledged \$550 billion in U.S.-focused investments and loans. This is one of Trump’s biggest trade deals since he introduced global tariffs in April. The deal benefits Japan’s auto industry, which makes up over a quarter of its U.S. exports. In 2024, the U.S. imported over \$55 billion in Japanese vehicles and parts but sold only about \$2 billion to Japan. Total trade between the two countries was nearly \$230 billion, with Japan holding a \$70 billion surplus. Additionally, planned tariffs on other Japanese goods, set to start August 1, were also lowered. Trump called it the “largest trade deal in history” on his Truth Social platform, praising the strong U.S.-Japan relationship. Furthermore, Japanese officials welcomed the deal, noting it avoids higher tariffs faced by other U.S. trade partners. The news boosted Japan’s stock market on Monday, with the Nikkei rising over 3% to a one-year high. Auto stocks surged, with Toyota up 14% Honda nearly 12%.

U.S. Housing Market Continues to Face Persistent Challenges

In the U.S., housing data released Wednesday pointed to ongoing strain in the real estate market. Existing-home sales fell 2.7% in June to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 3.93 million units, the lowest since September 2024, and below expectations. Despite slowing sales, the median home price surged to a record \$435,300 for the month, marking the 24th straight year-over-year price increase. Single-family home sales dropped 3% to 3.57 million, while condo and co-op sales held flat. Regionally, the Northeast led the decline with an 8% drop, while the West was the only region to post a gain, rising 1.4%. President Trump criticized Fed Chair Jerome Powell for not lowering the benchmark rate, stating “people aren’t able to buy a house.” Trump added, “He keeps the rates too high, and is probably doing it for political reasons.” Despite the sharp comments by Trump, the Fed is overwhelmingly expected to hold rates steady at the 4.25%-4.50% range in the upcoming policy meeting next week.

President Trump’s Remarks Fuel Market Volatility

President Trump’s remarks significantly impacted market sentiment across several sectors. On July 23rd, his address at an AI summit directly challenged major technology companies, urging them to halt overseas hiring and prioritize American workers, explicitly naming Google and Micro-

| Previous Week Levels | | | | | This Week’s Expected Range | | 3-Month |
|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------------------------|---------|---------|
| Currencies | Open | Low | High | Close | Minimum | Maximum | Forward |
| EUR | 1.1618 | 1.1614 | 1.1788 | 1.1740 | 1.1710 | 1.1900 | 1.1811 |
| GBP | 1.3393 | 1.3391 | 1.3588 | 1.3434 | 1.3310 | 1.3515 | 1.3449 |
| JPY | 148.07 | 145.82 | 148.66 | 147.66 | 146.75 | 149.20 | 146.17 |
| CHF | 0.7996 | 0.7908 | 0.8022 | 0.7948 | 0.7800 | 0.7985 | 0.7858 |

- U.S. Existing Home sales drop to 2.7% y/y in June.
- U.S. Composite PMI Rises to 54.6, Driven by Robust Services.
- UK Manufacturing Activity Stabilizes Slightly but Remains in Contraction.
- Eurozone PMI Reaches Highest Level in Nearly a Year, with the Composite PMI at 51.0.
- ECB Holds Main Refinancing Rate Steady at 2.15%
- China Holds 1-year & 5-year Loan Prime Rates at 3.0% & 3.5% Respectively.
- Tokyo Inflation at 2.9%, Underscoring Persistent Inflation Despite Policy Stability.

soft. This push for “America First” in tech, coupled with his administration’s “anti-woke” order tying federal contracts to “objective” AI systems, signals a potential shift in tech industry operations and could influence the valuation of companies with global workforces or government contracts. The following day, July 24th, Trump’s rare visit to the Federal Reserve saw him publicly pressure Chair Jerome Powell for interest rate cuts, even bickering over renovation costs. While the Fed is expected to maintain rates, this extraordinary public confrontation highlighted the White House’s persistent influence on monetary policy, injecting uncertainty into the market regarding the Fed’s independence and potentially leading to currency and stock market volatility. Despite that, the Nasdaq and S&P 500 indices managed to close the week at record highs.

U.S. PMI: Services Strength Masks Manufacturing Weakness

The S&P Global Flash US Composite PMI jumped to 54.6 in July, its highest in seven months, driven by robust growth in services (55.2) while manufacturing activity weakened (49.5). Despite broad economic expansion, the divergence between sectors grew sharper, with services powering ahead and factories showing signs of stress. Business confidence dropped as firms voiced concern over government policy uncertainty and rising tariffs. Input costs and output prices continued to climb, marking one of the steepest inflation rates in the past three years. While employment held up, new orders showed strain from weakening demand in manufacturing. The strong services-led rebound boosted Q3 growth momentum, but concerns about sustainability persist.

The US Dollar Index closed the week at 97.645.

United Kingdom

UK PMI Reflects Continued Manufacturing Slowdown

UK manufacturing activity showed signs of stabilization in July, with the PMI inching up to 48.2 from 47.7, just above expectations, yet still in contraction territory. The reading marked the softest decline since January and ended an eight-month streak of output deterioration. However, manufacturers continued to face export headwinds, with US tariffs delaying investment decisions. New orders shrank further, and job cuts picked up, while inflation pressures remained, with both input and output prices rising. Confidence remained subdued, as firms flagged weak domestic demand, geopolitical concerns, and global trade risks. A few cited defense-related demand as a bright spot, but overall sentiment stayed cautious. Services PMI on the other hand, came in lower than expect-

ed at 51.2, and lower than the previous figure of 52.8, highlighting consistent pressures in the sector.

UK Retail Sales Recover Moderately in June

UK retail sales rebounded 0.9% in June after a sharp 2.8% decline in May, although the recovery fell short of the 1.2% forecast. The increase marks the fourth monthly gain of 2025, driven by stronger food and fuel sales. Warm weather helped boost supermarket and beverage purchases, while fuel sales saw their largest rise in over a year. Online sales hit their highest level since early 2022, and department stores reported improved demand, aided by promotions and seasonal trends. Excluding fuel, sales rose 0.6%, showing a partial rebound. On an annual basis, sales grew 1.7%, slightly underperforming expectations of a 1.8% increase.

The GBP/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.3434.

Europe

Eurozone PMI Indicates Gradual Economic Improvement

The Eurozone’s composite PMI rose to 51.0 in July from 50.6 in June, signaling the region’s strongest private sector expansion in nearly a year and slightly outperforming expectations. Growth was driven by a solid uptick in the services sector and improved sentiment in manufacturing, which posted its least pessimistic reading in three years. While new orders remained flat, they managed to halt a 13-month streak of declines, offering a boost to both services and industry. Encouraged by the improved outlook, firms increased hiring for the first time in five months. Input cost inflation eased to a five-month low, allowing firms to hold prices steady for a second month. However, business confidence dipped slightly due to uncertainty over potential U.S. tariffs.

ECB Holds Rates Steady Amid Inflation and Euro Strength Concerns

The European Central Bank kept interest rates unchanged in July, signaling a likely end to its year-long easing cycle that saw eight rate cuts. The main refinancing rate held at 2.15%, while the deposit rate remained at 2.0%. Officials adopted a cautious stance, closely monitoring risks from global trade tensions, particularly from proposed U.S. tariffs. With inflation reaching the ECB’s 2% target in June, the case for further easing diminished. ECB President Lagarde acknowledged the mixed pressures on inflation, making it hard to predict the impact of tariffs on future pricing trends. She reiterated that the ECB doesn’t target exchange rates, though euro strength is considered when forecasting inflation.

The EUR/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.1740.

Fed maintains independent stance

Trump optimistic on Fed rate cuts, experts remain skeptical

WASHINGTON, July 27, (Xinhua): U.S. President Donald Trump has voiced confidence that the Federal Reserve will lower interest rates, but experts remain skeptical that his words or actions to pressure the Fed chair will affect the outcome.

Trump told reporters on Friday that the meeting with Fed Chair Jerome Powell the previous day was positive and said he believes the central bank is ready to cut rates, which the president has been pressuring the Fed to do for months.

“I think we had a very good meeting on interest rates. And (Powell) said to me ... very strongly, the country is doing well,” Trump said. “I got that to mean that I think he’s going to start recommending lower rates.” Powell has resisted lowering rates, taking a wait-and-see approach to gauge whether Trump’s sweeping tariffs would impact inflation.

The Fed has also described the tone of the meeting as positive, despite Trump’s dispute with Powell over the overall costs of renovating Fed headquarters.

“We are grateful for the President’s encouragement to complete this important project,” the central bank said on the social platform X on Friday. “We remain committed to continuing to be careful stewards of these resources as we see the project through to completion.”

Still, experts said Trump has little influence over Powell.

Brookings Institution Senior Fellow Darrell West told Xinhua that the Fed was designed to operate independently of political influence, as it is a data-driven institution and will not reduce interest rates unless there is a sound economic reason to do so.

“Nobody wants the Federal Reserve to cave to political pressure because it would threaten the long-term viability of the American economy,” said West.

Echoing that view, Gary Clyde Hufbauer, a nonresident senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for Inter-

national Economics, said, “I think Trump’s pressure is just increasing Powell’s resolve not to cut interest rates until there’s a meaningful slowdown in the economy and a rise in unemployment.”

Clay Ramsay, a researcher at the Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland, pointed out that Powell alone does not control interest rate decisions.

“A majority of the current voting group in the Fed, a group whose composition changes at regular intervals, sets the rates ... So trying to embarrass Powell could be quite counterproductive,” said Ramsay.

The Fed will hold its next policy meeting from July 29 to 30. The Chicago Mercantile Exchange Group’s FedWatch Tool, which acts as a barometer for the market’s expectation of the Fed funds target rate, showed that as of Saturday, the probability of the Fed keeping rates unchanged at the next meeting is over 95 percent.



Machines loading containers at a container terminal, in Shanghai, China on Wednesday, May 14, 2025. (AP)

What's On



Group and tour photo: Ms. Mpungose, Acting Head of Mission (AHoM), pictured with Embassy staff and Officials from the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).



PAM officials briefed Ms. Mpungose, Acting Head of Mission (AHoM), and Embassy staff on the range of services the shelter provides to its residents, including legal aid, healthcare, and psychological support.



Engaging with women residents at the shelter through outdoor volleyball and indoor billiards - fostering connection and fun through sports and activities.

South African Embassy marks Mandela Day with call to action

IT is truly an honour for us at the Embassy of the Republic of South Africa to be here with you today, commemorating Nelson Mandela International Day – a day that calls on all of us to take action, inspire change, and make a positive difference in the lives of others.

This year's theme, "It's still in our hands to combat poverty and inequity," resonates deeply with the values that Madiba championed throughout his life. As we gather here today, we reflect on his powerful words: "It is in your hands to make our world a better one for all, especially the poor, vulnerable, and marginalised." This message is more relevant than ever, reminding us that the responsibility to create more than just a better world lies within each of us.

We are grateful to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, particularly the Humanitarian Rights Department and Africa Affairs Department, as well as the Public Authority of Manpower, for our collaboration and on their unwavering support in organising today's visit. Their tireless efforts to support the Shelter and empower vulnerable individuals during their time of need, are truly admirable. This work not only reflects Madiba's vision, but also reaffirms the importance of service to humanity, reminding us that Mandela Day is not just about remembering a great man, but about continuing his legacy of kindness, care, and humanity in our everyday lives.

Today, we are reminded that every act of kindness counts. Whether it's supporting a local charity, helping those

affected by disaster, or simply showing compassion in our daily lives – every small action contributes to building a better world. Madiba believed in the spirit of togetherness and unity, regardless of class, race, and gender. We must continue to uphold these values to ensure that our next generations are empowered to build a society based on dignity, equality, and opportunity. Nelson Mandela inspires us to be the change we want to see.

To the Kuwaiti Government, your dedication to protecting and empowering the men and women during such vulnerable times is truly admirable. It is a reminder of what the late iconic statesman advocated for, and that together we can build a better tomorrow.

To the women and men, as well as families in these shelters - your strength and determination have kept you going, and we stand here to encourage you to remain hopeful for the brighter days ahead.

