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His Highness the Amir of Kuwait



King Mohammed VI of Morocco

Kuwait's Amir congratulates Morocco King on Throne Day

KUWAIT CITY, July 30, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable on Wednesday to King Mohammed VI of Morocco on the occasion of the 26th anniversary of the National Throne Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir praised Morocco's achievements across various fields under His Majesty's leadership and highlighted the deep-rooted ties between the two countries.

He also wished the King continued health and well-being, as well as further progress and prosperity for the Moroccan people.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince

Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable on Wednesday to King Mohammed VI of Morocco on the occasion of the 26th anniversary of the National Throne Day.

In the cable, His Highness expressed his sincere congratulations to the King, wishing him continued good health and well-being, as well as further growth and prosperity for Morocco.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a congratulatory cable on Wednesday to King Mohammed VI of Morocco on the occasion of the 26th anniversary of the National Throne Day.

Diverse expat workforce drives Kuwait's progress

Trafficking fight a national responsibility: Justice Minister

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: "The State of Kuwait hosts expatriate workers of more than 150 nationalities from around the world – all of whom contribute to the progress of the country and its development in all fields," says Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Human Rights Ambassador Sheikh Jawaher Al-Sabah.

In a statement to the press when she attended the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons event organized by the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) at the Avenues Mall on Wednesday, Sheikh Jawaher Al-Sabah emphasized that the expatriate workers are guests on Kuwaiti soil, and it is their duty to protect their rights and preserve their dignity, in the same manner that employers have rights and duties that must be preserved and protected.

She said Kuwait firmly believes in the need to combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling, and that it focuses on the issue in the context of its international and humanitarian obligations. She affirmed that Kuwait commends and appreciates the efforts of all those working hard to combat this human crime.

She disclosed that Kuwait formed the National Committee to

Combat Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling, headed by the Minister of Justice and with the membership of several government agencies, including the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Information, Health; and the Public Prosecution.

She pointed out that Law No. 91/2013 on combating this crime was passed, along with a comprehensive national plan and a national system for monitoring and responding to cases.

She stated that Kuwait's efforts in this area stem from its effective partnership with friendly countries, as well as close coordination with the United Nations and its specialized agencies – International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Labor Organization (ILO), and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). She added these efforts aim to develop training plans and programs and build the capacity of nationals specialized in this field to enhance the ability of the country to combat this phenomenon.

Meanwhile, acting Deputy Director General for Labor Affairs at PAM Musaed Al-Mutairi confirmed that Kuwait is moving forward in combating human trafficking by developing its national legislation and activating prevention mechanisms and measures necessary to provide protection and early detection, according to a comprehensive approach in line with international standards.

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Nasser Al-Sumait, Minister of Justice and Chairman of the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling

Bid to reclaim public land

Cabinet reflects on Iraqi invasion, honors heroes

KUWAIT CITY, July 30, (KUNA): Kuwait's Cabinet has recalled with resentment the Iraqi occupation of the country on 2nd August 1990, and expressed pride of the national heroes who sacrificed their lives to defend their homeland.

The Cabinet, in its weekly meet-

ing held Tuesday at Bayan Palace and headed by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, highly appreciated the unforgettable roles of the late Amirs; Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad

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Kuwaiti, US Naval commanders meet

Commander of the Kuwait Naval Force, Rear Admiral Saif Al-Hamdan, met on Wednesday with Commander of the United States Naval

Forces Central Command, Vice Admiral George Wikoff, onboard the USS Canberra.

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Kuwaiti Army photo
Commander of the Kuwait Naval Force receives the Commander of the US Naval Forces Central Command.

UN backs two-state solution

Kuwait welcomes UK PM's move to recognize Palestine

KUWAIT CITY, July 30, (Agencies): The State of Kuwait on Wednesday welcomed the Prime Minister of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Keir Starmer, announcement that his country is willing to recognize Palestine as an independent state.

In a statement by the Foreign Ministry, the State of Kuwait commended Starmer's support for the two-state solution, describing the step as "important" in efforts to achieve Middle East peace.

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Power surge amid 50°C temperatures

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Amid soaring temperatures that exceeded 50 degrees Celsius on Wednesday, the electricity load index increased once again, particularly in the afternoon, when it crossed the orange zone with an electrical load of 17,575 megawatts —

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Kuwait Towers gain heritage recognition

BEIRUT, July 30, (KUNA): The iconic Towers in the heart of Kuwait City have been designated as an Arab heritage site under the category of modern architecture, an updated list of a pan-Arab urban and architectural observatory showed on Wednesday.

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HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Until the lion learns to write, every story will glorify the hunter

The careless jackal tried to undermine the king of the jungle but failed.

His climb up the rock did not change his status; he remained a "chicken thief."

Whether I climb the rock, the tree, or stay at the bottom, the jungle knows who I am.

They don't talk about their brutality, but about the logic of power disguised as morality.

Double standards call killing as a "sport" and occupation as a "form of liberation."

Humans are skilled at wrapping crimes in "gift" paper.

The latest moral trend is to apologize to someone after killing them.

Asking "Where's the hat?" is enough reason to beat the donkey again.

An oppressor doesn't need a reason; any excuse will do.



HH the PM chairs the Supreme Petroleum Council meeting.

PM chairs Petroleum Council meeting

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired on Wednesday the Supreme Petroleum Council 127th (3/2025) meeting.

The council reviewed tabled

items as well as projects and strategy of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and its subsidiaries, in addition to the final account for the fiscal year 2024-2025. (KUNA)

Kuwait biometric database covers 16 million, boosts border security

KUWAIT CITY, July 30, (KUNA): The official spokesman for the Ministry of Interior, Brigadier Nasser Abu-Slaib has confirmed that the ministry's strategic plan aims to enhance the security system and keep pace with modern changes, in line with the goals of the 'New Kuwait 2035' vision.

This came during a visual presentation by Abu-Slaib, titled "Laws - Numbers - Achievements 2025", where he reviewed the strategic plan and legislative amendments to traffic, residency,

and drug laws, in addition to the digital transformation that enabled 37 electronic services through the "Sahel" application, with transactions exceeding 30.8 million.

He pointed to the biometric fingerprint project that has provided a database for over 16 million people, which is automatically linked with the state ministries, enhancing the procedures for identity verification and security at the borders.

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Gulf Bank's loan book grows 3.8% YTD, boosted by corporate portfolio



Burgan Bank announces stable financial performance for H1'25

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:37	Asr	15:30
Sunrise ..	05:07	Maghrib ..	18:42
Zohr	11:54	Isha	20:08

Local



KUNA photo
Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met with Bangladesh's Foreign Affairs Advisor Mohammad Hussein.

Kuwait, Bangladesh eye ties boost

NEW YORK, July 30, (KUNA): Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met with Bangladesh's Foreign Affairs Advisor Mohammad Hussein on Tuesday, on the sidelines of the High-level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the

Two-State Solution continues. During the meeting, both sides discussed bilateral ties and means of developing them in all fields. They further focused on some issues of mutual interest and the latest developments on regional and international arenas.

New-look residential complexes in offing

Leeway amends construction limits

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Chairperson of the Technical Committee at the Municipal Council Munira Al-Amir has confirmed the adoption of comprehensive amendments to the requirements and specifications for building residential complexes in and outside Kuwait City.

In a press statement after the seventh meeting of the committee on Tuesday, Al-Amir pointed out these amendments are considered the fruits of extensive efforts and numerous discussions within the committee and with other concerned parties.

She revealed the committee started its review with the principle of simplifying texts and unifying concepts, while maintaining the required balance between investment regulations and community comfort. She said a lot of repetitions and duplications were eliminated, and new elements were added to enhance construction quality and respond to modern urban and economic changes.

She cited one of the most notable changes brought about by the new schedule -- the unification of the definition of a residential complex in and outside Kuwait City, indicating there were differences in definitions and requirements prior to the amendment. She disclosed that the residential complex is now defined as a group of investment buildings consisting of apartments, villas, duplexes or studios; built on land measuring not less than 2,000 square meters, with the aim of "removing ambiguity in implementation and providing a unified planning framework."



Munira Al-Amir

ing a unified planning framework."

Regarding building ratios, she stated that a radical change has been made, with the maximum building ratio within Kuwait City reaching 400 percent of the plot area, compared to 250 percent outside the city. "This is in addition to the possibility of additional building ratios ranging from 30 percent to 80 percent, depending on the size of the plot, with the removal of the specified building percentage per floor. Other important features of the amendment include the restructuring of the setback rules, by standardizing the minimum setback to three meters on all sides within the boundaries of the plot. The committee was careful not to overlook the investment dimension of the complexes, maintaining the allowance for commercial services at five percent of the size of the plot," she explained.

On the design of basements, she affirmed that it is allowed to use the first basement or part of it for recreational purposes; provided that the technical requirements of the Ministry of Electricity and Water and Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) are met; in addition to allowing the construction of more than one basement as needed.

She mentioned a regulatory precedent -- the first of its kind, stating there is a special clause for mixed-use residential complexes in Kuwait City; allowing the combination of residential and commercial use on plots measuring 2,000 square meters or more, with clear proportions where commercial uses do not exceed 30 percent of the total building percentage (400 percent).

She emphasized that the amendment concerning investment plots outside the city include the adoption of a system for the combination of residential, commercial and hotel activities in separate or connected buildings within a single plot; provided that the area allocated for residential units is not less than 3,000 square meters. She clarified that the amendment mandates developers to implement a building code for people with disabilities and to allocate gender-friendly restrooms.

Tedious process of retrieving seized vehicles draws citizens, expats ire

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: In response to the rising number of public complaints and a directive from senior management, Kuwait Municipality is developing a series of solutions aimed at regulating workflow and improving operations at vehicle impoundment sites in Amghara and Mina Abdullah, reports Al-Rai daily quoting sources.

Sources revealed that Deputy Director General of the Services Sector, Mishal Al-Azmi is reviewing numerous complaints submitted by citizens and expatriates; such as the use of undersized and outdated vehicles to tow cars, which reportedly led to damage during the impoundment process. He said one major criticism is the outdated method of documenting violations. "Currently, when a vehicle is found to be in violation of road occupancy rules, a warning sticker is placed and photographs are taken to record the infraction. This approach falls short of the government's ongoing efforts toward full digital transformation," sources clarified.

mation," sources clarified.

Sources said citizens and expatriates have also raised concerns about the complexity and inconvenience of retrieving impounded vehicles. They pointed out that the process requires individuals to visit the Road Occupancy Department in the relevant governorate to process paperwork and pay fees, before heading to the impoundment site for final release. "This multi-step procedure is burdensome for individuals who are traveling or living abroad, as their vehicles may be towed in their absence and stored at their expense," sources added.

Sources also revealed that most impounded vehicles are returned to the owners with flat tyres. "Owners must often rent flatbed trucks to transport their vehicles, putting more financial strain," sources stated.

Therefore, the Municipality is considering a number of improvements to streamline operations, reduce complaints, and ensure greater transparency.

Following are the proposed measures:

1. Equip tow trucks with cameras to record the vehicle lifting and transport process.
2. Activate notifications through the Sahel app to immediately inform vehicle owners when their cars are impounded.
3. Centralize release procedures, so all transactions can be completed at a single location.
4. Offer a return service, allow vehicle owners to pay an additional fee to have their vehicles delivered to a location of their choosing.