The Embassy of the Republic of South Africa in the State of Kuwait, conveys its wishes for good health and success to His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, as well as peace and prosperity for the whole Kuwaiti nation.

Thank you all for allowing us the opportunity to share this meaningful day with you. And remember, every action counts. Let's make today be another count for a better tomorrow.

24% off on Talabat, X-cite & movie perks

Exclusive offers for NBK 247 Cashback Visa Platinum Prepaid Card Holders on July 24

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: National Bank of Kuwait is committed to presenting its customers with exceptional rewards that suit their diverse needs, lifestyles, and different segments all year round.

To that end, NBK celebrated the day of 247 by launching a selection of special offers for its NBK 247 Cashback Visa Platinum Prepaid cardholders exclusively on July 24, including a 24% discount on Talabat App purchases using the NBK 247 Cashback Visa Platinum Prepaid Card on the day of July 24, by entering the code 247CARD, in addition to a 24% discount on online purchases from X-cite on the same day as well.

Moreover, these offers were not exclusive to discounts only, as the first 100 cardholders who registered through the designated webpage and their plus ones also got to enjoy a special screening of the Superman film at Cinescape 360 Mall. Besides the free film entry, the celebrated cardholders and their guests were welcomed to the cinema by NBK in appreciation for their loyalty to the bank. They also enjoyed free popcorn and beverage to make the evening a truly unforgettable memory.

Commenting on this offer, Anwar Al-Ballam AVP - Cards Services Management said: "We launched these exclusive offers to reward our NBK 247 Cashback Visa Platinum Prepaid cardholders and highlight the daily values of this special card."

Al-Ballam also added that the discounts and free film screening for NBK 247 Cashback Visa Platinum Prepaid cardholders come in line with the bank's unwavering commitment to providing cardholders with exceptional experiences that go beyond cashback.

Additionally, Al-Ballam emphasized that the day of 247 stands as a token of appreciation from NBK to the NBK 247 Cashback Visa Platinum Prepaid cardholders and their continuous loyalty, further stressing that NBK



NBK 247 cardholders enjoy 24% off.

is always keen on rewarding customers with bigger and more exciting future surprises.

By transferring their daily spending from their debit cards and using their NBK 247 Cashback Visa Platinum Prepaid Card instead, cardholders are eligible for a 24% cashback on purchases from entertainment streaming services (only paid through the streaming service website or app, not any other service provider), 7% on food deliveries (only paid through food delivery apps and not from restaurants directly), 4% on bill payments (only paid through the telecom companies' websites, apps, or branches, and not from other service providers), 2% on groceries, 2% on medical services and pharmacies, 2% on gas stations, and 0.7% on digital payments.

It should be noted that NBK provides a diverse range of Prepaid Cards that give customers exclusive benefits and help them manage their spending with ease and confidence, while making sure they do not exceed their spending limit.

As part of its commitment to lifestyle-aligned banking

Exclusive limousine service now available for KIB Black customers

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the launch of an exclusive new offer for its Black segment customers, providing complimentary airport transfers in luxury limousine vehicles, in collaboration with its trusted partner, Wiyak. This initiative comes as part of KIB's ongoing commitment to delivering an exceptional banking experience and premium benefits to its valued customers, reflecting the Bank's dedication to elevating service standards and enhancing the overall customer journey.

Commenting on the offer, Mariam Al-Nasser, Head of Branches and Premier Banking at KIB, said: "At KIB, we are committed to enriching the experience of our Black segment customers through carefully tailored services that align with their lifestyle and meet their aspirations. Our collaboration with Wiyak falls within this vision, offering a luxury transport service that ensures the highest levels of comfort and privacy, from the moment they depart to their return from travel. We believe that excellence lies in the details, and we continuously strive to enhance our offerings and services in a way that reflects the stature of our customers and their trust in the Bank."

Al-Nasser concluded by reaffirming KIB's commitment to expanding the range of benefits offered to its customers and continuing to launch more innovative partnerships that enhance the added value of its banking services.

Through this partnership with Wiyak, KIB Black segment custom-



KIB's Mariam Al-Nasser

ers can now enjoy complimentary, comfortable, and seamless limousine transfers to and from the airport. To take advantage of this offer, eligible customers can call or reach out via WhatsApp on 22211221 to book their ride at least 24 hours prior to their departure date. Additionally, KIB Black customers holding Visa Infinite credit cards are entitled to a discount of up to 15% on all transportation and car rental services offered by Wiyak.

It is worth noting that KIB offers its Black segment customers a wide range of premium banking solutions and products, in addition to a variety of exclusive benefits. These include priority processing of banking and financial transactions through a dedicated relationship manager, access to designated premium banking lounges at branches, a VIP phone service, and priority book-

ing for branch visits via the website or the KIB Mobile app. Customers also enjoy free local and international transfers, as well as a 50% discount on safe deposit boxes.

About KIB

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Shari'ah, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and originally known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank, KIB made the transition to its current Islamic operating model in 2007. In 2018, KIB embarked on a new phase of its journey full of innovation and development. As part of its new strategic direction, the Bank focuses on offering a next-level customer experience under the slogan: "Bank for Life".

Through a network of branches spread across the State of Kuwait, KIB offers a broad range of banking products and services, as well as innovative digital banking solutions in line with international best standards. As part of its duty towards the community, the Bank also encompasses a leading social responsibility program that aims at positively impacting all members of the community through a wide range of impactful initiatives and activities.

Today, KIB has taken concrete steps in implementing its new strategic objectives. The Bank has cemented its role as a key player in the local banking industry and has continued to maintain its strong financial performance; enabling it to be globally recognized for its strong credit rating and financial position.

Mrs. Nigar Shaji to headline InnoEX 2025

TEF Kuwait hosts 5th Technical Seminar with InnoEX 2025 launch

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: The Tamilnadu Engineers Forum (TEF) Kuwait successfully hosted its 5th Technical Seminar at Park Inn Hotel, Mahboula on 22nd July 2025, with an evening packed with innovation, knowledge sharing, and key announcements.

A key highlight of the evening was the launch of the InnoEX 2025 flyer, officially announcing TEF Kuwait's flagship science and technology fair in association with Indians in Kuwait (IIK). The Event Flyer was jointly released by President Eng. Raja and past presidents Eng. A.N. Natrarajan & Eng. Krishna Jegan. Also revealed that the esteemed Mrs. Nigar Shaji, Project Director of Aditya-L1, India's pioneering solar mission under ISRO, will be the Chief Guest at the upcoming InnoEX 2025, scheduled for 7th November 2025 at Al-Zumerida Hall, Salwa.

Highlights of the 5th Technical Seminar

The evening commenced at 6:00 PM with the reverent rendition of Tamil Thai Vaazhthu, followed by a Safety Moment presented by Eng. Vadivelan and a Thirukkural recitation by Eng. Subbu.

The event was gracefully anchored by Eng. Suresh Anand and Eng. Middleton, who guided the proceedings with professionalism and enthusiasm.

In his welcome address, Eng. Gem Prasanna greeted attendees and set a vibrant tone for the evening. The seminar then proceeded with three highly engaging technical sessions:

1. "How Acoustic Emission and AI Can Reduce Seat Leakage in Valves" Delivered by Mr. Michael Hettegger, CEO of Senseven GmbH, this session highlighted how AI-driven acoustic analysis can revolutionize valve monitoring and predictive maintenance.
2. "Smart Strategies for Mutual Fund Investment in Turbulent Times" Financial expert Mrs. Lalitha Thamaraipandi, Managing Director of Panaimaram Fintech Pvt Ltd, shared valuable insights into navigating investment strategies during economic uncertainties.
3. "Ensuring Valve Reliability Through Precision Actuation – The Kinetrol Advantage"

Jointly presented by Mr. Akshay Anand, GM, and Mr. Gopiram Krishnaraj, Area Manager of Kinetrol Middle East, this session focused on the importance of actuation precision in enhancing industrial valve reliability.

Each session Speakers were introduced by TEF members Eng. Middleton, Eng. Maniyarasu, and Eng. Reckston, respectively.

Each session was followed by an interactive Q&A segment, enabling participants to engage directly with the speakers and deepen their understanding.

The event concluded on a high note with a heartfelt Vote of Thanks by Vice President Eng. Subramanian, followed by a delicious dinner, fostering networking and camaraderie among attendees.

TEF Kuwait continues to be a vibrant platform for engineering professionals, students, and innovators - promoting technical excellence, knowledge sharing, and community development. The upcoming InnoEX 2025 promises to be a landmark event that will further TEF's mission of inspiring the next generation of tech leaders.



TEF Kuwait highlights engineering excellence at 5th seminar.



New sci-fi film blends space, science and comedy

Gosling, faceless alien ‘Rocky’ wow crowd at Comic-Con

SAN DIEGO, July 27, (AP): Comic-Con got a lot of Ryan and a little bit of Rocky at a panel on “Project: Hail Mary,” the forthcoming film that’s equal parts space adventure, real-science deep-dive, broad comedy and relationship drama.

“What’s up Hall H!” a giddy Ryan Gosling in a trucker hat and flannel shirt shouted to the crowd of more than 6,000 at Comic-Con’s biggest venue.

Amazon MGM Studios showed the opening five minutes and several other slightly unfinished scenes from the first third of the film, seven months before its planned release.

It included an extended glimpse at Rocky, the stone-shaped and faceless alien who becomes Gosling’s mission partner as they attempt to save the universe from ecological disaster.

Phil Lord, who codirected the film with Chris Miller, said the relationship between the two beings stuck alone together in space represents the central theme.

“If the universe depended on it,” Miller said, “can adult men make friends?”

Rocky is already a cult favorite for readers of Andy Weir’s novel, and is sure to be a future staple of Com-

ic-Con cosplay.

Asked where Rocky might rank among his great screen relationships, Gosling declined to answer, saying it’s too soon to know.

Weir, who was part of the panel, chimed in: “From Emma Stone, to person of stone.”

The film is adapted by screenwriter Drew Goddard, who also wrote the script for the 2015 Matt Damon movie “The Martian,” based on Weir’s first novel.

Gosling said he got on board the ship immediately after reading “Project: Hail Mary” in manuscript form, and was only partly kidding when he called Weir, who was sitting next to him, “the greatest sci-fi mind of our time.”

“I knew it would be brilliant, because it’s Andy, but nothing could prepare me,” Gosling said. “It took me places I’d never been, it showed me things I’d never seen, it was as heartbreaking as it was funny.”

Gosling plays Ryland Grace, a middle school teacher and underachiever drafted for the mission.

“I connect to his reluctance,” Gosling said. “Aside from the fact that he has a doctorate in molecular biology he’s quite an ordinary person. He reacts to a lot of

things that I might or a lot of us might. He’s terrified - appropriately - of the task at hand.”

The opening five minutes show a gloppy, long-bearded, amnesiac Gosling as he awakes in a pod. He climbs out, confused. He finds other people in pods who are clearly dead. Then he finds a window and learns he’s in space. He gives a mealymouthed scream of “Where am I?”

When the lights came up in the room, Gosling said that he’d looked in the scene like a “space caveman” in a “placenta onesie.”

The movie represents the return to directing, and return to space, of Lord and Miller for the first time since they were fired and replaced by Ron Howard by Disney and Lucasfilm from 2018’s “Solo.”

Like, “The Martian,” the movie goes heavy on the science - Weir, also a producer, said he spent hours going over every equation one very white board.

But it takes the messy, kitchen-sink, everything-is-comedy approach Lord and Miller used in films like “The Lego Movie.”

“This movie is not a Mac, it’s a PC,” Lord said. “It can be beautiful, it just can’t be pretty.”



Ryan Gosling attends a panel for ‘Project: Hail Mary’ during Comic-Con International on Saturday, July 26, in San Diego. (AP)

Comic-Con

‘Coyote vs. Acme’ revs up for 2026 release

Gunn honored as ‘Superman’ takes flight

SAN DIEGO, July 27, (AP): Director James Gunn got an ovation from thousands for “Superman” in the most fitting place of all - Comic-Con.

Among the highlights of day three of the San Diego pop culture spectacular was a sincere tribute to the director who’s now helming Warner Bros.’ DC Comics screen universe, even if John Cena played it for laughs.

It came at a panel on the forthcoming Season 2 of DC’s HBO series “The Peacemaker,” and Cena appeared in the title character’s full comic costume and grand helmet, leading the legions in the kind of exaggerated drama he was perfect at provoking in his wrestling days.

It was Gunn’s first time in front of a crowd in the weeks since “Superman” was released and has earned more than \$200 million in North America.

“Today has been the most fun day I’ve had in a year,” Gunn told the crowd at the end of the session.

“Superman” was his first film as captain of the DC ship, but his first foray was in 2021’s “The Suicide Squad,” which spawned the “Peacemaker” TV series.

The crowd saw scenes from Season 2, which arrives in August and sees Cena entering another dimension where he gets to be a cool version of the hero instead of the often pained and pathetic version that’s typical of the character. Some characters from “Superman” will make appearances.

Wile E. Coyote is getting his day in court - and theaters.

The stars of “Coyote vs. Acme” delivered a rousing presentation Saturday morning of a movie that at one point wasn’t going to be released but is now bound for theaters in August 2026. The underdog story - both of the movie and Coyote - was a running theme of the panel. But rather than direct ire at Warner Bros., the real-world studio that shelved the project, the panel focused on the fictional Acme Corp.

Decisions

“This is purely an Acme decision ... and I am saying this for legal purposes,” moderator Paul Scheer said at the start of the panel.

The movie is a hybrid of animation and live action and is based on a 1990 New Yorker article that satirized a legal complaint filed by Coyote against Acme, the maker of the TNT, detonators, rocket shoes, catapults and other products that consistently backfire during the Coyote’s fruitless attempts to catch the Roadrunner.

Laughter filled Hall H as some 6,000 watched a montage of Coyote being blown up, flattened and falling into chasms in a scene set to Johnny Cash’s cover of “Hurt.” Coyote is replaying the moments in his lair when an ad for a personal injury lawyer appears on TV.

They also played six minutes of the movie, including a scene of opening statements in the case in which Coyote’s lawyer, Will Forte, accidentally unleashes a rocket skate into the courtroom, setting Coyote and the judge’s robes on fire. Cena plays a slick Acme lawyer who wins over the jury, which includes a cartoon character, quickly.

Forte said he didn’t think the movie would ever get to audiences.

“I’m pretty speechless. You think back to the journey that this movie has taken. I had kind of given up hope at a certain point,” Forte said. At one point, his comments were interrupted by a man playing an Acme lawyer who stormed into Hall H with cease-and-desist letters.

Director Dave Green said the movie conforms to famed animator Chuck Jones’ rules for the struggle between the Coyote and Roadrunner, which include the bird always staying on the road and the Coyote being ultimately more humiliated than hurt when he falls, is crushed or gets blown up by TNT.

The movie, which features cameos



Harriet Slater poses for a portrait to promote ‘Outlander: Blood of My Blood.’ (AP)



Rebecca Romijn poses for a portrait to promote ‘Star Trek: Strange New Worlds.’ (AP)



Hermione Corfield poses for a portrait to promote ‘Outlander: Blood of My Blood.’ (AP)

from numerous Looney Tunes characters like Foghorn Leghorn, Tweety and Bugs Bunny, will be released on Aug. 28, 2026. Ketchup Entertainment teamed up with Warner Bros. on the film and in the release of “The Day the Earth Blew Up: A Looney Tunes Movie.”

Also on Saturday morning, the cast of “Bad Guys 2” teasing new footage from the movie and describing how they recorded their characters.

Marc Maron, who plays Snake, joked he



Sydney Chandler poses for a portrait to promote ‘Alien: Earth’ during Comic-Con International on Saturday, July 26, in San Diego. (AP)



Celine Buckens poses for a portrait to promote ‘The Talamasca: The Secret Order’ during Comic-Con International on Saturday, July 26, in San Diego. (AP)

asked to be tied up as he performed his lines on the floor. “The depth of the character should read a little more this time,” he said.

The film, based on the graphic novel series by Aaron Blabey, introduces a new crew of animal criminals, the Bad Girls played by Danielle Brooks, Natasha Lyonne and Maria Bakalova.

Paramount showed off its first footage from a new series, “Starfleet Academy,” which stars Holly Hunter and Paul Giamatti.

The show follows cadets as they go through training, with Hunter serving as chancellor of the academy.

It will arrive in 2026, the 60th anniversary year of the original “Star Trek” series.

Paramount+’s other “Star Trek” series, “Strange New Worlds,” also shared updates.

The crew of the USS Enterprise are being turned into puppets for an upcoming “Strange New Worlds” episode, Paramount announced Saturday. The puppets will be created by Jim Henson’s Creature Shop.

Season 3, which follows the adventures of the Enterprise under the command of Capt. Christopher Pike, is being released on Paramount+.

An estimated 135,000 people - many in costumes - are expected to attend Comic-Con 2025, which runs through Sunday in downtown San Diego.

So far, fans have gotten previews of “Five Nights at Freddy’s 2,” the upcoming FX series “Alien: Earth” and “Predator: Badlands,” which will be in theaters in November.

Variety

BOSTON: Astronomer - the company whose CEO resigned after being caught on a KissCam at a Coldplay rock concert embracing a woman who was not his wife - is trying to move on from the drama with someone who knows the band pretty well.

Actress Gwyneth Paltrow, who was married to Coldplay’s frontman Chris Martin for 13 years, announced Friday on X that she has been hired by Astronomer as a spokesperson.

Astronomer, a tech company based in New York, found itself in an uncomfortable spotlight when two of its executives were caught on camera in an intimate embrace at a Coldplay concert - a moment that was then flashed on a giant screen in the stadium.

CEO Andy Byron and human resource executive Kristin Cabot were caught by surprise when Martin asked the cameras to scan the crowd during a concert earlier this month.

“Either they’re having an affair or they’re just very shy,” Martin joked when the couple appeared on screen and quickly tried to hide their faces.

In a short video, the “Shakespeare in Love” and “Ironman” star said she had been hired as a “very temporary” spokesperson for Astronomer.

“Astronomer has gotten a lot of questions over the last few days and they wanted me to answer the most common ones,” Paltrow said, smiling and deftly avoiding mention of the KissCam fuss.

“We’ve been thrilled that so many people have a newfound interest in data workflow automation,” she said. “We will now be returning to what we do best - delivering game-changing results for our customers.”

When footage from the KissCam first spread online, it wasn’t immediately clear who the couple were. Soon after the company identified the pair, and Byron resigned followed by Cabot. The video clip resulted in a steady stream of memes, parody videos and screenshots of the pair’s shocked faces filling social media feeds. (AP)

SAN DIEGO: A few things have changed for the stars of “Lilo & Stitch” since the movie became the breakout hit of 2025.

For 8-year-old star Maia Kealoha, it’s meant no more Doritos - she’s learned she has to keep her teeth clean, especially when doing interviews.

Kealoha, Sydney Agudong and Tia Carrere have been doing lots of those, taking a victory lap with “Lilo & Stitch” at Comic-Con 2025 and promoting the film’s release for digital purchase.

Another change? Kealoha says with a big grin that she’s been recognized at stores “like five thousand times.”

Agudong says the movie “an ode to Hawaii” and it’s been really cool to “see how much the world has taken to it and how much impact ‘Lilo & Stitch’ really has had as just this lifelong and timeless story.”

She says she’s been fortunate to celebrate the film’s success with family and friends and despite premieres and whirlwind interviews, she still gets to “go to the beach and have fun all over again and I’m just the same.”

Kealoha and Agudong are the breakout stars of the film, which is the biggest blockbuster of 2025, earning more than \$1 billion. (AP)

BERLIN: Vandals set fire to a mouse statue that’s a TV star and mascot for children’s programming at German broadcaster WDR, the television station said Saturday.

The cartoon mouse, known only as “Die Maus,” is the eponymous star of “Die Sendung mit der Maus” (The Show with the Mouse) since it first aired in West Germany in 1971. Each short episode features other languages and educational segments.

The statue - featuring the character’s famous orange body with brown ears, arms and legs - greets families and children outside a media building in Cologne, Germany.

A receptionist for WDR saw several young people standing around the statue in Cologne on a camera feed overnight Friday into Saturday. She then noticed flames and called the fire department, WDR said. (AP)



The staircase

Rokn Farouk Museum – a charming royal retreat nestled on the banks of the Nile.

The royal lounge balcony overlooking the Nile River.

KUNA photos
Fireplace room

Egypt's Rokn Farouk Museum...captivating Nile-view rest house

Lying along the Nile River in Cairo's western Helwan District, King Farouk's winter rest house known as Rokn Farouk Museum is an eye-catching royal architectural masterpiece that was built by the late king in 1942. Covering 11,600 m2, the museum, which is, in fact, is one of Cairo's hidden gems, was designed in the shape of a boat on the banks of the Nile. It consists of three entrances and berths designated for receiving royal yachts and large ships. The facility, which turned into a museum in 1979, embraces a ground floor that includes rooms and service units and the first floor that consists of a reception room, a large fireplace, a dining room and a bedroom. (KUNA)

Variety

SAN DIEGO: “South Park” co-creator **Trey Parker** had the briefest of responses Thursday to anger from the White House over the season premiere of the animated institution, which showed a naked President Donald Trump in bed with Satan.

“We’re terribly sorry,” Parker said, followed by a long, deadpan-comic stare.

Parker was asked for his reaction to the fracas as he sat on the stage at San Diego’s Comic-Con International at the beginning of a Comedy Central animation panel that also included his “South Park” partner Matt Stone, “Beavis and Butt-Head” creator Mike Judge, and actor Andy Samberg, who co-created the animated “Digman!”

Earlier in the day, the White House issued a statement on the 27th season premiere, which aired Wednesday night.

“This show hasn’t been relevant for over 20 years and is hanging on by a thread with uninspired ideas in a desperate attempt for attention,” White House spokesperson Taylor Rogers said in the statement. “President Trump has delivered on more promises in just six months than any other president in our country’s history - and no fourth-rate show can derail President Trump’s hot streak.” (AP)

Film

This image released by Netflix shows Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio, (left), and Adam Sandler in a scene from ‘Happy Gilmore 2.’ (AP)

Books

Powerful debut

Hwang probes death, healing

NEW YORK, July 27, (AP): “Mendell Station” is Korean American writer J.B. Hwang’s first novel. And it is all about death - its horror, finality and mystery, and, most of all, how those who knew and loved that person must cope.

Miriam, the main character, who is a Korean American postal worker living in San Francisco, learns that her best friend, Esther, was found dead, having fallen two stories onto the train tracks at Van Ness station.

The mystery of how Esther died is never solved in the book, although we learn she had been intoxicated and wobbly on her feet when last seen at a bar.

The narrative focuses more on Miriam’s initial confusion and the painful emotional attempt at mourning and eventual acceptance.

“The love I had for Esther distended and became a fluid that filled my skull... My skeleton felt ripped out of my body, and I crumpled to the floor. The sound of many waters, weighted clouds in the sky, thin black grooves between the wooden floorboards teeming with darkness.”

Like many great novels, the specifics are clear - the Asian American experience, which is quite different from the white or Black American experience, in many ways, or the details of working at the post office, the menial, never-ending repetition - as fitting the expression “going postal” - but also the gentle kindness of the regular folks who are her co-workers.

The universal human story of losing a loved one comes alive amid the backdrop of these specifics, like many great novels.

NEW YORK: Two-time Grammy Award-winning musician Chuck Mangione, who achieved international success in 1977 with his jazz-flavored single “Feels So Good” and later became a voice actor on the animated TV comedy “King of the Hill,” has died. He was 84.

Mangione died at his home in Rochester, New York, on Tuesday in his sleep, said his attorney, Peter S. Matorin of Beldock Levine & Hoffman LLP. The musician had been retired since 2015.

Perhaps his biggest hit - “Feels So Good” - is a staple on most smooth-jazz radio stations and has been called one of the most recognized melodies since “Michelle” by the Beatles. It hit No. 4 on the Billboard Hot 100 and the top of the Billboard adult contemporary chart.