Officials also emphasized the urgent need to install surveillance cameras around impoundment yards, as many of these facilities are currently unsecured and surrounded only by fencing.

These initiatives, still under review by the relevant sector in the Municipality, aim to modernize impoundment operations and reduce the inconvenience and cost incurred by the public.

Event marks 35th 'versary of invasion

'Blood donation campaign honors martyrs'

KUWAIT CITY, July 30, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Health launched on Tuesday the annual national blood donation campaign, which will commence this Thursday under the patronage of Health Minister Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi.

The campaign coincides with the 35th anniversary of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, aiming to honor the sacrifices of the nation's martyrs and celebrate the unity and resilience of the Kuwaiti people, said a ministry statement.

Director of the Department of Blood Transfusion Services Dr. Reem Al-Radhwan, said that the campaign will begin at



Dr. Al-Awadhi

the Central Blood Bank in Jabriya from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, with blood donations also accepted at all affiliated centers throughout the campaign, which runs until August 2.

She explained that this 10th annual drive is such a deeply humanitarian initiative; blending patriotism with volunteerism, and is the result of strong cooperation between the Ministry and socially responsible institutions.

The campaign involves the Ministries of Defense, Interior, along with the National Guard, in addition to civil society and public-private sectors, emphasizing community solidarity and promoting blood donation as a noble and life-saving humanitarian value, she noted.

Al-Radhwan added that such efforts help boost the national blood supply, with donation campaigns contributing 18 percent of annual donations, as evidenced by last year's collection of 85,028 blood bags and 8,078 platelet bags.

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Very hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 15-42 km/h causing rising dust.
By Night: Hot to rather hot with

Weather			
light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-38 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	51	39	
Kuwait Airport	50	39	
Abdaly	50	36	

Bubyan	49	30
Jahra	50	38
Salmiyah	47	37
Ahmadi	46	37
Nuwaisib	49	36
Wafra	50	37
Salmiy	48	33

Society launches 'Eternal Harmony' drive

Family break-up, divorce top talks agenda

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Under the patronage and in the presence of Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah, the Kuwait Society for the Prevention of Family Disintegration has organized an awareness program titled, "Eternal Harmony".

The objectives of the program were to address the causes of family disintegration and divorce, and build a balanced and stable married life.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Society Khaled Al-Mutairi, psychological consultant and founding member Dr. Maryam Al-Azmi, social worker and marriage and family counselor Alaa Al-Nassar, and social worker specializing in marital relations Nadia Al-Bin Ali warmly welcomed the Governor at the event.

The program featured interactive workshops to raise public awareness and promote the status of marital and family life, with several residents of the governorate in attendance.

Speaking at the event, Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser affirmed "we are committed to continue the implementation of such community initiatives, which strengthen family cohesion and enhance its status in the Kuwaiti society, as the family is the cornerstone of building a stable and secure society. We commend the organizers of this program for effectively playing their national and social roles."

At the conclusion of the program, the chairman and members of the association expressed their thanks and appreciation to the



Farwaniya Governorate photo
Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah arrives at the seminar.

Governor for his presence and sponsorship of the event; as well as his unwavering support for community initiatives and programs, particularly those aimed at improving the status of the family in the Governorate.



Photos by Mohammad Morsi
Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister for African Affairs Ambassador Nayef Al-Mudhaf, Ambassador of the Republic of Benin to Kuwait Prof. Baderou Dine Aguemou and officials at the cake-cutting ceremony.

Embassy marks 65th independence day

'Kuwait-Benin ties 5 decades strong'

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister for African Affairs Ambassador Nayef Al-Mudhaf said the relationship between Kuwait and Benin spans more than 50 years, characterized by strong ties and fruitful cooperation in many areas.

In a statement to the press when he attended the recent celebration of the 65th anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Benin, Al-Mudhaf disclosed that the two countries signed 11 agreements, including the skilled labor agreement; in addition to the existence of a joint committee, ongoing political consultations, and other agreements that support the framework of bilateral cooperation.

Al-Mudhaf disclosed that the Republic of Benin opened its embassy in Kuwait in 2009, while Kuwait opened its embassy in Cotonou in 2012 -- a manifestation of the strength of bilateral relations.

He confirmed that coordination is underway to arrange the visit of the Benin Foreign Affairs Minister to the State of Kuwait, which will be announced in due course.

Regarding the domestic worker

agreement, Al-Mudhaf explained that it is still under negotiation between the two sides; hoping that an agreement will be reached soon. He added the number of Benin citizens in Kuwait exceeds 10,000 and most of whom are domestic workers.



Benin envoy

He pointed out that Kuwait, through the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), has so far provided 14 development loans to the Republic of Benin -- a total of around KD42 million. He asserted this reflects the depth of the development partnership between the two countries.

On the other hand, Ambassador of the Republic of Benin to Kuwait Prof. Baderou Dine Aguemou pointed out that the 65th anniversary of his country's independence is a glorious national occasion to celebrate not only freedom and sovereignty; but also the collective commitment of Benin to move toward a more prosperous, peaceful and internationally cooperative future.

He emphasized that the new Republic of Benin is open and ambitious, ready to forge fruitful strategic partnerships with sisterly and friendly countries, especially Kuwait. He said the Beninese Embassy in Kuwait is ready to serve the community and provide the necessary support to anyone wishing to learn about the opportunities available in his country, urging everyone to contact the embassy whenever necessary.

He also expressed his gratitude and appreciation to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled for their support and commitment to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries. He appreciated the warm welcome and the joint efforts to develop cooperation between Benin and Kuwait.

He added that cooperation between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Benin is a model worthy of emulation in terms of relations between the Arab world and sub-Saharan Africa, stressing that the future holds broad prospects for a constructive partnership that serves the aspirations of the two friendly peoples.

Kids under five at greater risk of 'dry drowning' as summer peaks

KUWAIT CITY, July 30, (KUNA): As summer temperatures soar and families head to pools and water activities, growing concern surrounds a rare but potentially fatal condition called "dry drowning", a silent threat that can affect children without the usual signs of drowning.

Children under five are most at risk due to narrow airways and weak breath control, especially those with asthma or past respiratory issues.

Speaking to KUNA, Director of the Emergency Medical Services Department at the Ministry of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Shatti said that dry drowning is a rare condition where a small amount of water enters the airway, causing vocal cord spasms that block airflow and can lead to serious breathing problems or death if not treated quickly.

He warned that symptoms like trouble breathing, persistent cough, pale or blue skin, fatigue, or confusion after swimming may signal dry or secondary drowning and require urgent medical attention.

Dr. Al-Shatti noted that dry drowning symptoms could

appear minutes to hours after leaving the water due to airway spasms, stressing the need to watch for any unusual signs, even if they seem mild at first.

Close monitoring of children after swimming or water play is crucial, especially in the hours that follow, to prevent the serious risks of dry or secondary drowning, he added.

For his part, Director of Public Relations and Media at the General Fire Force, Brigadier Mohammad Al-Ghareeb said dry drowning is rare but serious, and can happen without immediate symptoms-often after a child swallows a small amount of water while swimming.

He warned that leftover water in the airway could cause serious issues later, urging parents and pool staff to watch for signs like constant coughing, breathing trouble, or unusual tiredness.

"Prevention begins with awareness and continuous supervision," he said, urging safe swimming habits, avoiding water swallowing, and not swimming when tired or having breathing issues.

He stressed the need for trained rescue teams and emergency equipment at swimming sites. He highlighted the General Fire Force's "Safe Summer" campaign to raise drowning awareness and urged the public to call 112 immediately in emergencies.



Al-Ghareeb

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



Until the lion learns to write, every story will glorify the hunter

EVERY DAY, a lion climbed the only rock in the jungle that allowed him to oversee all the animals. This rock was his alone, and no one dared to climb it, out of fear and respect for the king of the jungle.

There was a careless jackal whose sole task was to watch the lion.

One day, the jackal decided to take the lion’s place on the rock.

He succeeded, but the animals saw that the jackal’s behavior was reckless and over the line. However, they didn’t mind, after all, he was just a “chicken thief.”

When the lion arrived, he looked at the jackal but said nothing. “I should not lower myself to his level”, the lion thought.

The jackal didn’t stop there. He mocked the lion, saying, “I see you stayed at the bottom today and didn’t climb the rock.”

The king of the jungle replied calmly, “Listen, jackal, whether I climb a rock, a tree, or stay on the ground, the whole jungle knows I am a lion. But no matter how high or low you climb, you will always remain a jackal, a mere chicken thief.”

The lesson - People know who you truly are and where you come from. A chicken thief will always be exposed.

Killing a tiger is a sport

When a man kills a tiger, it is called a hobby, but when a tiger kills a man, it is called barbarism. With this biting remark, George Bernard Shaw sheds a sarcastic light on the hypocrisy of morals shaped by human selfishness.

People don’t really care about the tiger, as they

- The careless jackal tried to undermine the king of the jungle but failed.
- His climb up the rock did not change his status; he remained a “chicken thief.”
- Whether I climb the rock, the tree, or stay at the bottom, the jungle knows who I am.
- They don’t talk about their brutality, but about the logic of power disguised as morality.
- Double standards call killing as a “sport” and occupation as a “form of liberation.”
- Humans are skilled at wrapping crimes in “gift” paper.
- The latest moral trend is to apologize to someone after killing them.
- Asking “Where’s the hat?” is enough reason to beat the donkey again.
- An oppressor doesn’t need a reason; any excuse will do.

care about the power dynamic cloaked in a mask of morality. Killing becomes a “sport” as long as the killer is human, while the exact same act is branded murder if done by an animal.

In this context, man isn’t hunting for survival but for pleasure. It is sadism disguised with soft labels

like “hobby” and “sport.”

Bernard Shaw isn’t really talking about tigers but he is talking about us. We all have a habit of wrapping crimes in “gift” paper. We call the invasion of another nation a liberation and the killing of innocent people self-defense. We accuse those without a megaphone.

Unfortunately, the tiger hasn’t mastered public relations or polished its image in the media. So, the tiger is killed twice - once by bullets, and then by words. Maybe the latest ethical trend is to apologize after the killing, preferably on camera.

As an African proverb says, “Until the lion learns how to write, every story will glorify the hunter.”

The donkey asked the lion, “Aren’t you the king of the jungle?” The lion replied, “Yes, what’s wrong?”

The donkey said, “The tiger keeps beating me every time he sees me after asking why I am not wearing a hat. But I don’t understand. What hat should I be wearing? And why does he keep beating me?”

The lion said he will talk to the tiger.

When they met, the lion asked the tiger about the hat. The tiger replied, “That was just an excuse to beat the donkey.”

The king of the jungle said, “You should have found a good reason. For example, ask the donkey to bring you an apple. If he brings a yellow apple, slap him and ask why he didn’t bring a red one. If he brings a red apple, slap him and ask why he didn’t bring a yellow one... and so on.”

The next day, the tiger asked the donkey to bring him an apple. The donkey returned with two apples, one red and one yellow. The tiger muttered, “Where’s the hat?” and slapped the donkey again!

■ An oppressor doesn’t need a reason; he just looks for a pretext to justify his oppression.



■ I firmly believe that zakat funds should be used to help pay off the debts of debtors. Many of them are currently in prison, particularly for “bounced checks.” The Minister of Justice and the government must take action to decriminalize bounced checks, as has been done in all civilized countries.