“It identified for a lot of people a song with an artist, even though I had a pretty strong base audience that kept us out there touring as often as we wanted to, that song just topped out there and took it to a whole other level,” Mangione told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette in 2008.

He followed that hit with “Give It All You Got,” commissioned for the 1980 Winter Olympics at Lake Placid, and he performed it at the closing ceremony.

Mangione, a flugelhorn and trumpet player and jazz composer, released more than 30 albums during a career in which he built a sizable following after recording several albums, doing all the writing. (AP)

NEW YORK: MrBeast’s new CEO hit Wall Street Wednesday as YouTube Jimmy Donaldson’s media empire looks to develop long-term brand partnerships and, in turn, unlock more funding for its charitable content.

Venture capitalist Jeff Housenbold took over MrBeast leadership last summer with a mandate to professionalize an ever-growing entertainment company. YouTube’s most popular creator had reached record audience levels far outpacing its startup days, while vowing to reassess its internal culture amid multiple controversies. But, despite joining Nasdaq’s closing bell ceremony on Wednesday, Housenbold said their strategic plan does not currently include a public offering - or any active funding rounds.

“Do I want to make banger content? Yeah. That’s cool,” Housenbold told The Associated Press. “But what can we do with that banger content? Generate profits, make a sustainable business that gives us greater ability to impact people’s lives around the world.”

“We’re marching quickly to profitability, so we don’t have to raise additional capital,” he added.

Instead, MrBeast is focused on securing multi-year exclusive advertising deals as opposed to single-video brand partnerships. With 416 million subscribers and legions of impressionable young fans, Housenbold argued that MrBeast is uniquely positioned to deliver more bang for companies’ marketing bucks by pointing that “firehose of attention” at them. (AP)

NEW YORK: July 27, (AP): “Happy Gilmore” was born on the range.

When Adam Sandler was a kid growing up in New Hampshire, his father was an avid golfer. He’d often take his son along to hit balls at the driving range. But Sandler was uninterested in the sport, and usually got antsy.

“Why don’t you bring a friend?” his dad told him. So Sandler took his buddy, Kyle McDonough, a star hockey player who’d later turn professional.

“He never played before but he was cracking the ball so far,” Sandler recalls. “So when I started becoming a comedian and me and (Tim) Herlihy were writing stuff and stand-up and talking about movies, I started thinking about a guy who could hit it really big and had a hockey player mentality.”

“Happy Gilmore,” released in 1996, was Sandler and Herlihy’s second movie, following “Billy Madison.” Sandler was just exiting “Saturday Night Live.” Herlihy was Sandler’s roommate at New York University and became a lawyer before Sandler got him to stick to writing comedy.

“We had just done our first movie, ‘Billy Madison,’ and we put every idea we ever had for a movie in that movie,” says Herlihy. “So when they said we could do another movie, it was like, ‘What are we going to do this movie about?’”

“Happy Gilmore,” released in February 1996, became one of the most beloved comedies of the ‘90s and codified the hockey-style swing as a mainstay on golf courses. “A hop, skip and a hit,” as Sandler says. The movie also made comic heroes of Bob Barker, Christopher McDonald and Carl Weathers, and made lines like “Are you too good for your home?” plausible things to ask golf balls.

Like most cult comedies, “Happy Gilmore” didn’t start out an obvious instant classic, though. “A one-joke ‘Caddyshack’ for the blitzed and jaded,” wrote EW. “To describe Happy’s antics as boorish is putting it mildly,” wrote The New York Times. “Happy Gilmore” tells the story of a violent sociopath,” wrote Roger Ebert. He called it “the latest in the dumber and dumbest sweepstakes.”

“Happy Gilmore” was a box-office success, grossing \$39 million in the US and Canada. And through worn-out DVDs and regular TV reruns, it became a favorite to generations of golfers and a staple of goofy ‘90s comedy.

“I can’t even tell you how many times I’ve seen that movie,” says the actor-filmmaker Benny Safdie, who co-directed Sandler in “Uncut Gems.” “It was on an endless loop. I had the DVD and I just kept watching it. I can close my eyes and see the movie end to end. It’s one of my favorite movies.”

Now, nearly three decades later, and after years of batting away pleas for a sequel, Sandler has finally put Happy’s Bruins jersey back on. “Happy Gilmore 2,” which Netflix debuted Friday, is arguably the most anticipated streaming release of the summer.

Sandler was well aware of the checkered history of comedy sequels. Movies like “Zoolander 2” and “Anchorman 2” have struggled to recapture the freewheeling spirit of the originals. The movie Sandler counts as his favorite, “Caddyshack” - so much so that he was initially hesitant to make a golf comedy - spawned 1988’s woebegone “Caddyshack II.”

Moment

“If someone brought it up to us, we were like, ‘Yeah, no, we’re not going to do that.’” Sandler said in a recent interview alongside Herlihy. “There was no moment we went ‘Aha.’ It just kind of happened. The last couple years, we were talking about Happy and how it might be funny if he was down and out.”

In “Happy Gilmore 2,” co-written by Sandler and Herlihy, Happy is a decorated retired golfer with four sons and a daughter (played by Sandler’s daughter, Sunny Sandler). But after a tragic incident and falling on hard times, he’s lured back into golf. This time, though, Happy is an insider, motivated to protect the sport. Safdie co-stars as the founder of Maxi Golf, a new circus-like tour with long hitters.

“We thought it could be fun to write something like that” says Sandler. “It kind of connected to our lives and this age, and wanting to make a full-on comedy. There’s nothing better than dropping a comedy and trying to make people laugh, to us. It feels like why we originally got into this business.”

Big, broad comedies have grown almost extinct in the decades since “Happy Gilmore.” Returning to that style of comedy was, for Sandler and Herlihy, the best reason to make the sequel. For the 58-year-old friends and regular collaborators, it was a chance to riff like they used to.

“We were outlining the story together and then we were like, ‘We should watch the first one again, man.’” Sandler says. “We’re going off of our memory of so many things, hanging out with Carl Weathers and Bob Barker and all that stuff. Then we watched it and we were like, ‘Oh, yeah.’ It was a tone.”

“It made a little more sense than ‘Billy Madison,’” says Herlihy, “but we weren’t afraid to swing, swing, swing.”

Cameos, of course, were a major part of “Happy Gilmore.” (The Bob Barker scene was originally written for Ed McMahon.) In the years since, many of the faces of the original have died, including Barker, Weathers, Frances Bay, the hulking Richard Kiel and Joe Flaherty, who played the heckler. Even the golf ball-stealing alligator, Morris, has passed on. “Happy Gilmore 2,” unusually elegiac for a proudly silly comedy, nods to all of them.

For the sequel, many others, like Travis Kelce, Bad Bunny and Margaret Qualley, were lining up to be a part of it. So were pro golfers. Just about all the big names in golf, including several legends, appear. The day after winning Sunday’s British Open, Scottie Scheffler flew to New York for the premiere.

Over the years, Herlihy and Sandler have seen a lot of them try “the Happy Gilmore.”

“I feel like when these golfers try to do it, these pros, they’re 5% thinking, ‘Maybe this will work,’” says Herlihy, laughing.

“I played with Bryson (DeChambeau) like a week ago and when he did it, it was ridiculous,” adds Sandler. “He literally blasted it 360 and just kept walking. I was like, ‘Did he just smash the Happy Gilmore and not even think about it?’”

It’s possible that “the Happy Gilmore” will even outlive the movies. There’s a good chance that, even as you read this, somewhere some kid is trying it, hoping to get a laugh and maybe get it on the fairway, too.

5SOS’s Michael Clifford drops solo pop-punk ‘Sidequest’

LOS ANGELES, July 27, (AP): Over a decade ago, the Australian pop-punk boy band 5 Seconds of Summer (5SOS) emerged as charming genre-revivalists. Their 2014 career-making single “She Looks So Perfect” was all palm-muted power chords and gang vocals, a familiar sound for fans of the Warped Tour scene. In the years since, the quartet evolved into a full-on arena pop-rock act, taking turns at releasing solo material. Next up is lead guitarist Michael Clifford, the edgiest of the bunch, with a spirited solo debut album that feels truer to the band’s earliest material than their most recent.

But he doesn’t just rehash the past. Rather, the colorful-haired musician adds his own twist on “Sidequest.”

Ten energetic, introspective tracks form a tight album that explores self-doubt, fame and romance. The songs are pop-punk in spirit but deviate from the formula with a stadium-sized production: experimental electronics, big synths and versatile vocals.

And it is an emotional journey. The lovesick opener “Kill Me for Always,” featuring Porter Robinson, sets the stage, with its scintillating mix of electronica and bass.

This cover image released by Hopeless Records shows ‘Sidequest’ by Michael Clifford. (AP)

The sound of “Cool,” released as a single, acts as the strongest evidence of Clifford’s former boy band roots. It’s self-deprecating and self-aware.

“Confidence doesn’t come so easily / When you’re the guy who caught fire with the colored hair / From the band with the song about underwear,” Clifford sings, referencing the chorus of “She Looks So Perfect.”

In an album stuffed with energetic songs juxtaposed with existential lyrics, the best track arrives at a midpoint high in “Enough.” “At 3 a.m. awake again / I can see all of the damage you’ve done,” Clifford sings through an evocative rasp. “With friends like you who needs a loaded gun.”

“Remember When” and “Fashion” maintain the swoony cadence of Clifford’s 5 Seconds of Summer work; “Eclipse” ends the album in a crescendo.

“Sidequest” sets out to prove it’s both a culmination of the last decade of Clifford’s life and a deviation from it, as he steps into his own sound. Thankfully, for fans, it succeeds. The debut album reflects Clifford’s maturation and self-agency, despite the insecurities and doubts that creep in throughout.

“All I’ve done / Is it ever gonna be enough?” Clifford sings, growing hoarser, in “Enough.” Then the question changes: “Am I ever gonna be enough?”

On “Sidequest,” the answer, quite simply, is yes.

Mendell Station

NEW YORK, July 27, (AP): “Mendell Station” is Korean American writer J.B. Hwang’s first novel. And it is all about death - its horror, finality and mystery, and, most of all, how those who knew and loved that person must cope.

Miriam, the main character, who is a Korean American postal worker living in San Francisco, learns that her best friend, Esther, was found dead, having fallen two stories onto the train tracks at Van Ness station.

The mystery of how Esther died is never solved in the book, although we learn she had been intoxicated and wobbly on her feet when last seen at a bar.

The narrative focuses more on Miriam’s initial confusion and the painful emotional attempt at mourning and eventual acceptance.

“The love I had for Esther distended and became a fluid that filled my skull... My skeleton felt ripped out of my body, and I crumpled to the floor. The sound of many waters, weighted clouds in the sky, thin black grooves between the wooden floorboards teeming with darkness.”

Like many great novels, the specifics are clear - the Asian American experience, which is quite different from the white or Black American experience, in many ways, or the details of working at the post office, the menial, never-ending repetition - as fitting the expression “going postal” - but also the gentle kindness of the regular folks who are her co-workers.

The universal human story of losing a loved one comes alive amid the backdrop of these specifics, like many great novels.

This image released by Bloomsbury shows ‘Mendell Station’ by J. B. Hwang. (AP)

Tips to stay safe during heat waves

Watch for these heat stroke signs during summer heat

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



By Brian Bossak
College of Charleston

Millions of people are under heat advisories again as a major heat wave spreads across large parts of the central and eastern US in late July 2025.

For many people, summer is a time for cookouts, beach trips and other outdoor activities. However, it also brings the risk of dangerously high temperatures and humidity.

In the US, hundreds of people succumb to heat-related illnesses each year. Older adults and people in areas that historically haven't needed air conditioning tend to see the highest rates of illnesses during heat waves, as Chicago saw in 1995 when at least 700 people died in a heat wave.

Even in places where heat is recognized as a dangerous health threat, people can be caught off guard as the thermometer creeps higher, on average, each year. In some cases, dangerous heat can arise quickly. In 2021, a young family died of heat stroke on a California trail after setting out for a hike when temperatures were still in the 70s Fahrenheit (low to mid 20s Celsius).

I study health risks in a warming climate as a professor of public health, and I've seen heat become a growing concern. Here are some of the key warning signs to watch for when temperatures rise - and ways to keep cool when the heat and humidity get too high.

Heat-related illnesses occur across a spectrum, and mild heat stress can quickly progress to life-threatening heat

stroke if a person is exposed to dangerous conditions for too long.

Mild forms of heat-related illness include heat cramps and heat rash, both of which can be caused by extensive sweating during hot conditions. Cooling the body and drinking cool fluids can help.

When heat-related illnesses progress into heat exhaustion, the situation is more serious. Heat exhaustion includes symptoms such as dizziness, nausea, excessive sweating, feeling weak, thirst and getting a headache.

Heat exhaustion is a signal that the body is losing its ability to maintain a stable core temperature. Immediate action such as moving to a cool, ideally air-conditioned space, drinking liquids, loosening clothes and applying wet cloths are some of the recommended steps that can help keep heat exhaustion from progressing to the most dangerous form of heat-related illness, heat stroke.

Heat stroke is a medical emergency. At this point, the body can no longer maintain a stable core temperature. A body with heat stroke can reach 106 degrees Fahrenheit or higher rapidly, and that heat can quickly damage the brain, heart and kidneys.

Typically, someone suffering heat stroke has exhausted their reserves of sweat and salt to stay cool, so sweating eventually stops during heat stroke. Their cognitive ability fails, and they cannot remove themselves from danger. Heat stroke can cause seizures or put someone into a coma as their core temperature rises. If the condition is not treated immediately, and the core temperature continues to rise, heat stroke becomes fatal.

Because heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke, addressing heat-related illnesses before they progress is vital.

Heat risk isn't just about temperature - humidity also increases the risk of heat-related illnesses because it affects how well sweating will cool the human body when it gets hot.

Instead of just looking at temperature when planning outdoor activities, check the heat index, which accounts for heat illness risk associated with temperature and relative humidity.

It doesn't take very high temperatures or very high humidity for the heat index to enter dangerous territory.

However, the heat index is still a conservative measure of the impact of heat on humans, particularly for outdoor workers and athletes at summer practices. This is because temperature measurements used in weather forecasting are taken in the shade and are not exposed to direct sunlight. If someone is outside and exposed to the direct sun, the actual heat index can be as much as 15 F higher than the heat index chart indicates.

A more sophisticated measurement of heat effects on human health is what's known as the wet-bulb globe temperature, which takes into account other variables, such as wind speed and cloud cover. Neither takes into account a person's physical exertion, which also raises their body temperature, whether working at a construction site or playing soccer.

How can you stay cool when heat waves set in? The answer depends in part on where you are, but the main points are the same:

■ Avoid strenuous outdoor activities in high temperatures if possible. If you start to feel symptoms of heat-related illnesses, drink fluids that will hydrate you. Find shade, rest, and use cool, damp cloths to lower your body temperature. If you see signs of heat stroke in someone else, call for medi-

cal help.

■ Be careful with fans. Fans can be useful if the temperature isn't too high because they wick sweat away from the body and induce evaporative cooling. But at very high temperatures, they can accelerate heat buildup in the body and lead to dangerous conditions. If indoor temperatures reaches 95 degrees or higher, using fans can actually be dangerous and raise the risk of heat-related illnesses.

■ Find a cooling center, library or community center where you can get inside and rest in an air-conditioned space in the hottest hours. In places such as Phoenix, where high temperatures are a regular hazard, cooling centers are typically opened in summer. Northern cities are also opening cooling centers as heat waves occur there more frequently than they did in the past. Urban areas with a lot of pavement and buildings - known as heat islands - can have temperatures well above the city's average.

■ Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate! Drink plenty of fluids, and don't forget about the importance of electrolytes. Heat-related dehydration can occur when people sweat excessively, losing water and necessary salts from the body. Some sports drinks or rehydration fluids restore electrolytes and hydration levels.

Older adults and people with disabilities often face higher risks from heat waves, particularly if they can't easily move to a cooler environment. Communities and neighbors can help protect vulnerable populations by providing cooling centers and bottled water and making regular wellness checks during high heat.

Summer can be a season of fun. Just remember the risks, keep an eye on your friends and neighbors when temperatures rise, and plan ahead so you can beat the heat. (AP)

NASA, SpaceX eye July 31 launch

How to watch two meteor showers peak in late July

WASHINGTON, July 27, (Agencies): It's almost time for summer's meteor shower duet.

The Southern Delta Aquariid and the Alpha Capricornid meteor showers peak at the same time - in the early morning of July 30.

Without too much interference from moonlight - the waxing moon will be only about a quarter full - the meteors should appear bright and clear in regions away from city lights.

With each shower expected to produce up to a dozen visible meteors per hour under dark skies, the doubleheader means the total number of meteors "do add up," said Thaddeus LaCoursiere, planetarium program coordinator at the Bell Museum in St. Paul, Minnesota.

"Look for flashes of light in the night sky," he said, adding that both are "very nice classic meteor showers."

The Alpha Capricornids - produced by slower-moving meteors - may have tails that linger slightly longer in the sky, said Nick Moskovitz of the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona.

Viewing of each shower lasts through August 12.

As the Earth orbits the sun, several times a year it passes through debris left by passing comets and sometimes asteroids.

The source of the Delta Aquariids is debris from comet 96P/Machholz. The Alpha Capricornids stem from the comet 169P/NEAT.

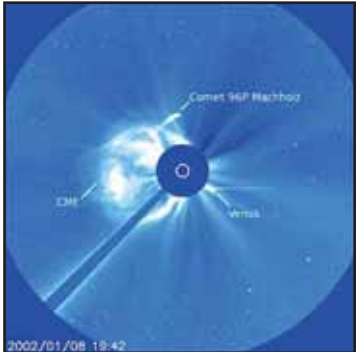
When these fast-moving space rocks enter Earth's atmosphere, the debris encounters new resistance from the air and becomes very hot, eventually burning up.

Sometimes the surrounding air glows briefly, leaving behind a fiery tail - the end of a "shooting star."

You don't need special equipment to see the various meteor showers that flash across annually, just a spot away from city lights.

The best time to watch a meteor shower is in the early predawn hours when the moon is low in the sky.

Competing sources of light - such as a bright moon or artificial glow - are the main obstacles to a clear view of meteors. Cloudless nights when the moon wanes smallest are optimal



This image provided by NASA shows comet 96P Machholz which orbits the Sun about every 6 years, and is suspected to cause the Southern Delta Aquariids meteor showers. (AP)

viewing opportunities.

And keep looking up, not down. Your eyes will be better adapted to spot shooting stars if you aren't checking your phone.

The next major meteor shower, the Perseids, peaks in mid August.

Meanwhile, NASA and SpaceX are targeting July 31 for the launch of their next crewed mission to the International Space Station (ISS), the US space agency announced Thursday.

Liftoff is scheduled for 12:09 p.m. U.S. Eastern Time (1609 GMT) next Thursday from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Docking with the ISS is expected around 3 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 2.

The new mission, codenamed Crew-11, will send NASA astronauts Zena Cardman and Mike Fincke, Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency astronaut Kimiya Yui, and Roscosmos cosmonaut Oleg Platonov to the ISS.

This will mark the 11th crew rotation mission conducted in partnership with SpaceX under NASA's Commercial Crew Program. The initiative aims to provide safe, reliable and cost-effective transportation to and from the ISS using commercial spacecraft. NASA launched a new mission Wednesday designed to study magnetic explosions in space that occur when the Sun's magnetic field interacts with the Earth's magnetic shield.

Scores of Gazans die starving or get shot seeking food

Latest child to starve to death in Gaza weighed less than at birth

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip, July 27, (Agencies): A mother pressed a final kiss to what remained of her 5-month-old daughter and wept. Esraa Abu Halib's baby now weighed less than when she was born.

On a sunny street in shattered Gaza, the bundle containing Zainab Abu Halib represented the latest death from starvation after 21 months of war and Israeli restrictions on aid.

The baby was brought to the pediatric department of Nasser Hospital on Friday. She was already dead. A worker at the morgue carefully removed her Mickey Mouse-printed shirt, pulling it over her sunken, open eyes. He pulled up the hems of her pants to show her knobby knees. His thumb was wider than her ankle. He could count the bones of her chest.

The girl had weighed over 3 kilograms (6.6 pounds) when she was born, her mother said. When she died, she weighed less than 2 kilograms (4.4 pounds).

Malnutrition

A doctor said it was a case of "severe, severe starvation."

She was wrapped in a white sheet for burial and placed on the sandy ground for prayers. The bundle was barely wider than the imam's stance. He raised his open hands and invoked Allah once more.

Zainab was one of 85 children to die of malnutrition-related causes in Gaza during the war, according to the latest toll released by the territory's Health Ministry on Saturday. It said 127 people had died of malnutrition-related causes overall, with the adult deaths counted in just the past few weeks.

"She needed a special baby formula which did not exist in Gaza," Zainab's father, Ahmed Abu Halib, told The Associated Press as he prepared for her funeral prayers in the hospital's courtyard in the southern city of Khan Younis.

Dr. Ahmed al-Farah, head of the pediatric department, said the girl had needed a special type of formula that helps with babies allergic to cow's milk. He said she hadn't suffered from any



Ahmed Abu Halib and his wife Esraa Abu Halib, (left), mourn over the body of their 5-month-old baby, Zainab, who died from malnutrition-related causes, according to the family and the hospital, during her funeral outside the Nasser Hospital, in Khan Younis, Gaza Strip, Saturday, July 26. (AP)

diseases, but the lack of the formula led to chronic diarrhea and vomiting. She wasn't able to swallow as her weakened immune system led to a bacterial infection and sepsis, and quickly lost more weight.

The child's family, like many of Gaza's Palestinians, lives in a tent, displaced. Her mother, who also has suffered from malnutrition, said she breastfed the girl for only six weeks before trying to feed her formula.

"With my daughter's death, many will follow," she said. "Their names are on a list that no one looks at. They are just names and numbers. We are just numbers. Our children, whom we carried for nine months and then gave birth to, have become just numbers." Her loose robe hid her own weight loss.

The arrival of children suffering from malnutrition has surged in recent weeks, al-Farah said. His department, with a capacity of eight beds, has been treating about 60 cases of acute malnutrition. They have placed additional mattresses on the ground.

Another malnutrition clinic, affiliated

with the hospital, receives an average of 40 cases weekly, he said.

"Unless the crossings are opened and food and baby formula are allowed in for this vulnerable segment of Palestinian society, we will witness unprecedented numbers of deaths," he warned.

Doctors and aid workers in Gaza blame Israel's restrictions on the entry of aid and medical supplies. Food security experts warn of famine in the territory of over 2 million people.

After ending the latest ceasefire in March, Israel cut off the entry of food, medicine, fuel and other supplies completely to Gaza for 2 ½ months, saying it aimed to pressure Hamas to release hostages.

Under international pressure, Israel slightly eased the blockade in May.

Since then, it has allowed in around 4,500 trucks for the U.N. and other aid groups to distribute, including 2,500 tons of baby food and high-calorie special food for children, Israel's Foreign Ministry said last week. Israel says baby formula has been included, plus formula for special needs.

Caution urged

Laos warns of dengue spike

VIENTIANE, July 27, (Xinhua): As persistent rainfall continues across Laos, health authorities urge the public to remain alert and take preventive measures against dengue fever.

Although Laos has reported a significant drop in dengue cases, health officials caution that the risk remains high during the rainy season. They urge residents to participate in local clean-up efforts and practice home prevention measures to combat the spread of the disease.

To further prevent dengue, local officials in many villages have organized collective activities that encourage authorities and villagers to work together to eliminate mosquito breeding sites around their homes.

Mithouna, a Vientiane resident, actively participates in local clean-up efforts.

"My neighbors and I clean our homes and surroundings at least once a week. It's important for everyone to work together to reduce the risk of dengue fever, especially during continuous rainfall," Mithouna told Xinhua on Sunday.