■ You will earn admiration by arming yourself with your mind, not your tongue, and by choosing silence over excessive talk. Elevate the quality of your words without raising your voice. After all, it is rain, not thunder, that helps roses grow.



■ You are not required to please everyone. You are only asked not to harm anyone.



■ Tolerance is the highest form of strength. The desire for revenge is a sign of weakness. Never judge people’s intentions. Only God knows what’s in their hearts.



■ A confident person never acts arrogantly because they are aware of their own weaknesses and shortcomings.



■ You may possess anything in this world, but remember, you will leave it just as you came.



KUNA photo
Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Major General (Pilot) Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, visited the General Directorate of the Coast Guard, led by Brigadier General Sheikh Mubarak Ali Al-Sabah.

Army, Coast Guard in joint security strategy

KUWAIT CITY, July 30, (KUNA): Major General (Pilot) Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, visited the Directorate General of the Coast Guard, led by Brigadier General Sheikh Mubarak Ali Al-Sabah, as part of efforts to boost military and security cooperation.

During the visit, Coast Guard officials presented an overview of their operational capabilities, including:

- Unmanned naval boats
 - Coastal surveillance systems and radars
 - Joint coordination mechanisms with military and security agencies
 - Training and development plans for national personnel
- The visit emphasized the exchange of expertise, strengthening of inter-agency cooperation, and enhancing readiness for emergency response. It concluded with a ceremonial recognition, symbolizing the strong coordination between the Army and Coast Guard.

Jahra sleuths probe two thefts in spate of hours

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Security authorities in Jahra are investigating two separate theft cases reported within hours of each other recently -- one is the theft of a vehicle license plate from a public parking area near a government office, and the other concerning stolen personal belongings from a gym locker, reports Al-Anba daily.

In the first case, an expatriate born in 2001 filed a complaint at Jahra Police Station, stating that his German-made vehicle was parked near the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) at around 10:00 am. When he returned an hour later, he discovered that the license plate was forcibly removed, with visible damage near the mounting areas of both plates.

The victim expressed concern that the plate may be used for criminal activity such as theft or fraud, prompting the station’s investigator to circulate the missing plate number to all police patrols in the area.

Moreover, a Kuwaiti citizen born in 2003 told police that personal items worth KD46 were stolen from his locker at a gym in Jahra. The victim said he put his belongings in the locker before exercising, only to find them missing after about an hour.

He told police that he does not suspect anyone in particular and confirmed that no surveillance cameras were installed in the locker area, complicating efforts to identify the perpetrator.

A case has been filed and further investigation is underway.

Truant doctor jailed 5 years

6 years for insulting Kuwait

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: The court has rejected the appeal filed against the ruling to sentence a Kuwaiti doctor to five years in prison for embezzling KD 115,000 in undue salaries due to prolonged absence from work. The doctor was also fined KD 345,000, and dismissed from his position.

According to details obtained from the Ministry of Health’s Legal Department, the doctor had been absent from the hospital for five years, residing abroad while continuing to receive his full salary in collusion with another employee.

A complaint against the doctor was filed with the Public Prosecution, and criminal investigations revealed that the doctor had stayed outside Kuwait for the entire five-year period, confirming his absence and unauthorized salary payments.



6 years for phone misuse: The Criminal Court sentenced a Kuwaiti citizen to six years in prison with hard labor after convicting him of insulting the country and misusing his mobile phone by publishing offensive content on his X account, reports Al-Anba daily.

The court handed down a five-year prison sentence with hard labor for three charges related to defamation and misuse of telecommunications. It also ordered the closure of the defendant’s X account for one year and placed him under police surveillance for five years following the completion of his sentence. His mobile phone was confiscated as part of the ruling.

Mol staff jailed in false case saga

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: The Criminal Court sentenced six individuals, including three Ministry of Interior personnel, to 10 years in prison and fined them KD10,000 each for fabricating a drug case against an innocent victim, reports Al-Anba daily.

On another charge, the court sentenced the citizen to one year in prison with hard labor and imposed a fine of KD5,000.



Fake magician held: The Financial Crimes Department of the General Department of Criminal Investigation has arrested a female Arab resident for allegedly defrauding people by claiming to practice magic and sorcery, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to a press statement issued by the Ministry of Interior, authorities received a report concerning an Iraqi woman, identified only by her initials I.K., who allegedly claimed to possess the ability to predict the future and perform magical rituals. She exploited individuals seeking solutions to personal, family, and financial difficulties, deceiving them into paying for her services.

The suspect’s actions have been classified as fraud and deception, and legal proceedings are underway.



Drug addict arrested: Jahra police referred a man, in his 30s, to the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) at the Interior Ministry after arresting him in Al-Naeem; where he was found in an abnormal condition and in possession of narcotics and drug paraphernalia, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the arrest happened at a checkpoint conducted by Jahra police patrols in coordination with other security units at the entrance of Al-Naeem. Officers noticed a four-wheel drive vehicle, driven by a man who appeared confused.

Upon stopping the vehicle, officers suspected the driver was under the influence of drugs. A thorough search of the individual and the vehicle led to the discovery of narcotics and drug paraphernalia. The suspect and the forbidden items were referred to the DCGD for legal action.

The defendants were found guilty of conspiring to falsely implicate the victim in a narcotics case as an act of personal revenge. The court found out that the group deliberately forged an official document – the case report – in an attempt to frame the individual and cause him harm.

Excessive load cause of fire?

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Firefighters contained a fire that broke out in the main electrical transformer in Ahmadi, after emergency responders quickly cut power to the unit, reports Al-Anba daily.

While the exact cause of the fire remains under investigation, a security source indicated that electrical overload due to high temperatures is a likely factor.

Teams from Fahaheel, Mina Abdullah and Ahmadi fire stations dealt with the incident. Fortunately, no injuries were

reported.

In light of the incident, Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) issued a warning to citizens and expatriates against plugging multiple electrical devices into a single outlet; citing the increased risk of fire due to excessive electrical load.

The warning is part of KFF’s ongoing public awareness campaign to reduce the risk of household fires, especially during the summer months when temperatures and electricity consumption surge.

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Ahmadi Governorate holds first council session, sets dev't plans

Subcommittees formed to tackle key issues

KUWAIT CITY, July 30, (KUNA): The Ahmadi Governorate Council held its first session, chaired by Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Humoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, at the Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber

Oil and Gas Exhibition. Representatives of government agencies and three council members representing citizens attended the session.

In a press statement following the meeting, Sheikh Humoud stressed the importance of the council's role in supporting development efforts and improving public services in the governorate, in implementation of Decree No. (81) of 2014 regarding the governorates system and its amendments.

He outlined the council's work plan and mechanism, which includes following up on development plan projects of government agencies in the governorate, raising the level of public services, studying the needs of facilities and services, following up on citizens' complaints and grievances, and receiving initiatives and proposals aimed at developing the governorate.

He explained that the council's responsibilities also include following up on security and order affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, monitoring matters related to environmental safety and public health, and encouraging educational, social, and volunteer activities.

He praised the cooperation of participating government agencies and their keenness to improve service levels and promote sustainable development across various areas of the governorate.

During the session, the relevant subcommittees were formed, including the Public Services Committee, the Complaints and Suggestions Committee, and the Government Projects Follow-up Committee.



KUNA photo of Ahmadi Governorate Council holds its first session, chaired by His Excellency the Governor of Ahmadi, Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.



KUNA photo Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met on Tuesday with his Slovenian counterpart Tanja Fajon.

Kuwait, Slovenia eye closer ties

NEW YORK, July 30, (KUNA): Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met on Tuesday with his Slovenian counterpart Tanja Fajon to discuss means of enhancing bilateral relations in all fields.

Al-Yahya's reception of Fajon came on the sidelines of the High-level Inter-

national Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution continues.

Both sides also focused on some issues of common concern, and the latest developments on regional and international arenas.



Farwaniya Governorate photo Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah with Green Hands Environmental Team leaders at the governorate headquarters.

Farwaniya Governor meets Green Hands Team to bolster environmental initiatives

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah had a meeting with Head of Green Hands Environmental Team Latifa Fouad Al-Juma, former Andalusia Mayor Mutab Al-Fajji, environmental advisor of the team Fouad Al-Juma, and team member Abdullah Al-Juma at his office in the headquarters of Farwaniya Governorate on Tuesday.

This is part of the efforts of the Governor to cooperate with volunteer teams and support their activities.

During the meeting, they discussed the mandate and objectives of the team; as well as its environmentally friendly health development activities and initiatives toward a sustainable Kuwait. The Governor was briefed on the environmental work of the team and their cooperation with govern-

ment agencies to implement sustainable development projects. Some proposals to transform certain areas in the government into environmentally friendly green spaces were also presented.

On the other hand, the Governor reaffirmed his continuous support and participation in national initiatives and volunteer team activities that contribute to the development of public services and provision of a good environment for all those residing in the governorate, particularly those related to the environment. He praised the national and social roles played by volunteer teams in this field. At the end of the meeting, the guests thanked the Governor for the warm welcome and for providing volunteer teams the opportunity to engage in sustainable development activities and projects.

MEWRE commemorates Iraqi invasion with exhibition

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy will hold an exhibition titled "By its loyal sons' hands" on Thursday and Friday in the lobby of the ministry's headquarters, to commemorate the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

The event, which is held under the patronage of Minister Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem, aims to honor the sacrifices and resilience of the Ku-

waiti people during the brutal occupation. It also pays tribute to the ministry's employees who continued their duties under extremely difficult conditions. It reaffirms that Kuwait was, and continues to be, built by the hands of its own people.

The exhibition will include historical memorials presented by the Expo 965 team, a documentary film, and an artistic performance by artist Fahad Al-Najjar. In addition, national figures who played major roles in serving the country will be honored.

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News in Brief

PACI launches photo update on Sahel: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) has launched a new electronic service on Sahel app that enables citizens and residents to add or update their personal photograph. This service is aimed at simplifying procedures and speeding up transaction processing, reports Al-Rai daily.

As part of its digital transformation efforts, PACI allows users to submit applications online without the need to visit government offices.

- To use the service, the following steps need to be followed:
1. Log in to the Sahel app and select Individual Services.
 2. Choose the "Add/Update Personal Photo" service.
 3. Upload the required documents (personal photograph and a copy of the civil ID).
 4. Submit the application and receive the application number.

MPW logs 607 inspections, 249 tests: The Ministry of Public Works has reaffirmed its commitment to ensure the quality and safety of materials used in infrastructure projects through intensified oversight and technical efforts, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Statistics released by the Asphalt Department for June revealed that a total of 607 inspection visits were conducted at asphalt plants to verify compliance with approved specifications and standards.

In addition, 249 laboratory tests were carried out in specialized facilities, while 200 samples were collected from asphalt laying sites and 19 samples from the plants, as part of routine quality monitoring and testing procedures.

PART completes 65% of drainage project: The Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) has completed 65 percent of the rainwater drainage project in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak – a vital infrastructure initiative expected to be delivered by early 2026, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources said the project was officially launched on Jan 5, 2025, under Contract No. H T/291; indicating it is one of the most significant components of the plan of the Ministry of Public Works to upgrade the rainwater drainage network. Sources revealed the aim to boost the capacity of storm water systems in view of the climate change and ongoing residential expansion.