Communities

She stressed that dengue affects entire communities, not just individuals. "Dengue is a deadly disease, and it doesn't affect just one household. That's why I believe everyone needs to stay alert and take responsibility."

Chanxay emphasized the importance of disease prevention, especially during the current period of continuous rainfall when many children are home on summer break.

"The rain hasn't stopped, and water is collecting everywhere. On top of that, children are home from school, which makes this a very dangerous time for us," said Chanxay. "As parents, we have to be more careful than ever."

As of July 21, Laos has reported 4,308 cases of dengue fever, including one death. The highest number of cases was recorded in the Lao capital Vientiane, which reported 2,052 infections, according to the Ministry of Health.

Health authorities recommend five effective dengue control measures for households, sealing unused containers, emptying water vessels, placing guppy fish in jars to consume mosquito larvae, cleaning around homes, and consistently performing these tasks weekly.

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Union extends home unbeaten streak to 11

Miami draws without suspended Messi

CHESTER, Pa., July 27 (AP): Mikael Uhre subbed on in the 73rd minute and score two goals, Tai Baribo also scored a goal and the Philadelphia Union beat the Colorado Rapids 3-1.

Philadelphia (15-5-5) is unbeaten in four straight overall. The Union are 9-1-3 at home this season and unbeaten in 11 straight at Subaru Park.

Uhre, at the left side of the penalty arc, cut outside to evade a defender and then rolled a shot from 18 yards out that bounced off the back post to give the Union a 2-1 lead in the 89th minute.

Colorado (8-11-6) was dispossessed near midfield and Alejandro Bedoya played a first-touch pass down the right side and Uhre, who outraced the defense to the corner of the 6-yard box, rolled a shot that bounced off goalkeeper Zack Steffen's right foot as it went between his legs and into the net in the fifth minute of stoppage time.

On the counter-attack, Cole Bassett's first-touch shot bounced off the crossbar and Rafael Navarro's putback - a diving header from the center of the area - opened the scoring in the 37th minute.

Philadelphia had 63% possession and outshot the Rapids 11-4, 6-1 on target, before the break but went into halftime trailing 1-0.

Baribo scored his 15th goal of the season - tied with Cincinnati's Evander Da Silva Ferreira for third most in MLS - to make it 1-1 in the 64th. Kai Wagner, who had played a corner kick in to Jovan Lukic and got it right back, chipped a perfectly-placed entry to the back post and Baribo's left-foot volley bounced into the net.

Inter Miami played FC Cincinnati to a 0-0 draw without the suspended Lionel Messi.

Messi was not available after he and teammate Jordi Alba were suspended one match by Major League Soccer for



skipping the All-Star game. Messi was still in attendance on Saturday, watching from a suite at Chase Stadium.

Inter Miami co-owner Jorge Mas called the punishment "draconian" on Friday, saying that Messi was "extremely upset" at the suspension that sidelined him for an important match as Miami pushes for its second-straight MLS Supporters' Shield.

Miami coach Javier Mascherano questioned if the league would have still suspended Messi if Inter Miami had been playing an away game.

Miami and Cincinnati both entered the matchup as winners of six of their last seven. Cincinnati, which routed Messi and Inter Miami 3-0 last Wednesday, is second in the Supporters' Shield standings with 49 points, while Inter Miami is fifth with 42 points.

Idan Toklohati and Kerwin Vargas each scored a second-half goal, Kristijan Kahlina had three saves and Charlotte FC beat Toronto FC 2-0 to win its fourth game in a row.

Kahlina has six shutouts this season for Charlotte (12-11-2), which is unbeaten in five straight.

Brandt Bronico chipped an entry from the right corner of the box to the back post and a wide-open Toklohati headed home the finish to open the scoring in the 60th minute.

Vargas made it 2-0 in the 65th. Wil-

fried Zaha dispossessed Toronto in its defensive half and immediately played a ball-ahead that led a streaking Vargas for a low finish from the right-center of the area that deflected of goalkeeper Sean Johnson into the top corner of the net.

The 20-year-old Toklohati has all of his six career goals this season, his second in MLS. The Israeli forward scored a

Charlotte beat Toronto 2-0 May 31 on the road.

Seattle's Osaze De Rosario and Atlanta's Alexey Miranchuk both scored in second-half stoppage time and their teams played to a 2-2 draw.

In the fifth minute of stoppage time, De Rosario scored on a header from the middle of the box after a pass from Nouhou Tolo, giving the Sounders what would be short-lived 2-1 lead.

Four minutes later, Miranchuk blasted a 20-yarder past Sounders goalkeeper Andrew Thomas to the lower left zone. Miguel Almirón assisted on the play.

Atlanta (4-11-9) earned a point in the standings but is now without a win in the past seven matches. Seattle is 10-6-8.

Seattle's Yéimar Gómez Andrade was charged with an own goal in the seventh minute when he deflected a shot from Emmanuel Latte Lath over the outstretched arm of goalkeeper Thomas and into the net.

Andrade helped Seattle level the score in the 54th minute. He delivered a long clearing pass to Pedro de la Vega, who dribbled up the left side and his shot beat goalkeeper Brad Guzan to the left corner for the goal.

Each team had two shots on goal and Thomas had the game's only goalkeeper save.

Seattle announced that midfielder Paul Rothrock had undergone successful surgery to repair a fractured third metacarpal bone in his right hand. His recovery is not expected to be long-term.

MLS play will be on a break Sunday through Aug. 8 for Phase One of the Leagues Cup.

American improves to 17-0

Mystics overcome fourth-quarter drought to defeat Storm

Shields outclasses Daniels to defend heavyweight crowns

DETROIT, July 27, (AP): Claressa Shields unanimously outpointed Lani Daniels to successfully defending all her belts as the first undisputed heavyweight champion in women's boxing.

The 30-year-old Shields, a two-time Olympic champion, improved to 17-0 in front of 15,366 fans at Little Caesars Arena. The 36-year-old Daniels, the IBF light heavyweight champion, dropped to 11-3-2. She had won seven in a row.

Former super-welterweight champion Tony Harrison beat Edward Diaz of the Dominican Republic by unanimous decision after being knocked down in the ninth round of the 10-round fight. Harrison, who is from Detroit, improved to 30-4-1 in his first fight since losing his belt to Tim Tszyu more than 10 years ago.

In the main event, Daniels danced and shuffled along the ropes for two rounds to stay away from Shields, who was patient until unleashing a flurry of combinations late in both rounds. Daniels didn't run in the following rounds - and Shields took advantage with punishing blows to the body and head.

Daniels fought for the first time outside of her native New Zealand and was not welcomed in the Motor City, where Shields is a fan favorite.

Shields, elected to the Michigan Sports Hall of Fame on Friday, has revived big-time boxing in Detroit.

The city with a rich history in the sport that includes Joe Louis, Sugar Ray Robinson and Thomas Hearns went decades without relevant fights.

The Red Wings and Pistons moved into Little Caesars Arena in 2017, but the arena didn't have a boxing card until 2023 when Shields was the headliner and beat Maricela Cornejo.

Shields was back at Little Caesars Arena last summer, knocking out WBC heavyweight champion Vanessa Lepage-Joanisse in front of about 12,000 fans and she drew a bigger crowd in her latest

Earlier this month, Katie Taylor beat Amanda Serrano for the third time in front of a sold-out crowd of more than 19,000 at Madison Square Garden in New York in the arena's first all-women's card.

Shields won gold medals at 165 pounds at the 2012 and 2016 Olympics, making her the first boxer from the United States to win consecutive Olympic medals. Professionally, she has earned titles in five divisions from 154 to 200 pounds.

Jackson stars as Sparks hand Liberty tough loss

NEW YORK, July 27, (AP): Rickea Jackson's layup at the buzzer lifted the Los Angeles Sparks to a 101-99 win over the New York Liberty.

The Liberty also lost star Breanna Stewart to a lower leg injury 3 minutes into the game. Stewart had three points and a rebound before she left and went to the locker room. New York was playing the second half of a back-to-back. The Liberty rallied to beat Phoenix on Friday night.

Sabrina Ionescu, who scored 30 points, tied the score at 99 with an elbow jumper with 23.1 seconds left. Los Angeles worked the clock down before Stephanie Talbot fouled Kelsey Plum with 5.9 seconds left. The Liberty still had a foul to give, so the Sparks got the ball on the side.

After a timeout, Jackson got the ball in the post and threw a shot up over her head just before time expired. She finished with 24 points and Plum added 20 for the Sparks, who have won five straight.

Mystics 69, Storm 58

In Washington, Shakira Austin had 14 points and 11 rebounds, Sug Sutton scored 13 points and Wash-



ington beat Seattle.

Seattle, which endured a five-minute scoring drought to open the third quarter and trailed 60-45 entering the fourth, held Washington without a point for the first six minutes of the final quarter. The Storm's 11-0 run had them within 60-56 with four minutes remaining in the game.

Kiki Iriafen then made one free throw for Washington for a five-point lead and her layup with about 2 1/2 minutes left put the Mystics up 63-56. Brittney Sykes scored on two driving layups, leaving the Mystics in command 67-58 with 51 seconds remaining. The Mystics won by double digits despite scoring only nine points in the fourth quarter. They held the Storm under 15 points in each of the last three quarters.

Nneka Ogwumike had 18 points, all in the first half for Seattle (15-11). Erica Wheeler scored 12 points.

Meanwhile, Cameron Brink can

see the light at the end of the tunnel.

She's been out for 13 months after tearing the ACL in her left knee in a game at Connecticut in June last season.

Now she's been cleared to play again and is eager to get back on the court with her Los Angeles Sparks teammates.

"I feel great. I'm super thankful that the Sparks have let me take my time and really feel great coming back," Brink said to a few reporters after shootaround Saturday. "I'm excited to be out there with my teammates."

Brink has been working toward playing in a game. After the Sparks finished their pregame shootaround, Brink went to the Barclays Center practice court and got in another 20-minute workout.

"I've put in a lot of hard work. I feel like what people usually see is me living my life normally, but people don't see the hours and hours that I put in the gym with my trainers, amazing training staff," she said. "I've been working my (behind) off, so I definitely see the light at the end of the tunnel for sure."

Coach Lynne Roberts said that Brink won't play against the Liberty on Saturday night, but expects the 6-foot-4 forward back soon.

Depay earns Corinthians point at Botafogo

RIO DE JANEIRO, July 27, (Xinhua): Memphis Depay struck late to earn Corinthians a 1-1 away draw with defending champion Botafogo in Brazil's Serie A.

Arthur Cabral gave the host the lead in the 24th minute by nodding home from close range after Nathan Fernandes' headed pass.

Depay, a second-half substitute for Luiz Gustavo, equalized seven minutes from time with a low first-time shot that left goalkeeper John with no chance.

"Our first half was very good but we were unable to translate our dominance into goals," Botafogo manager Davide Ancelotti told a post-match news conference.

"The second half was more difficult. They made some substitutions that provided them with a lot of energy. We

tried to defend the best we could, but in the end it wasn't enough. I think a draw is a fair result." Corinthians manager Dorival Junior praised his team's improved performance after the interval. "We came out with a completely different approach after halftime," he said.

"We were unable to find our feet at the start and gave them too much space. We made some positional changes at half-time and managed to strike a better balance in the second half." The result leaves Botafogo fifth in the 20-team Serie A standings with 26 points from 15 games, five points ahead of eighth-placed Corinthians.

Elsewhere, Fortaleza won 3-1 at home to Bragantino, Victoria drew 1-1 at Mirassol, Santos drew 2-2 at Sport Recife, and Palmeiras edged to a 1-0 home win over Gremio.

Best of the Rest

'Xavi did not apply for India job': India's soccer federation has dispelled speculation Xavi Hernández had applied to coach its national team, saying the job application it apparently received from the former Barcelona player was bogus.

The All India Football Federation said Saturday that it had received emailed job applications from senders claiming to be Xavi and Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola, but that neither was genuine.

Indian media reported that Xavi had applied for

the role.

Xavi has been without a team since being let go by Barcelona in June 2024.

Guardiola, one of the top coaches in the sport, is under contract with City through June 2027.

India is looking to replace Spanish coach Manolo Márquez after he left the position by mutual consent earlier this month following just one win in eight games, and less than a year in the job.

The federation said Saturday that it has narrowed a group of 170 applicants to three unnamed finalists. (AP)

Debate over try continues long after the Lions clinch a series win

MELBOURNE, Australia, July 27, (AP): Debate continued Sunday on a hemispheric basis over the last-minute try and absence of a penalty that sealed the British and Irish Lions' 29-26 win over Australia in the second test and a series victory with a match to spare.

From the Northern Hemisphere, Jac Morgan's cleanout of Carlo Tizzano at the last breakdown Saturday was fair and perfectly executed. From the Southern Hemisphere, Morgan breached rugby's law 9.20 by striking Tizzano above the shoulders which likely in most matches in the south would have been considered endangerment and would have been penalized.

While the Lions woke with the sore heads of celebrants, the Wallabies were left to brood over what might have been.

Australia coach Joe Schmidt was emphatic after the match that Italian referee Andrea Piardi had erred in not penalizing Morgan and ruling out the last-minute try to Hugo Keenan which prevented the Wallabies from leveling the series.

Piardi and his assistant referees closely studied replays of the final ruck before waving away the entreaties of Wallabies captain Harry Wilson and awarding the try. In explanation, Piardi said Tizzano and Morgan had arrived at the ruck at the same time and their collision was part of the normal rough and tumble of the game.

"You just have to read law 9.20 and I guess you just have to listen to the description from the referee and then watch the vision," Schmidt told a news conference after the match. "When two players are described as arriving at the same



Australia's Len Ikitau is challenged by Huw Jones, left, and Bundee Aki of the British & Irish Lions during the second rugby union test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in Melbourne, Australia. (AP)

time, just watch the footage.

"Players make errors. Match officials make errors. Our perspective is we felt it was a decision that doesn't really live up to the big player safety push that they're talking about. You cannot hit someone above the level of the shoulders and there's no wrapping with the left arm, the hands on the ground. That's what we've seen, and we've watched a number of replays from different angles. It is what it is. We just have to accept it."

From the northern perspective, Morgan makes contact with Tizzano below the neck and shoulders. It was, Lions coach Andy Farrell said "brilliant".

Some Lions fans even went as far as to accuse Tizzano of "simulation," by trying to exaggerate the incident to influence the referee. "I thought it was a brilliant clear-out, honestly, didn't you? It depends on what side of the fence you come from," Farrell said.

"I thought it was a good clear-out live. I couldn't understand what they were going back for. They seem to go back for everything these days. But I'm so pleased that the referee held his nerve. It was the right decision in my opinion.

"I can understand people's opinions."

Wallabies and Lions fans clashed on social media long after the crowd of more than 90,000 fans - the most ever to watch the Lions - had left the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Fans from the north and south agreed only that this had been one of the great test matches and most memorable of rugby occasions.

Brazil completes marvelous comeback in men’s basketball final

Japan tops FISU Games medal table after gymnastics surge



Gold Medalist Ma Xiuzhen (center) of China, silver medalist Tsuchiya Makoto (left) of Japan and bronze medalist Noda Mariya of Japan react during the awarding ceremony for the women's half marathon at the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games in Bochum, Germany. (Xinhua)

ESSEN, Germany, July 27, (Xinhua): Japan rose to first in the medal table of the FISU World University Games by churning out 11 gold medals.

The gymnastics competition staged at the Messe Essen Hall was practically a rivalry between Japan and China, as the two teams claimed seven of the 10 golds of the day, with Japan taking four.

With four golds in the women’s team, all-around, vault, and individual floor under her belt, Japan’s Shoko Miyata thought it was the best way to show what she is capable of.

“This was a perfect performance and a perfect finish to this event. This was the perfect international comeback for me. The best way to show what I can do, I’m happy about all those medals. It’s amazing,” she said.

China’s Chen Zhilong, who took his first international championship by winning the men’s vault event, revealed the secret to his victory was stability.

“Today’s performance is close to my daily training. I think ‘perfect display’ didn’t exist in vault, what I can do is to put errors within limits, that’s enough.” Elsewhere in athletics, Japan took three golds through the men’s half-marathon team, women’s half-marathon team, and men’s half-marathon, while China’s Ma Xiuzhen bounced back from her 12th-place finish in the women’s 10,000m to win the half-marathon.

“I felt perfect today. I have been adapting to the pace of the leading group from start to finish. I failed to step onto the podium two years ago at the Chengdu Universiade, but this time a relaxed mentality helped me,” said Ma.

Japan also claimed three golds from tennis, while another one from judo completed its gold sheet on the penultimate day of the Games. Now it leads the medal table with 33 golds, 20 silvers and 24 bronzes, while the United States and China rank second and third respectively.

Brazil completed a marvelous comeback



Liu Hengyu of China competes during the men's rings final of artistic gymnastics event at the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games in Essen, Germany. (Xinhua)

in the men’s basketball final. Down by 22 points against the United States after three quarters, Brazil played out a 35-13 fourth quarter to drag the game into overtime, where it eventually registered a 94-88 victory.

The U.S. women’s basketball team also took silver on Friday after an 81-69 defeat to China.

When asked about the emotional impact of the loss, USA head coach Scott Drew said: “There are a lot of positives, but you know what? You want it to hurt. Because if it doesn’t hurt, then you’re not competitive. And then if it hurts bad enough, you’ll make sure it doesn’t happen again. And that’s for coaches, players, and everybody.” The closing ceremony will be held in Duisburg on Sunday, with only athletics and rowing to be contested on the same day.

Late ‘drama’ as Nigeria edges Morocco to win women’s Afcon

Super Falcons keep intact perfect record in the competition’s finals

RABAT, Morocco, July 27, (AP): Nigeria won its record-extending 10th Women’s Africa Cup of Nations title after fighting back from two goals down to beat host Morocco 3-2 in thrilling final.

Morocco was up 2-0 until Esther Okoronkwo led Nigeria back with a penalty and two assists in the final half hour.

The continent’s most successful national team kept intact its perfect record in the competition’s finals with its comeback victory in Rabat.

The Super Falcons had started the tournament with what they called “Mission X,” a quest to re-establish their dominance.

After smashing Morocco’s hopes for a first title, Nigeria celebrated with a social media post saying “Mission X Accomplished.”

Nigeria had lost to Morocco in

the semifinals of the previous edition in 2022, and they looked to be going down again until a handball sparked a late rally.

The Atlas Lionesses dominated the first half. Ghizlane Chebbak curled a shot from outside the box for a 13th-minute lead and 11 minutes later Sanaa Mssoudy added a second goal.

But Okoronkwo pulled one back for Nigeria in the 64th when she converted a penalty after a video review spotted a handball in the area by Nouhaila Benzina.

Okoronkwo soon turned assister to set up Folashade Ijamusi to level it in the 71st.

Substitute Joe Echechini, a Paris Saint-Germain midfielder, scored the winner in the 88th with a right-footed shot from the center of the area after a free kick by Okoronkwo.

Morocco lost the 2022 final to South Africa. Coach Jorge Vilda took over Morocco after leading Spain to the 2023 World Cup title.

Ghana beat South Africa on penalties to claim third place.

China showcases badminton dominance at China Open

CHANGZHOU, China, July 27, (Xinhua): China showcased its dominance at the China Open on Sunday, winning four gold and four silver medals in a commanding performance ahead of next month’s World Championships.

In the all-Chinese men’s singles final, Shi Yuqi rallied to beat unexpected finalist Wang Zhengxing in a spirited match 14-21, 21-14, 21-15. Leveraging his experience, Shi secured his fourth title this season and achieved a rare sweep of all four BWF World Tour Super 1000 events.

“I’ve never performed well here before due to the drafty conditions,” Shi said. “I’m very happy to finally break through.” The women’s final saw Wang Zhiyi successfully defend her title with a decisive 21-8, 21-13 victory over compatriot Han Yue. Wang’s precise lobs and smashes

established early leads, and errors piled up for her opponent.

“I battled recurring low fever all week and had negative thoughts,” Wang admitted. “Reaching the final came down to pure willpower.” China claimed two doubles gold medals through intense all-Chinese finals. Top seeds Feng Yanzhe and Huang Dongping retained their mixed doubles title against Jiang Zhenbang and Wei Yaxin 23-21, 21-17.

In the women’s doubles, Liu Shengshu and Tan Ning outlasted Jia Yifan and Zhang Shuxian 24-22, 17-21, 21-14 in 69 minutes, securing their third consecutive title.

The only non-Chinese victory came in the men’s doubles, where Indonesia’s Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Shohibul Fikri defeated Malaysia’s Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik, 21-15, 21-14 in just 35 minutes.

A perfect fit for our vision: Berta

Arsenal signs Sweden striker Viktor from Lisbon

LONDON, July 27, (AP): Arsenal signed Sweden forward Viktor Gyokeres, bringing an end to the Premier League club’s years-long search for a prolific goal-scorer.

Gyokeres completed a move from Sporting Lisbon worth a reported 63 million pounds (\$85 million) and signed a five-year contract.

“Viktor is an exceptional talent and has consistently demonstrated he has the qualities and winning mentality required of a top-level centre-forward. His physicality, intelligence and work ethic make him a perfect fit for our vision,” said Arsenal sporting director Andrea Berta.

The 27-year-old striker joins Arsenal after establishing himself as one of the deadliest finishers in world soccer after two outstanding seasons in Portugal, where he fired Lisbon to back-to-back league titles. He hit 97 goals in 102 games, including 54 last term, outscoring the likes of Kylian Mbappe, Erling Haaland and Mohamed Salah.

A top-class striker has long been considered the missing element for Arsenal, which was runner-up in each of the last three Premier League seasons. The failure to bring one in during the January transfer window badly undermined its attempts to challenge Liverpool for the title last term.

“The consistency he has shown in his performances and availability have been outstanding, and his goal contributions speak for themselves,” said manager Mikel Arteta. “He is a quick and powerful presence up front, with incredible goal-scoring numbers at club and international levels.”

Gyokeres returns to England after joining Brighton as a youth player and later emerging at second-tier Coventry, where his 22



In this file photo, Sporting’s Viktor Gyokeres, left, avoids Vitoria’s goalkeeper Bruno Varela to score his side’s second goal during the Portuguese league soccer match between Sporting CP and Vitoria SC at the Alvalade stadium in Lisbon. (AP)

goals helped the team reach the playoff final in 2023.

His record of 40 goals in 97 games for Coventry caught the attention of Lisbon and led to a 20.5 million pounds (\$25 million) move to the Portuguese club.

Gyokeres’ explosive form over the past two seasons has sparked frequent speculation about a move to one of European soccer’s giants, including Manchester United. But Arsenal has won the race for his signature and the transfer represents a remarkable rise for a player who was first developed at Brommapojkarna, a Swedish club with a reputation for guiding the careers of some of the country’s best emerging talents.

“He was a late developer because he was not the best striker or the best player in Brommapojkarna at age 16, 17, 18, 19,” Dalibor Savic, his former youth coach at the Swedish club told The Asso-

ciated Press in November. “If he aims at something, he will achieve it.”

Gyokeres will have to prove he can make the step up to the Premier League after failing to break through at Brighton, a club known for unearthing players like Moises Caicedo and Alexis Mac Allister in recent years. He only made eight appearances for the club and was loaned to St Pauli in Germany and Swansea before his permanent move to Coventry.

His performances for Sweden and in the Champions League suggest he will be able to continue that form at Arsenal.

He was the leading scorer in the Nations League with nine goals, outperforming Haaland and Cristiano Ronaldo, and hit six in eight appearances in the Champions League for Lisbon last season.

“I started here (in England), it feels like a long time ago. I think I’ve improved a lot since then.

Now I want to prove myself for real and perform together with the team,” Gyokeres said. “I always want to score. To be a part of this club and to score in this kit and with this badge in front of all the supporters, I can’t wait.”

Meanwhile, Everton coach David Moyes emphasized the need for several new signings ahead of the upcoming Premier League season following a 3-0 defeat to Bournemouth.

During the Premier League Summer Season match at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, Everton’s loss underscored the club’s urgency to bolster its squad.