Council launches probe into State land seizures

Subcommittee to summon ministries

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: The Legal and Financial Affairs Committee at the Municipal Council, chaired by Fahad Al-Abduljader, recommended the formation of a subcommittee to investigate the encroachments on State properties during its meeting on Wednesday.

The subcommittee will look into the seizure of State property and similar properties, their exploitation for commercial purposes, and

the conduct of commercial activities in locations other than those designated for such purpose.

Council member Walid Al-Dagher was designated as chairman of the subcommittee, Ismail Behbehani as rapporteur and Fahd Al-Abdul Jader as member.

The primary tasks of the subcommittee are as follows:

- Identify the locations of State-owned land being used commercially without a license or legal basis;
- Verify the extent to which the relevant authorities follow legal procedures in dealing with encroachments;
- Investigate the practice of commercial activities in locations other than those designated for such purpose and the legality these activities;

- Summon the relevant authorities in the Ministry of Finance, State Ministry of Municipality, and Ministry of Commerce and Industry to obtain data and licenses, as well as any other government agency that the committee deems necessary to call;
- Prove the reasons for encroachment on State property and its exploitation for commercial purposes, and the shortcomings and negligence in terms of oversight by the executive branch and other concerned government agencies;
- Submit a detailed report on the results of its work and appropriate recommendations to the Legal and Financial Affairs Committee.

On the other hand, the committee approved the letter of the Public Prosecution regarding exemption from the prescribed fees for issuing description certificates for real estate in cases being investigated by the prosecution.

Polls open 9 am to 9 pm for 2-day vote

Egypt’s Embassy in Kuwait ready for Senate elections

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Osama Shaltout confirmed that the Embassy of Egypt has completed its preparations to receive voters among members of the Egyptian community who will participate in the Egyptian Senate elections on Friday and Saturday.

Shaltout pointed out that participation in this election is the national duty and constitutional right of all eligible Egyptian voters living abroad.

He announced that voting will take place at the embassy in Daiya (Block Five) from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm on Aug 2-3, urging all eligible Egyptian voters in Kuwait to cast their votes.

He added that the embassy will provide free buses to transport voters from the assembly site near Al-Jazirah Al-Khadra to the polling station in order to facilitate access for everyone. He said transportation will be available back and forth throughout the two-day election on a regular basis, starting at 8:45 am until the end of the voting process.

He affirmed that the organizing committee at the embassy made the necessary technical arrangements to ensure the smooth electoral process; praising the positive spirit of the Egyptian community in Kuwait, as they have consistently exemplified outstanding engagement in national issues.



Minister Al-Mukhaizeem alongside the event organizers.



Minister Al-Mukhaizeem attends showcase of invasion-era memorabilia.



Spent ammunition and explosive remnants from the Iraqi occupation.



Photos by Mohammad Morsi
Rare artifacts recount resistance and sacrifice.

MoHE honors Ideal Employee of 2024

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Under the patronage and in the presence of Minister of Higher Education Dr. Nader Al-Jalal and Acting Undersecretary Lamia Al-Mulhim, a ceremony was held to honor the Ideal Employee of the Year 2024, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Dr. Al-Jalal expressed his gratitude to the honorees and encouraged

everyone to continue working together as one team to achieve greater successes.

Acting Undersecretary Al-Mulhim stated that the honor reflects appreciation for the employees' tireless efforts in achieving the ministry's goals. She praised their commitment and dedication, wishing them continued success in their work.

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem inaugurated the Invasion Anniversary Exhibition on Wednesday with the theme, "With the Help of its Sons," coinciding with the 35th anniversary of the brutal Iraqi invasion of the State of Kuwait.

In a statement to reporters on the sidelines of the exhibition, official spokesperson of the ministry Fa-

tima Hayat said: Today, we pay tribute to the martyrs of the nation who gave their lives for the homeland and were the starting point for the liberation of Kuwait from the brutal aggression. We pray to Allah Almighty to perpetuate our security and safety under the wise leadership and wise government.

She also confirmed that numerous measures have been taken to rationalize energy consumption since the beginning of summer in coordination with government and private entities, in addition to implementing operational measures; hoping that the elec-

tricity grid will stabilize and that this summer will pass without power interruptions.

She pointed out that the country has been witnessing soaring temperatures for two weeks, approaching 50 degrees Celsius. She said "global warming is causing pressure on the electrical grid. Therefore, the ministry sent a message through Sahel to all citizens and expatriates, with the aim of encouraging them to rationalize electricity consumption during the peak period -- from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. We ask Allah for a safe summer."

Continued from Page 1

King Mohammed VI,

"Building on this solid foundation a more competitive, diversified and open economy has been established." King Mohammed VI asserted during his speech from the Throne.

The Moroccan economy today is the center of power in Africa, significantly boosting the gross domestic product and diversifying sources of income.

Despite the natural challenges like drought and international crises, Morocco managed to maintain an upward trajectory at all levels and achieved significant growth; positively impacting the standard of living of the citizens and creating new job opportunities. These achievements would not have been possible without a developed and advanced infrastructure, encompassing all service facilities.

In spite of all that has been achieved over the past two and a half decades, the energetic King was frank with his people when he said, "I will not be satisfied -- regardless of the level of economic and infrastructure development -- if it does not contribute to improving the living conditions of citizens in all social classes and in all areas."

This sincerity has been maintained by King Mohammed VI since assuming power, making it the foundation of Morocco's relations with the entire world.

Thus, the many roles that Rabat has played throughout history have been based on its unwavering positions and its extension of friendship and cooperation to everyone, especially its natural geographical neighbors.

Consequently, King Mohammed VI stresses, on every occasion, the close relations with the Algerian people. He affirmed "we have a strong commitment to extend a helping hand to our brothers in Algeria."

The Western Sahara issue has long been a source of concern and troubles for Rabat. However, thanks to King Mohammed VI's wisdom, diplomacy and sagacity; he managed to steer the compass towards the right direction.

King Mohammed VI has always been keen on clearly stating Moroccan rights within the framework of the Kingdom's sovereignty over Sahara, which has strengthened the positions of many countries regarding the issue.

Today, 26 years after assuming power, King Mohammed VI succeeded in taking his country to new horizons.

On this occasion, one cannot forget what the late King Hassan II once said about his son: "I prepared him to carry the nation. I did not teach him to be a prince, but rather a servant of his country."

Indeed, King Mohammed VI is the best servant of his country, his homeland and his people. King Mohammed VI is the man capable of solving the most difficult problems.

Diverse expat

Al-Mutairi said PAM has been keen on building an integrated work system that includes continuous training for labor inspectors and strengthening cooperation with local and international bodies. "This is achieved through the unwavering support of Sheikhha Jawaher Al-Sabah, as well as the provision of safe and confidential channels for receiving complaints and reports," he elaborated.

He revealed that PAM works in close partnership with IOM to enhance the capabilities of workers in the field and provide a decent work environment that respects rights and combats exploitation.

He stressed that combating human trafficking is a national and humanitarian responsibility, indicating that PAM continues to develop its oversight and regulatory policies to ensure a safe working environment which protects the dignity of all residents and workers.

Director of the Public Relations and Media Department at PAM Mohammad Al-Muzaini emphasized that the authority is keen on commemorating the World Day against Trafficking in Persons by holding a special event; pointing out that awareness and community assessment are the focus of this year's event.

He said the event includes a survey to measure community awareness, describing the day as an awareness-raising event par excellence. He highlighted State efforts to combat human trafficking; particularly in terms of the methods of dealing with such cases, shelters for the victims and public awareness programs. He said PAM operates two shelters --one for women and the other for men, stressing these shelters are not crowded. He affirmed that the shelters are accommodating all the cases, which are very limited.

Regarding the mechanism for dealing with suspected trafficking cases, he explained "we handle these cases in cooperation with the embassies, or whenever a worker reaches out to us directly, or even through reports of suspected trafficking or the need for assistance. We have a field team capable of reaching the workers and assisting them immediately. They are admitted to the center, and then we communicate with the relevant parties to resolve the problem and settle the worker's situation -- whether for reintegration into the labor market or in preparation for their departure from the country."

Asked about the possibility of transferring the workers to another sponsor, he said this depends on their legal status and it is carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior.

Ali Al-Hussien, Director of the Industry and Labor Department at Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), stated that the chamber's participation affirms its full support for the efforts of PAM in combat-

ing human trafficking.

He underscored the importance of partnership between the public and private sectors to promote the principles of decent work and combat all forms of exploitation, including human trafficking.

Secretary General of Kuwait Trade Union Federation Nasser Al-Azmi reiterated the firm position of the federation in confronting this heinous crime; which violates human dignity, religious values, ethical principles, and international human rights agreements and treaties.

He stated that human trafficking, particularly the exploitation of forced labor, is a direct and blatant threat to the rights and dignity of workers; hence, the need for a collective, integrated and coordinated response at the national and international levels, based on legal tools and a comprehensive humanitarian approach.

Also on Wednesday, Minister of Justice and Chairman of the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling, Nasser Al-Sumait affirmed that protecting individuals from human trafficking is a national responsibility requiring year-round institutional collaboration.

Speaking to KUNA on the occasion of World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, observed annually on July 30, Al-Sumait said Kuwait has adopted a comprehensive approach combining prevention, legislation, and victim care, grounded in transparency and accountability.

He emphasized that Kuwait continues to develop modern tools to address trafficking crimes, in line with international changes and digital challenges, and highlighted the importance of social partnerships and responsible media, noting that public awareness is the first line of defense.

Al-Sumait expressed confidence that Kuwait's national efforts, aligned with international standards, will foster a safe environment where human rights are protected without discrimination.

Kuwait established its National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling in 2018, aiming for a society free of trafficking, raising awareness of its dangers, and working toward its eradication.

The UN General Assembly designated July 30 as World Day Against Trafficking in Persons to raise awareness of human trafficking, highlight victims' suffering, and protect their rights.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed on Wednesday Kuwait's firm commitment to combating the crime of human trafficking, describing it as a blatant violation of human rights.

In a statement posted on (X), the Ministry emphasized Kuwait's keenness to strengthen both its national and international efforts to prevent this crime, protect its victims, and take all necessary measures, in line with its legal and human rights responsibilities.

Cabinet reflects

Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, in ending the Iraqi occupation and fully liberate Kuwait.

The Cabinet remembered with admiration the Kuwaiti people's unity, steadfastness and heroic sacrifices to repel the enemies and defend their dear homeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereeda Al-Mousherji said in a statement after the meeting.

It recalled with pride the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for their country's liberation.

The Cabinet thanked all friendly countries, which participated in the liberation of Kuwait from the Iraqi occupation.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Cabinet, in its weekly meeting on Tuesday, gave instructions to relevant state bodies to speed up the removal of all encroachments on state properties.

Following the meeting, headed by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereeda Al-Mousherji said the instructions were made after reviewing the Ministry of Finance's report about encroachments on state properties in 2024.

At the advent of the meeting, the Cabinet members reviewed a number of letters sent by several world leaders to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah about strengthening bilateral relations and expanding cooperation in various realms.

Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Askar and the acting undersecretary of the ministry made a presentation to the Cabinet about the Ministry's plans to establish warehouses for strategic commodities in the country's five governorates to enhance food security.

Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabae briefed the Cabinet about the ministry's preparations for the upcoming academic year.

The Cabinet reviewed the minutes of the ministerial economic committee meeting, especially its report about the public-private partnership projects during the period from March 2024 to April 2025.

It referred the report to the higher committee for public-private partnership projects to take necessary decisions.

It deliberated others issues on its agenda and approved some of them and referred some others for ministerial committees for more study.

Finally, the Cabinet approved the minutes of the Supreme Committee for the Investigation of Kuwaiti Citizenship, which included cases of loss, withdrawal and revocation of Kuwaiti citizenship from some individuals, in accordance

with the provisions of Decree Law No. (15) of 1959 regarding Kuwaiti nationality and its amendments.

Kuwait biometric

He explained that the new drug law aims to reduce use and trafficking by tightening penalties and expanding security powers, as 1,451 cases and 11 drug-related deaths were recorded in the first half of 2025.

Abu-Slaib also reviewed the changes to visa residency services, with the launch of the e-visa platform KUWAIT VISA, which allows obtaining entry visas to the country, including the tourist visa, family visa, business visa, and government visa.

In addition, he highlighted the innovation of the Kuwait Coast Guard through the inauguration of smart unmanned boats that enhance maritime security and allow them to operate for several days without direct human intervention.

He pointed out the new Kuwaiti flag law, which aims to protect the symbolism of the national flag, regulate its use at events, and prohibit the raising of foreign flags or religious or sectarian slogans without official permission.

Kuwait Towers

The Arab heritage label comes after the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) had nominated the trio of slender Towers for such a distinction, the body's restoration of historical buildings department chief Mahmoud Al-Rubaie told KUNA, citing the Towers as a landmark and an enduring symbol of modern day Kuwait.

In addition to being a renowned Kuwaiti tourist hotspot, the official spoke of the functional meaning behind the iconic Towers, having served as a national water storage and distribution facility, while the architects of the landmark wanted to put an "aesthetic touch" on the structures, transforming them into a beguiling national emblem, he added.

The chief of the Arab Urban and Architectural Observatory committee, Mohammad Abusaadi, said that sites nominated by Arab states for inscription on its heritage list are evaluated based on their cultural or natural significance, citing some 19 locations across the Arab world to have gained heritage status.

On the justification for including Kuwait Towers on the list, he said the structures are "deserving," given their historic and cultural significance, which is a major prerequisite to be granted such a distinction.

The observatory, an affiliate of the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization, is convening a two-day gathering in the Lebanese capital to approve heritage status on a number of sites across the Arab region.

Kuwaiti, US

A statement by the Army Staff said that Rear Admiral Al-Hamlan toured the American vessel and was briefed on its systems, combat capabilities, and mission.

The visit comes within the framework of continuous cooperation and exchange of expertise between the sides, it concluded. (KUNA)

Power surge

a difference of 65 megawatts compared to the record high of 17,640 megawatts last year.

Sources from the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy attributed the load index hike to the increased electricity demand, specifically during the afternoon. They stressed the need to implement rationalization mechanisms, especially during peak hours.

Sources also confirmed that despite the high temperatures recently, the ministry has been able to address the consumption challenge by operating production units in stations that were undergoing maintenance; in addition to utilizing the energy imported from the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA) and a number of other measures.

Sources revealed that the ministry sent awareness messages on Wednesday -- as part of the 'Save' campaign -- through the government's Sahel application in order to urge everyone to cooperate in rationalizing electricity consumption during peak hours from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm; taking into consideration the remarkable increase in temperatures that exceeded the usual rates.

Kuwait welcomes

The British step also aligned with UNSC resolutions on the matter, the Arab Peace Initiative, it added, noting that it would enable Palestinians to determine their own destiny in establishing an independent state within the 1967 borders and east Jerusalem as its capital.

High-level representatives at a U.N. conference on Tuesday urged Israel to commit to a Palestinian state and gave "unwavering support" to a two-state solution, signaling widespread international determination to end one of the world's longest conflicts.

The "New York Declaration" sets out a phased plan to end the nearly eight-decade conflict and the ongoing war in Gaza. The plan would culminate with an independent, demilitarized Palestine living side by side peacefully with Israel, and their eventual integration into the wider Mideast region.

The meeting is taking place amid the latest reports that starvation and famine are taking place in Gaza, and growing global outrage at Palestinians not getting food due to Israeli policies and practices - which Israel denies.

WH wants Harvard to pay far more than Columbia as part of settlement

WASHINGTON, July 30, (AP): The Trump administration is pressing for a deal with Harvard University that would require the Ivy League school to pay far more than the \$200 million fine agreed to by Columbia University to resolve multiple federal investigations, according to two people familiar with the matter.

Harvard would be expected to pay hundreds of millions of dollars as part of any settlement to end investigations into antisemitism at its campus, said the people, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations. Harvard leaders have been negotiating with the White House even as they battle in court to regain access to billions in federal research funding terminated by the Trump administration.

The White House’s desire to get Harvard to pay far more than Columbia was first reported by The New York Times, which said the school has signaled a willingness to pay as much as \$500 million.

Harvard did not immediately comment.

The Trump administration plans to use its deal with Columbia as a template for other universities, with



Students, faculty and members of the Harvard University community rally on April 17, in Cambridge, Mass. (AP)

financial penalties that are now seen as a staple for future agreements. Last week, Columbia leaders agreed to pay \$200 million as part of a settlement to resolve investigations into alleged violations of federal antidiscrimination laws and restore more than \$400 million in research grants.

Columbia had been in talks for months after the Trump administration accused the university of allow-

ing the harassment of students and employees amid a wave of campus protests. Harvard faces similar accusations but, unlike Columbia, the Cambridge, Massachusetts, school challenged the administration’s funding cuts and subsequent sanctions in court.

Last week, President Donald Trump said Harvard “wants to settle” but he said Columbia “handled it better.”

LA County seeks ordinance preventing law enforcement from concealing identities

LOS ANGELES, July 30, (AP): Los Angeles County leaders want to prohibit law enforcement officers from concealing their identities while on duty, a response to recent immigration raids during which some federal agents refused to identify themselves or covered their faces.

The Board of Supervisors on Tuesday voted 4–0, with one abstention, to direct county counsel to draft an ordinance that bars officers, including federal agents, from wearing masks, with limited exceptions such as for medical protection or during undercover operations. Officers would also be required to visibly display identification and agency affiliation while out in public.

Since early June, immigration agents have swarmed Southern California, arresting hundreds of people and prompting protests against the federal raids and the subsequent deployment of the National Guard and Marines. About half the Guard troops and all the Marines were pulled out of LA in recent weeks.

Supervisor Janice Hahn, who co-authored the motion, said the raids carried out by the Trump administration have sparked fear and residents have a right to know who is stopping, questioning or detaining them.

“Across the county, people are being pulled out of their cars, beaten, and



Federal agents stage a raid at MacArthur Park on July 7, in Los Angeles. (AP)

ripped from their families by men in tactical gear with balaclavas, no badges, and no names,” Hahn said. “That’s not how law enforcement in a democracy should operate.”

Hahn conceded that it is unclear if the county will be able to enforce the law when it comes to actions by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement and other federal agencies. “Ultimately, it might have to be decided by a court,” she said.

Legal scholar Erwin Chemerinsky said Tuesday that a court could have to decide if the ordinance is interfering with the ability of officers to carry out their duties.

“They key is that it has to apply to all law enforcement. It can’t just apply to federal law enforcement,” said Chemerinsky, dean of the law school at the University of California, Berkeley.

We are for a bipartisan, bicameral bill: Schumer

US govt shutdown talk starting early ahead of difficult funding fight in Congress

WASHINGTON, July 30, (AP): It’s become tradition. Congressional leaders from both major political parties blame each other for a potential government shutdown as the budget year draws to a close.

But this year, the posturing is starting extraordinarily early.

The finger-pointing with more than two months to go in the fiscal year indicates the threat of a stoppage is more serious than usual as a Republican-controlled Congress seeks to make good on its policy priorities, often with no support from the other political party.

Democratic leadership from both chambers and the two panels responsible for drafting spending bills met behind closed doors recently to discuss the strategy ahead. The leaders emerged demanding that Republicans work with them but were careful to avoid spelling out red lines if Republicans don’t.

“We are for a bipartisan, bicameral bill. That’s what always has been done,” said Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer. “The onus is on the Republicans to help us make that happen.”

On the Republican side, lawmakers

describe the Democrats as itching for a shutdown. Senate Majority Leader John Thune said Schumer had threatened a shutdown should Republicans pass a bill to roll back \$9 billion in public broadcasting and foreign aid funds. Republicans subsequently passed those cuts.

“It was disturbing to see the Democratic leader implicitly threatening to shut down the government in his July ‘Dear Colleague’ letter, but I’m hopeful that he does not represent the views of Senate Democrats as a whole,” Thune said.

The federal government is operating on a full-year continuing resolution that provided about \$1.7 trillion in spending for defense and non-defense programs. The funding expires Sept. 30.

President Donald Trump requested a comparable amount for the coming fiscal year, but the Republican proposed dramatically overhauling how that money is distributed to include more for defense and border security and significantly less for health, education, housing and foreign assistance.

So far, the House has approved two of the 12 annual spending bills. The



US Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer looks over notes as Senate Republicans work to cancel \$9.4 billion in previously approved spending targeted by DOGE, at the Capitol in Washington on July 15. (AP)

Senate has yet to approve any, but those bills that have advanced out of the Senate Appropriations Committee are enjoying bipartisan support while the House bills are generally advancing out of committee on party line votes.

Congress got off to a late start on the funding process. Republicans prioritized Trump’s tax and spending cut bill. Most lawmakers agree Congress will need to pass a stop-gap measure before Sept. 30 to avoid a shutdown and allow lawmakers more time to work on the full-year spending measures.

Democrats overwhelmingly opposed this year’s funding bill that expires in two months. But in the end, Schumer and nine Democratic colleagues decided a government shutdown would be even worse. They voted to allow the bill to proceed and overcome a filibuster, giving Republicans the ability to pass it on their own on a final vote.

Schumer took considerable heat from progressives for his strategy. House Democratic leadership issued a statement at the time saying “House Democrats will not be complicit.” And members of his own caucus publicly expressed disapproval.

“If we pass this continuing resolution for the next half year, we will own what the president does,” said Sen. Adam Schiff, D-Calif. “I am not willing to take ownership of that.”

Some liberal groups threatened to

hold protests at various events Schumer was planning to promote a new book, and some of those events ended up being postponed due to security concerns.

The Democratic frustrations have only grown stronger in the ensuing months.

First, the Democrats watched the Trump administration slow-walk or block hundreds of billions of dollars from going out in part through the work of its Department of Government Efficiency. Then they watched as Republicans passed Trump’s big tax and spending cut bill without any Democratic votes.

Finally, they watched as Republicans this month canceled \$9 billion in foreign aid and public broadcasting funds when much of it had been previously agreed to on a bipartisan basis.

Meanwhile, Trump’s director of the Office of Management and Budget, Russ Vought, declared that the appropriations process “has to be less bipartisan.”

Democrats complain that much of the work taking place in the House has been a waste of time, since those partisan bills have no chance of getting 60 votes in the 100-member Senate.