Everton has already signed striker Thierno Barry and goalkeeper Mark Travers, while the loan of Charly Alcaraz has been made permanent. Moyes also revealed that the club has made an offer for Bayern Munich defender Adam Aznou.

“We’ve signed three, but we’re still in need of maybe five or six players. That’s what we have to try and do,” said Moyes, adding that he had never had to try to sign so many new players in “one transfer window.” “We’re trying really hard behind the scenes to get things done. We’re going to need it,” he said.

He said the club has “made an offer” for Aznou, explaining the Moroccan was “a young player. It’s someone we see as having a good future and good potential,” but he admitted he didn’t expect any arrivals before Everton plays his former club, West Ham, in Chicago on Thursday.

“I’d be very surprised, you never know! We have a lot of work to do. We know what we have to do, and we have to improve it. Today’s performance showed that,” concluded Moyes.

Best of the Rest

Botswana, Mozambique gain promotion: Botswana and Mozambique gained promotion to tennis Davis Cup Africa Group IV with victories over Madagascar and Rwanda respectively in the Group V promotion playoffs in Gaborone.

Botswana registered a hard-fought 2-1 victory over Madagascar, while Mozambique saw off Rwanda 2-0.

Botswana’s Ntungamili Raguin earned Botswana the lead after beating Lucas Andriamasilalao 6-3, 6-2, before Madagascar rallied through Valentin Rakotondrasoa, who tied the score with a 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 victory over Denzel Seetso.

Botswana’s pair of Raguin and Mark Nawa proved too strong for Rakotondrasoa and Antso Rakotondramanga, beating them 6-3, 2-6, 6-1 to help the home side gain promotion to Group IV after narrowly missing out on promotion in 2024 when it lost the final.

Botswana captain Phenyo Matong said the result was evidence of the hard work the team had done in preparations for the tournament, while the loss in 2024 motivated the team to push harder this year to gain promotion. (Xinhua)

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Spain's Mavi Garcia reacts as she crosses the finish line to win the second stage of the Women's Tour de France cycling race that starts in Brest to finish in Quimper, Brittany, western France. (AP)

Sports

McIntosh claims first gold in five-medal quest



Gold medalists team Australia pose together after the men's and women's 4x100-meter freestyle finals at the World Aquatics Championships in Singapore. (AP)



Qin Haiyang of China competes during the men's 100m breaststroke semifinal of swimming at the World Aquatics Championships in Singapore. (Xinhua)

Australia shines with double relay titles

SINGAPORE, July 27, (AP): For Summer McIntosh of Canada, it's one gold medal won at the swimming world championships with four to go.

McIntosh is aiming to win five gold medals in individual events at the worlds in Singapore, and the first one came Sunday in the 400-meter free-style on the first of eight days in the pool.

Only legendary American Michael Phelps has ever won five individual medals in the worlds. He also did it at the Olympics.

McIntosh won but did not break her own world record, winning in 3 minutes, 56.26 seconds. Li Bingjie of China took silver (3:58.21) with a late charge to leave American Katie Ledecky (3:58.49) with bronze.

A year ago in the Olympics, Ledecky also took bronze in the 400. McIntosh was the silver medalist with gold for Australian Ariarne Titmus of Australia.

Titmus is taking a year off and did not swim and has since lost her world record in the event to McIntosh.

For Ledecky, a nine-time Olympic gold medalist, it was her 27th medal in the world championships in an astonishing career.

She won her first Olympic gold in 2012 in London, and then started adding world championship medals beginning in Barcelona in 2013.

About 25 minutes after winning the 400, McIntosh came back and qualified first in the 200 individual medley, clocking 2:07.39. American Alex Walsh was second in 2:08.49. That final is Monday.

The Canadian added: I think I'm at my best. I'm in the best shape of my life. So now I just have to act on that and put it into all my races."

The shock of the first day might have been Chinese 12-year-old Yu Zidi, who was the seventh fastest in qualifying and will swim in the final.

Asked her reaction, she replied: "Oh, I'm in," unaware she had advanced.

Asked for her reaction to the competition, she added. "You can feel it's quite intense. I try not to think so much and just give it my all." The 200 IM might not even be her best event with the Chinese likely quicker in the 400 IM and the 200 butterfly. Meanwhile, the United States is swimming with what appears to be a weakened

team after officials acknowledged Sunday that some members of the team had come down with "acute gastroenteritis" at a training camp in Thailand prior to arriving in Singapore.

Nikki Warner, a spokeswoman for USA Swimming, would not say how many fell ill in Thailand. She cited health confidentiality rules. She said all American swimmers had traveled to Singapore.

In the other early individual final Sunday, Lukas Martens of Germany won the men's 400 free in 3:42.35, edging Sam Short of Australia who was .02 behind. Bronze went to Kim Woomin of South Korea in 3:42.60.

Martens is the defending Olympic champion and also holds the world record of 3:39.96.

McIntosh, who won three gold medals a year ago at the Paris Olympics, holds the world record in the 400 free - 3:54.18. She will face off again with Ledecky in the 800 free later in the meet, probably the most anticipated race in Singapore.

Though she holds the 400 free world record, McIntosh had failed to win gold in the event in the Olympics or previous world championships.

Al-Salamah linked with historic move to Iraq's Al-Quwa Al-Jawiya

Al-Arabi lines up friendlies ahead of crucial clash

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 27: Al-Arabi is scheduled to play two friendly matches against UAE sides Hatta and Banayyas on July 31 and August 6, respectively, as part of its training camp in Abu Dhabi, which runs until August 8.

The club is ramping up preparations for a crucial AFC Challenge Cup playoff match against Maldives' Maziya Sports on August 12. The game, which will determine a spot in the group stage, is set to take place at the Maldives National Football Stadium at 3:00 p.m. local time.

Meanwhile, reports from Iraqi media suggest that Baghdad-based powerhouse Al-Quwa Al-Jawiya (Air Force Club) has shown serious interest in signing Al-Arabi and Kuwait national team player Bandar Al-Salamah. An initial inquiry has been made, and the club has reportedly set a condition for preliminary approval before engaging in formal negotiations. If the deal materializes, Al-Salamah would become the



Al-Arabi player works out as teammate looks on.

first Kuwaiti footballer in the history of the Iraqi Premier League.

Currently, Al-Salamah is absent from Al-Arabi's training camp as he continues a rehabilitation and treatment program in Dubai following a successful knee-cleaning procedure and protective support installation performed earlier this month in Kuwait.

If the transfer goes through, Al-

Salamah will be the second player to leave Al-Arabi this season, after defender Hassan Hamdan joined Jordanian club Al-Ahli earlier in July.

Al-Arabi's Portuguese head coach Marco Alves has intensified training in anticipation of the Maziya match. Players recently completed morning workouts at the camp's fitness center, followed by evening sessions on the field.

Kuwait Club continues its daily training under Montenegrin coach Nebojsa Jovicic in preparation for the 2024-25 Zain Premier League season, which kicks off on September 12. The team will soon depart for a 20-day training camp in Prague, Czech Republic, which will include four friendly matches.

In the domestic transfer market, Qadsia and Kuwait national team defender Yousef Al-Haqan is reportedly close to joining Salmiya for the upcoming season. Salmiya's training sessions have already seen the arrival of new Jordanian signing Hossam Abu Dhahab.

Kuwait suffers 2nd straight loss at Arab Basketball Championship

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

MANAMA, July 27: Kuwait endured its second straight defeat at the 26th Arab Basketball Championship, losing to Tunisia 61-86. The tournament, hosted by Bahrain, runs through August 2.

In other matches, Egypt defeated Qatar 90-69, while the UAE narrowly beat Bahrain 81-79.

With two victories, the UAE leads the standings, followed by Egypt, Algeria, Bahrain, and Tunisia, each with one win. Kuwait and Qatar are at the bottom of the table with two losses apiece.

Kuwait had opened its tournament campaign with a 79-87



Players battling for the ball during Kuwait and Tunisia match.

loss to the UAE and faced another tough test late last night against title favorite Egypt.

Tunisia took early control of the game against Kuwait, capi-

talizing on its physical and technical superiority. It closed the first quarter with a 21-16 lead and extended its advantage to 42-20 by halftime, and dominated the third quarter to go up 67-30. Kuwait showed signs of improvement in the final period as Tunisia eased off, already confident of victory, with the game ending 86-61.

All teams will enjoy a rest day today, with matches resuming tomorrow. Kuwait will not participate in the fourth round, returning to face Algeria in the fifth round the day after tomorrow.

The championship is being played in a single round-robin format at Khalifa Sports City Arena, with the team earning the most points declared the winner.

Sheikh Joaan honors winners



Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani applauds as Lukas Martens celebrates.

SINGAPORE, July 27: Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani, President of the Qatar Olympic Committee and First Vice President of the Association of National Olympic Committees, attended the World Aquatics Championships currently taking place in Singapore. Also present was Hussein Al-Musallam, President of World Aquatics and Director General of the Olympic Council of Asia.

Sheikh Joaan took part in the medal ceremony, crowning the swimming champions and congratulating the athletes on their achievements. His presence reflects his ongoing commitment to supporting and developing sports across various disciplines.

German Olympic swimmer Lukas Martens won gold in the men's 400-meter freestyle, edging out Australia's Sam Short in a thrilling finish.

Martens, who broke the world record earlier this year, posted a winning time of 3:42.35 minutes - just 0.02 seconds ahead of Short. South Korea's Kim Woo-min claimed the bronze medal.

The championship has drawn record participation, with 206 countries and about 2,500 athletes competing in official events. An additional 7,700 swimmers are participating in the Masters competition, bringing the total number of athletes to more than 10,000.

Norris and Leclerc complete podium

Piastri wins rain-delayed Belgian Grand Prix

SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS, Belgium, July 27, (AP): Oscar Piastri beat his McLaren teammate and title rival Lando Norris to win Formula 1's Belgian Grand Prix on Sunday after heavy rain delayed the start.

Piastri powered past his teammate and title rival Norris on the first racing lap after the safety car pulled into the pits on lap four, following a delay to the start of more than an hour.

"I knew I was going to try and lift (off the accelerator) a little bit less than Lando did and try to make it stick," said Piastri, admitting his car felt "lively" as he took on the extra risk through the steeply uphill Eau Rouge corner.

Norris reduced Piastri's lead toward the end of the race but the Australian held on with worn tires and Norris couldn't get close enough to challenge.

Charles Leclerc was third for Ferrari after he kept Red Bull's Max Verstappen behind him all race.

Piastri extended his championship lead over Norris from nine points to 16 and denied his British teammate a third Grand Prix

win in a row.

It was the second straight day that Piastri held off Norris after taking second place ahead of his teammate in Saturday's sprint, won by Max Verstappen.

Except for the weather, Piastri's overtake of Norris was almost a copy of Verstappen's opening-lap pass on the Australian from second on the grid in the

sprint.

Piastri had been disappointed to qualify second for the Grand Prix behind Norris, but it "turns out starting second at Spa is not so bad after all," he said.

Piastri took his sixth win of the season and is the first McLaren driver to win the Belgian Grand Prix since Jenson Button in 2012.



McLaren driver Oscar Piastri of Australia steers his car during the Formula One Grand Prix at the Spa-Francorchamps racetrack in Spa, Belgium. (AP)

Unlike the thrilling and chaotic last race in Britain, there was no significant rain after the race finally got underway and Sunday's race was largely a procession after a few early attacks on the still-wet track. Most key contenders switched to dry tires at roughly the same time and didn't have to stop again.

In Red Bull's first Grand Prix since the firing of Christian Horner as team principal, Verstappen failed with an attempt to get past Leclerc at the start and spent the rest of the race behind the Ferrari driver on his way to fourth.

George Russell was fifth for Mercedes after an early pass on Alex Albon, who finished sixth for Williams after holding off Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton, who was seventh.

The seven-time champion started 18th and Hamilton carved his way through the field on the wet track early on but then lost momentum. Liam Lawson was eighth for Racing Bulls, with Sauber's Gabriel Bortoleto ninth and Pierre Gasly 10th for Alpine.