This image taken from a video released by Geophysical Service of the Russian Academy of Sciences, shows the aftermath of tsunami hitting the coastal area of Severo-Kurilsk at Paramushir island of Kuril Islands, Russia on July 30. (AP)

8.8 magnitude quake strikes off Russia’s Far East, tsunami waves reach Japan and Hawaii

TOKYO, July 30, (AP): One of the strongest earthquakes ever recorded struck off Russia’s sparsely populated Far East early Wednesday, sending tsunami waves into Japan, Hawaii and the US West Coast. Several people were injured, but none gravely, and no major damage has been reported so far.

Authorities warned the risk from the 8.8 magnitude quake could last for hours, and millions of people potentially in the path of the waves were initially told to move away from the shore or seek high ground. But the danger already appeared to be lessening, with Hawaii and parts of Japan downgrading their warnings.

Residents fled inland as ports flooded on Russia’s Kamchatka peninsula near the quake’s epicenter, while frothy, white waves washed up on the shore in northern Japan. Cars jammed streets and highways in Honolulu, with standstill traffic even in areas away from the sea.

People flocked to evacuation centers in affected areas of Japan, with memories fresh of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami that caused reactor meltdowns at a nuclear power plant. No abnormalities in operations at Japan’s nuclear plants were reported Wednesday.

Russian authorities said several people were injured, but said all were in stable condition, though they gave few



People take shelter on the roof of a fire station in Mukawa town, Hokkaido, northern Japan on July 30, 2025, after a powerful earthquake in Russia’s Far East prompted tsunami alert in parts of Japan. (AP)

details. In Japan, at least one person was injured.

A tsunami height of 3 to 4 meters (10 to 13 feet) was recorded in Kamchatka, 60 centimeters (2 feet) on Japan’s northern island of Hokkaido, while tsunami waves about 2 to 5

feet high reached San Francisco early Wednesday, officials said.

Much of the West Coast, spanning California, Oregon, Washington state, and the Canadian province of British Columbia, were under a tsunami advisory.

Germany’s Klingbeil vows to defend European security in Lithuania visit

VILNIUS, July 30, (Xinhua): Germany is ready to step up for European security with the development of its brigade in Lithuania, German Vice Chancellor and Finance Minister Lars Klingbeil said in Vilnius on Tuesday.

After talks with his Baltic counterparts in the Lithuanian capital, Klingbeil told a press conference that Germany wants to continue actively strengthening the defense alliance and helping to achieve NATO goals, the Baltic News Service (BNS) reported.

“We’ll try to implement this even earlier than agreed,” the vice-chancellor said.

The German brigade in Lithuania, announced in 2023 and set to be fully deployed by 2027, sends an “important and unequivocal” message to Lithuania and the Baltic states that Germany will stand by its allies, Klingbeil underlined.

Currently, 500 German troops are stationed in Lithuania, while the full deployment will comprise approximately 5,000 soldiers and civilian personnel.

Klingbeil’s visit to Lithuania was one of his first bilateral trips as vice chancellor.

“All three Baltic states are very important partners for Germany and the



German Vice Chancellor and Finance Minister Lars Klingbeil, (right), leaves the chancellery after the cabinet meeting in Berlin, Germany on July 30. (AP)

German government, and we want even closer cooperation with these countries,” he stressed.

Meanwhile, Lithuanian Finance Minister Rimantas Sadzius emphasized that the Baltic states and Germany are committed to significantly increasing defense spending.

“Latvia and Estonia are also on this

path, and the new German government has also made sweeping decisions for which we are very grateful, because this is a serious step forward in bolstering European security,” Sadzius noted.

The ongoing deployment of the German brigade in Lithuania is “a fundamental shift,” the finance minister said.

Europe

Ukraine army training ground hit, 3 dead: A Russian missile hit a Ukrainian army training ground, killing three soldiers and wounding 18 others, authorities said, in the latest attack to embarrass military officials as they struggle to make up a severe manpower shortage in the nearly 3½-year war.

The Russian Defense Ministry said that the strike killed or wounded about 200 Ukrainian troops. The ministry said that Ukraine’s 169th training center near Honcharivske in the Chernihiv region was hit with two Iskander missiles, one armed with multiple submunitions and another with high explosives.

Meanwhile, Russia continued its stepped-up aerial campaign against Ukrainian civilian targets, launching 78 attack drones overnight, including up to eight newly developed jet-powered drones, Ukraine’s air force said Wednesday. At least five people were wounded.

The UN mission in Ukraine says there has been a worsening trend in civilian casualties from Russian attacks this year, with 6,754 civilians killed or injured in the first half of 2025 - representing a 54% increase from the same period in 2024.

In an effort to stop that, US President Donald Trump said Tuesday he’s giving Russian President **Vladimir Putin** until Aug. 8 for peace efforts to make progress or Washington



Putin

will impose punitive sanctions and tariffs. Western leaders have accused Putin of dragging his feet in US-led peace efforts in an attempt to capture more Ukrainian land. (AP)

□ □ □

Poland detains 32 people: Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk on Tuesday said authorities have detained 32 people suspected of coordinating with Russia to engage in acts of sabotage, according to Polish news agency PAP.

One person has been convicted, while the others are in custody awaiting trial, PAP reported.

The group includes a Pole, Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians, PAP reported, as well as a 27-year-old Colombian man who is accused of two arson attacks in Poland last year at Russia’s behest.

The Polish Internal Security Agency in a statement Tuesday said he faces up to 10 years to life in prison in connection with the arson attacks on two construction warehouses in May 2024. (AP)

□ □ □

Belarus downs drone carrying explosives: A drone with explosives was intercepted and shot down early Tuesday morning in Minsk, the belarusian capital, local authorities said.

Air defence forces detected the unmanned aerial vehicle around 2 a.m. Tuesday local time (2300 GMT Monday) and neutralised it using electronic warfare, the Defense Ministry said on its Telegram channel.

The drone reportedly crashed near a house in northwestern Minsk, damaging several vehicles parked nearby, the country’s Investigative Committee said. No injuries were reported. (Xinhua)

Bid to resolve border dispute

Thailand, Cambodia reaffirm ceasefire after China-brokered meeting in Shanghai

BANGKOK, Thailand, July 30, (AP): Thailand and Cambodia reaffirmed their shaky ceasefire violation after days of fighting along their border, as China stepped in to negotiate with the two countries.

The ceasefire reached in Malaysia was supposed to take effect at midnight on Monday, but was quickly tested. Thailand’s army accused Cambodia of launching attacks in multiple areas early Tuesday, but Cambodia said there was no firing in any location. The Thai army then reported exchanges of gunfire into Wednesday morning but said there was no use of heavy artillery.

“Such act of aggression constitutes once again a clear violation of the ceasefire agreement by Cambodian forces and their apparent lack of good faith,” said Thailand’s Foreign Ministry in a statement Wednesday morning.

By Wednesday afternoon, however, both sides appeared to have reaffirmed their commitment to a ceasefire, with representatives appearing smiling in a photo with a Chinese vice minister Sun Weidong at a meeting in Shanghai. In attendance from Cambodia was Kung Phaok, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Ministry and in attendance from Thailand was Jullapong Nonsrichai, executive advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand.

“Cambodia and Thailand reiterated to China their commitment to the ceasefire consensus and expressed appreciation for China’s positive role in de-escalating the situation,” a statement from China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.

China said the informal meeting was its “latest diplomatic effort” and it was playing a “constructive role in resolving their border dispute,” according to the same statement.

The fighting Tuesday night occurred in Phu Makhuea, a mountain in a disputed area next to Thailand’s Sisaket province.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet and Thailand’s acting prime minister, Phumtham Wechayachai, agreed on Monday to an “unconditional” halt in fighting, which has killed at least 41 people.

The meeting was hosted by Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim as an-



In this photo released by Agence Kampuchea Press (AKP), delegation of the military attaches and diplomats from 13 countries, including the United States and China, visit a damaged Buddhist pagoda in An Ses, a Cambodia-Thailand borders check point in Preah Vihear province, Cambodia on July 30, as observed the implementation of the Cambodia-Thailand ceasefire agreement. (AP)

nual chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. He called the ceasefire a “vital first step towards de-escalation and the restoration of peace and security.”

The ceasefire was brokered with US pressure and US Secretary of State Marco

Rubio said Washington applauded the ceasefire declaration.

“President (Donald) Trump and I are committed to an immediate cessation of violence and expect the governments of Cambodia and Thailand to fully honor their commitments to end this conflict,” Rubio said in a statement.

Hun Manet said Tuesday that Trump had called to offer congratulations for the peace move. He posted on social media that Trump pledged the US would join the monitoring process along with Malaysia to ensure the ceasefire is implemented.

The Thai government separately said it has complained to Malaysia, the US and China about Cambodia’s alleged breach of the ceasefire agreement previously.

By Wednesday, there were signs of calm along the border, with some of the more than 260,000 people displaced by the fighting returning to their homes.

Cambodia and Thailand have clashed in the past over their 800-kilometer (500-mile) border. The fighting began Thursday after a land mine explosion along the border wounded five Thai soldiers. Tensions had been growing since May when a Cambodian soldier was killed in a confrontation that created a diplomatic rift and roiled Thailand’s domestic politics.

While some residents near the border have started returning home, many remain behind in evacuation shelters, uncertain of their fate.

Vendor Kanchana Sukjit, 33, said she fled home near the Ta Muen Thom temple with a few belongings and her small white-colored dog Nam Khaeng, which means ice in Thai. The temple had been one of the main flashpoints in the conflict over the past week.

It was the first time she had to flee home like this and she was worried as she waited for clearer instructions about what happens next.

“I’m stressed when I read the news, like when reports said they were going to fire (a long-range rocket), because my home is right next to a military camp. I was quite stressed that day because I was afraid that my home would get caught in a crossfire,” she said.



This photo taken on July 30, 2025 shows an explosion site at a fireworks factory in Suphan Buri province, Thailand. (Xinhua)

Thailand fireworks workshop explosion kills 9

An explosion at a fireworks workshop in central Thailand killed at least nine people on Wednesday, local officials said.

The blast occurred in Suphan Buri province, about 95 kilometers (60 miles) northwest of Bangkok in the heart of the country's central rice-growing region. The cause was not immediately known.

The Samerkun Suphan Buri Rescue Foundation reported nine deaths and said two people were taken to hospital in critical condition. The provincial government’s public relations department said one person had been injured. The number of people missing was not immediately clear.

Police Senior Sergeant Major Pinyo Chanmanee said the explosion took place in a building used to produce fireworks. It was not clear if it was licensed to do so.

Video and photographs from the scene showed shattered wooden buildings in green rice fields.

A similar incident in the same area in January 2024 killed around 20 people.

In July 2023, a large explosion at a fireworks warehouse in southern Thailand killed at least 10 people and wounded more than 100, according to officials. (AP)

Lat/Am

Dominican authorities find 1½ tons of cocaine:

Authorities in the Dominican Republic said Tuesday that they chased a boat for more than 12 hours and discovered 1½ tons of cocaine aboard it.

It’s one of the Caribbean country’s biggest seizures in history, said Carlos Devers, spokesperson for the country’s Anti-Drug Agency.

Helicopters, boats and cars were involved in the chase, which began Monday off the country’s south coast near Pedernales. It ended with the arrest of three Dominicans and one Colombian, Devers said.

Authorities also seized items including a cellphone, 13 jerrycans of fuel, a small cooler filled with water and food, and a backpack with a change of clothes.

In late December, authorities seized nearly 9½ tons of cocaine worth \$250 million, marking the largest seizure in the country’s history. Overall, officials seized more than 46 tons of drugs last year.

The second biggest seizure was reported in 2006, with 2.8 tons of cocaine found at a busy port.

The Dominican Republic under the government of **Luis Abinader** has long been considered a major transit point for drugs bound for Europe. (AP)



Abinader

assault early Tuesday in Ecuador’s violence-torn Pacific coast province of Manabi, the online newspaper Primicias reported.

Police were sent to the scene after an emergency hotline report, and preliminary investigation results indicated that the attackers opened fire at the victims.

Four of the fatal victims had criminal records for various offenses, including illegal possession of a weapon, robbery, murder and trafficking of controlled substances, and the fifth was a 16-year-old boy.

National Police has attributed an escalation of violence in Manabi to a turf war between two dangerous criminal gangs in vying for control of drug trafficking, money laundering and extortion in the region. (Xinhua)

Peru road accident kills 7:

At least seven people were killed and one child was seriously injured after a pickup truck plunged off a cliff in Peru’s central Junin region, local media reported Monday.

The accident occurred Sunday in the remote area of Carpapata, located between the towns of Tarma and La Merced. The vehicle veered off the road and fell approximately 300 meters down a ravine.

Emergency crews from the highway police responded to the scene. A child was rescued and is the sole survivor of the crash.

The tragedy follows another fatal road accident last week in the same province, where a bus crash in the town of Talca left 18 people dead.

According to Peru’s National Road Safety Observatory under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, 1,215 people were killed and 22,846 injured in traffic accidents across Peru between January and May of this year. (Xinhua)

5 killed in Ecuador armed assault:

At least five people were killed at a three-story house following an armed

Haiti to send 400 police officers to Brazil for training as gangs seize more territory

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, July 30, (AP): Haiti’s government said Monday it plans to send 400 police officers to Brazil next month for training as gang violence overwhelms the troubled Caribbean country.

Currently, Haiti only has about 10,000 police officers and 1,300 soldiers protecting a country of nearly 12 million people, said Fritz Alphonse Jean, leader of the transitional presidential council.

A total of 700 Haitian police officers and soldiers will be trained by foreign countries in upcoming months and will then join a Kenyan-led, U.N.-backed mission in its fight against gangs.

“Haiti is weak, and we need special training,” Jean said during a rare press conference held for international media. Last week, 150 Haitian soldiers were deployed to Mexico for training as gangs that control up to 90% of the capital, Port-au-Prince, encroach on more territory.

From October 2024 to June 2025, more than 4,800 people across Haiti were killed by gang violence. Hundreds more have been injured, kidnapped, raped and trafficked, according to the United Nations.

Gang violence also has displaced more than 1.3 million people in recent years, with Jean noting that the



Security guards stand watch as Haiti’s Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aime, center, talks with Mexico’s Charge d’Affaires Jesus Cisneros after attending an event marking one year since the start of the Multinational Security Support Mission in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on June 26. (AP)

government is trying to ensure that Haitians are able to return home soon. The government has started distributing money to some of the tens of thousands of people crowded into schools and makeshift shelters.

Jean is leading a council tasked with organizing general elections by February 2026, but ongoing gang violence is

threatening that deadline.

“We are doing everything possible so we can hold elections,” he said, declining to provide a date. Haiti hasn’t held general elections in almost a decade, with its last president, Jovenel Moise, slain at his private residence in July 2021. Gang violence has since surged in the aftermath of the slaying.

Asia

Chinese, Russian navies to hold joint exercise:

The Chinese and Russian navies will hold a joint exercise in the sea and air spaces near Vladivostok, Russia, in August, said **Zhang Xiaogang**, spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defense.

Following the exercise, some participating forces from both sides will conduct the sixth joint maritime patrol between the Chinese and Russian navies in the Pacific Ocean, Zhang said at a press conference on Wednesday.

The program is part of the annual cooperation plan between the Chinese and Russian militaries, is not directed at any third party, and is unrelated to the current international and regional situation, according to the spokesperson. (Xinhua)

Typhoon makes landfall in east China: Co-May, the eighth typhoon of this year, made landfall in east China’s Zhejiang Province at about 4:30 a.m. Wednesday, according to the provincial meteorological observatory.

The typhoon, with the maximum wind force near its center reaching 23 meters per second, churned ashore at Zhoushan City of Zhejiang.

Zhejiang upgraded the emergency response level for Typhoon Co-May from IV to III at 3:00 pm on Tuesday, according to the provincial emergency management department.

China has a four-tier emergency response system, with Level I being the most severe response. (Xinhua)



Zhang

German athlete Laura Dahlmeier dies in climbing accident in Pakistan: officials

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, July 30, (AP): German biathlon champion Laura Dahlmeier has died on a mountain peak in northern Pakistan following a climbing accident, and efforts are underway to retrieve her body, a local government spokesman said Wednesday.

Rescuers have confirmed Dahlmeier’s death on Laila Peak, said Faizullah Faraq, a spokesman for the regional Gilgit-Baltistan government. Dahlmeier, an Olympic gold medalist, was climbing Laila Peak in the Karakoram mountain range when she was struck Monday by falling rocks.

Dahlmeier’s body will be brought to the city of Skardu when it is retrieved by rescuers, Faraq said.

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier offered his condolences to Dahlmeier’s parents, writing that she “was an exceptional sportswoman.” He recalled that he presented her with the highest honor on German sport, the Silver Laurel Leaf, shortly after she won her first Olympic gold medal in 2018.

“Laura Dahlmeier was an ambassador for our country in the world, a role model for peaceful, cheerful and fair coexistence across borders,” he said.

Local authorities launched the rescue mission Monday after receiving a distress signal from Dahlmeier’s climbing partner, Marina Eva, who managed to descend to base camp with help from rescuers Tuesday.

Dahlmeier was injured at an altitude of about 5,700 meters (18,700 feet) around noon Monday, according to her management team in Germany. German broadcaster ZDF reported she suffered serious injuries in a rockfall.

Hundreds of climbers try to scale



Women’s 7.5km biathlon sprint gold medalist Laura Dahlmeier, of Germany, celebrates during the medals ceremony at the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea on Feb 11, 2018. (AP)

mountains in northern Pakistan every year and accidents are common because of avalanches and sudden weather changes. The region has also been battered by above-normal seasonal rains, triggering flash floods and landslides. Since last week, at least 20 Pakistani tourists have been missing after floodwaters swept them away near the northern district of Chilas.

Rwanda President Kagame ready to strengthen cooperation with China

KIGALI, July 30, (Xinhua): Rwandan President Paul Kagame said on Tuesday that China is a good friend, and he looks forward to strengthening the traditional friendship and practical cooperation between the two countries.

He made the remarks while receiving the letter of credence of Gao Wenqi, the new Chinese ambassador to Rwanda.

Kagame said the Rwandan government and people will provide full support and facilitation for Gao to fulfill his duty.

Gao noted that under the strategic guidance of the two heads of state, China-Rwanda relations have been elevated to a comprehensive strategic partnership featuring fruitful cooperation on all fronts.

China stands ready to work together with the Rwandan side to enhance political mutual trust and promote practical cooperation to deliver more tangible benefits to the two peoples, the Chinese ambassador added. Meanwhile, Kagame on Friday presided over the swearing-in ceremony of the newly appointed prime minister and Cabinet members at the Rwandan Parliament in the capital city, Kigali.

Addressing the new officials, Kagame emphasized the gravity and significance of public responsibility.

“Entrusting you with these responsibilities carries great weight,” he said. “It is based on your capacity, knowledge, and willingness to fulfill them. However, how you carry out these duties -- how much ownership and commitment you bring -- must come from within you.”

Kagame urged them to lead with purpose, accountability, and self-reflection, stressing that no external validation can replace personal dedication to national service.

The president called for a fundamental shift in mindset and leadership behavior, saying that Rwanda cannot afford to remain anchored in outdated attitudes.

“We cannot remain the same Rwandans, the same Afri-



Rwandan President Paul Kagame (right) and Chinese Ambassador to Rwanda Gao Wenqi pose for a photo in Kigali, Rwanda, on July 29. (Xinhua)

cans, as we were 100 years ago, or even 50 years ago,” Kagame said. “We simply can’t.”

According to the Rwandan constitution, a new Cabinet must be formed within 15 days of a prime minister’s appointment.

The ceremony took place two days after Kagame appointed Justin Nsengiyumva as prime minister, followed by a Cabinet reshuffle on Thursday evening that retained most existing members while introducing key changes.

Kuwaiti oil rises \$1.56 to \$73.15 pb

KUWAIT CITY, July 30, (KUNA): Price of Kuwaiti oil rose by USD 1.56, reaching US 73.15 per barrel in Tuesday's trading, compared to USD 71.59 per barrel on Monday, according to the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation

(KPC) on Wednesday. Globally, price of Brent crude rose by USD 2.47 to USD 72.51 pb, while West Texas Intermediate crude increases by USD 2.5 to USD 69.21 pb.

Business

The earnings webcast was held and presented by the Chief Financial Officer, David Challinor

Gulf Bank's loan book grows 3.8% YTD, boosted by corporate portfolio

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Gulf Bank held its first half 2025 earnings webcast on Tuesday, 29th July 2025, to present and discuss the Bank's financial performance. The webcast was organized by EFG Hermes and presented by **Mr. David Challinor**, Chief Financial Officer of Gulf Bank. The discussion was moderated by Mr. Youssef Dib, from Investor Relations at Gulf Bank.

Operating Environment

Mr. David Challinor, Chief Financial Officer of Gulf Bank, commenced the webcast with key updates regarding Gulf Bank's operating environment during first half 2025. Challinor stated: "The first half of 2025 was marked by a dynamic operating environment and rising geopolitical tensions and oil price fluctuations have added volatility to regional markets and shifted governments priorities. These factors have also influenced market sentiment, creating a more cautious investment landscape. Locally, fiscal policy developments have also played a role in shaping market conditions. The most recent local government debt issuances will accelerate economic activity and enable faster participation by banks in financing national initiatives."

Mr. Challinor added, "Against this backdrop, and despite continued pressure on margins across the sector, our financial performance reflects 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 of our loan book. Our low non-performing loan ratio and high



David Challinor, Chief Financial Officer

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 currently being explored. We are carefully assessing all operational and market implications to ensure we would be well-prepared subject to obtaining the necessary approvals. In addition, we have recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Warba Bank stating the basis of cooperation in assessing a proposed merger between both banks independently, ensuring the best interests of all the Bank's shareholders in line with all regulations. Following that, we announced on 28th July 2025 that we had obtained approval from the Central Bank of Kuwait to

Challinor:

- We maintained a balanced approach between credit expansion and asset quality, ensuring the resilience and integrity of our loan book.
- We saw an improvement in the cost-to-income ratio in the second quarter versus the first as margins recovered.
- The most recent local government debt issuances will accelerate economic activity and enable faster participation by banks in financing national initiatives.

engage and appoint a group of specialized consultancy firms with the necessary qualifications and expertise to carry out the feasibility study and due diligence for the potential merger."

Margins

In response to questions raised regarding the interest margins and the trend during Q2 on a sequential basis, Mr. David Challinor, Chief Financial Officer of Gulf Bank remarked: "The margin expanded very strongly by a total of 14 basis points from Q1. Now, even though we saw a fall in the cost of funds during Q2 the market has recently become very competitive which is causing the cost of new deposits to rise and if this dynamic continues to persist, then we could be faced with some margin pressure even in the absence of cuts to benchmark rates."

Operating Expenses

In terms of operating expenses Mr. Challinor mentioned: "We've seen a 6% growth

in total operating expenses in H1 25 versus H1 24. I think given the potential Islamic banking conversion coupled with the potential merger, we are likely to have a higher absolute level of operating expenses in the second half than the first. Now, the increase in the cost to income ratio at H1 25 has been primarily by asset repricing on the income side, coupled with an uptick in the other expenses category. However, we did see an improvement in the cost-to-income ratio in the second quarter versus the first as the margin recovered, but I think the full year outlook is that the ratio is set to increase from FY24 levels".

Credit Cost

When asked about the credit cost and the Bank's asset quality, Mr. Challinor said: "As I've mentioned on previous investor calls, for at least a year now, the vast majority of the Bank's credit costs are coming from the retail book and this trend continued into Q2. However, the Q2 credit costs for retail

were the lowest since Q3 2023 which is an encouraging sign. On the corporate side, the book continues to perform exceptionally well with insignificant new NPLs. In terms of the guidance we gave at the beginning of the year we said FY25 credit costs are likely to fall in the 60 to 70 basis point range, which was down significantly from 75 basis points for FY24. For H1 25 we are sitting at 61 basis points, so I think the full year guidance of 60 to 70 continues to be appropriate at this stage."

Loan Growth

In regard to loan growth, Mr. Challinor noted: "In Q2 we continued to grow the loan book, and the year-to-date growth was 3.8% for the first half of 2025. Now, when we compare it to the second half of last year, where we saw a contraction of 1.8%, H1 25 has witnessed a strong rebound from H2 24. And this rebound has been driven by our corporate business, which has grown 7.2% year to date versus the market growth, to the end of May 25, of 5.1%."

So, we've gained market share in corporate this year and we also gained market share last year. Now when we look at retail, this continues to be a challenge in the current environment, and according to the CBK data the growth to the end of May 2025 was only 1.2% which is perhaps indicative of the current higher rates and future rate expectations. In terms of the outlook for total loan growth for the full year 2025, we did guide for around mid-single digit loan growth, and we are currently on track to achieve this."

All Share Index gains 0.34%

Boursa Kuwait closes up

KUWAIT CITY, July 30, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed on Wednesday with the All Share Index rising by 29.11 points (0.34%) to 8,582.10 points. The day's trading involved 438 million shares across 25,406 transactions, with a total value of KD 77.4 million (USD 253.4 million).

The Main Market Index increased by 18.62 points (0.25%) to 7,577.14 points, based on 315.2 million shares traded in 17,439 transactions, valued at KD 39.9 mil-

lion (USD 130.6 million).

The Premier Market Index advanced by 33.17 points (0.36%) to 9,256.91 points, with 122.7 million shares traded through 7,967 transactions, totaling KD 37.5 million (USD 122.7 million).

The Main 50 Index climbed by 38.57 points (0.51%) to 7,587.23 points, through 239.2 million shares exchanged in 10,575 cash transactions, reaching a value of 30.2 million dinars (USD 98.8 million).

KUFPEC designates Al-Osaimi as Deputy CEO for key affairs

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Abdullah Al-Osaimi has been appointed Deputy CEO for Financial and Administrative Affairs at Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC), say reliable sources.

Sources confirmed that the company will witness several organizational changes in the coming period for the benefit of the business, especially since Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) focuses on KUFPEC due to its leadership and numerous achievements in recent years.

Sources revealed KUFPEC has achieved huge net profits, with the ability to pay its debts to international banks; adding that the company triumphed over many of the losses it incurred for many years, until it started to recover in 2022.

Sources pointed out that KUFPEC succeeded in increasing production at the Quebec Duvernay project in Canada to 25,927 barrels per day in 2024, compared to its initial production of 750 barrels per day last November.

Sources said KUFPEC has secured a land contract in Canada to expand its investments; while its average production share in Quebec was expected to reach 19,891 bar-

rels of oil equivalent per day in 2024, compared to 14,853 barrels of oil equivalent in 2023. "These achievements are attributed to the company's exploration efforts and its use of the best drilling rigs with the latest global technologies. It expanded and developed its investments in Australia, which will enable it to increase production at the Wheatstone gas plant in Australia to 210 million standard feet per day. It secured two exploration blocks in Indonesia in the first bidding round for 2024 -- the Melati and Sumatra blocks. This is part of its efforts to significantly expand its investments in the country. It is also completing its ambitious gas production plan in Indonesia, which became clear with its recent announcement of obtaining official approval to develop the Anambas field that has a production capacity of more than 55 million cubic feet per day," sources elaborated.

Sources also stated that KUFPEC is keen on acquiring existing projects in the oil and gas sectors, in addition to its efforts to obtain bids in Asia to increase its exploration capacity. "It is also planning to exit from some unprofitable projects in five continents, some of which are in Pakistan; along with its willingness to enter future bids in Pakistan."

Kuwait's Ministry of Finance charts course for fiscal innovation & sustainable growth

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: The Ministry of Finance's efforts to advance fiscal resilience, financial sector development and investor engagement under Kuwait Vision 2035 were the focus of a recent high-level meeting between Noora Al Fassam, Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, and senior representatives from Oxford Business Group (OBG), including Andrew Jeffreys, the Group's Chief Executive Officer, and Cristina Mirica, Country Director for Kuwait.

The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the Ministry's evolving mandate, with particular attention given to the implementation of the new Public Debt Law. The legislation establishes a KD 30 billion ceiling on sovereign borrowing across local and international markets, enhancing the capacity of the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Kuwait Investment Authority to manage debt sustainably.

Discussions also highlighted the Ministry's progress in modernising Kuwait's mortgage framework to stimulate private sector lending and expand access to housing finance. Broader reforms in public financial management and fiscal governance were addressed as part of the Ministry's commitment to building a resilient and transparent economic environment.

The Minister also underlined the importance of clear communication with stakeholders as reforms progress.

"By implementing robust public debt legislation and modernising the mortgage regime, we are taking decisive steps to strengthen fiscal resilience and support sustainable growth," she said. "It is essential that we convey these developments transparently to global investors and partners."

Andrew Jeffreys, CEO of Oxford Business Group, welcomed the dialogue and the opportunity to support the Ministry's objectives.

"Our discussion with Her Excellency and her team provided valuable insight into Kuwait's fiscal reform agenda," he said. "We look forward to exploring ways to help articulate the Ministry's progress and vision to the international business community."



Photo during the meeting.

ward to exploring ways to help articulate the Ministry's progress and vision to the international business community."

The engagement forms part of OBG's research for The Report: Kuwait 2025, which will include in-depth analysis of Kuwait's economic trajectory, covering fiscal governance, debt management frameworks, financial sector innovation and public-private partnerships.

About Oxford Business Group

Oxford Business Group (OBG) is a global research and advisory company with a presence in over 30 countries, spanning Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and the Americas. It is recognised internationally as a distinctive and respected provider of on-the-ground intelligence on world's fastest-growing markets, termed

The Yellow Slice, in reference to OBG's corporate colour.

Through its range of products -- Economic News and Views; OBG CEO Surveys; OBG Events and Conferences; Global Platform, which hosts exclusive video interviews; and The Report publications -- as well as its Advisory division, OBG offers comprehensive and accurate analysis of macroeconomic and sector-level developments for sound investment opportunities and business decisions.

OBG provides business intelligence to its subscribers through multiple platforms, including its direct subscribers, Dow Jones Factiva subscribers, the Bloomberg Professional Services subscribers, Refinitiv's (previously Thomson Reuters) Eikon subscribers, and more.

Partnership with Sabah Al Ahmad Center nurtures youth creativity

Warba Bank launches summer club for employees' children

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: In a first-of-its-kind initiative in Kuwait, Warba Bank has partnered with the Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity to launch a dedicated summer club for the children of the Bank's employees. This initiative stems from Warba's belief that human investment begins at a young age and aims to nurture creativity, innovation and skills development among youth through a series of interactive and educational workshops.

The week-long summer program features four distinct tracks targeting two age groups: 7 to 10 years old and 11 to 14 years old. The program is thoughtfully designed to blend learning with fun, offering hands-on workshops that integrate innovative scientific content with an engaging recreational experience. It aims to foster creative thinking, develop digital and interpersonal skills, help participants discover and hone their talents early on and encourage teamwork and exploration in a dynamic educational environment.

Commenting on the initiative, **Ms. Maali Abdullah Al-Rasheed**, Group Chief Human Resources & General Services Officer at Warba



Maali Al-Rasheed

Bank, said: "At Warba Bank, we believe that growth and education should extend beyond our employees to include their families and children. They are an integral part of our institutional fabric. Through this summer initiative, we aim to offer children a rich and enjoyable educational experience that empowers them to discover their potential and enhance their skills in a safe and inspiring environment."

She added: "Our partnership with the Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity forms the foundation of this program. The Center's



Warba Bank launches summer club for employees' children with Sabah Al Ahmad Center.

specialized experience in talent development and innovation among youth aligns perfectly with Warba's vision of building a better future starting with our children."

This summer program reinforces Warba Bank's commitment to its

human-centric values and institutional identity, which places people at the heart of its strategy. It also promotes a positive workplace culture and strengthens internal community bonds. Furthermore, initiatives like this reflect the Bank's stability and

its holistic support of the Warba family, enhancing customer trust and solidifying the Bank's image as a community-focused institution.

Warba: A Partner in Innovation and Talent Development

This initiative builds upon the stra-

tegic partnership between Warba Bank and the Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity. The Bank previously collaborated with the Center to support talented Kuwaiti students who participated in the Web Summit hosted in Qatar. Warba's Head of Business Banking was part of the judging panel that selected eight finalists from 20 applicants who presented innovative projects at one of the region's leading tech events.

In another joint effort, Warba and the Center co-hosted tech visionary Bertrand Nepveu, renowned for his role in developing pioneering innovations including the Apple Vision Pro, during his visit to Kuwait and the Middle East to share his groundbreaking insights into the world of technology and creative industries.

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.

9% increase in net profit to KD 31.73 million

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait announces H1 2025 financial results

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) proudly announced its robust financial results for H1 2025, once again affirming its position as a leading financial institution.

Financial Performance

ABK Group recorded a net profit attribute to shareholders of KD 31.73 million, up 9% year-on-year. Earnings per share stood at 11 fils, and operating profit increased by 18% to KD 62.94 million.

Operating income increased year-on-year by 8% to KD 108.83million.Total assets grew year-on-year by 8% to KD 7.19 billion, loans and advances grew by 5% to KD 4.72 billion,while customer deposits rose 9% to KD 4.32 billion, affirming the Group’s reputation as a trusted financial partner.

The non-performing loan (NPL) ratio stood at 1.35%, covered by provisions at 447%. The Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) was 16.96%, and shareholders’ equity rose by 4.6% to KD 635.38 million, further underscoring ABK’s financial stability.

On this occasion, **Mr. Talal Mohammad Reza Behbehani**, Chairman of ABK, stated that the Group’s results for the first half of 2025 reflect the strength of its financial position and its success in achieving strategic objectives. He emphasized, “These achievements were made possible through the implementation of diverse plans aimed at developing ABK’s banking services and products, clearly demonstrating the Group’s ability to maximize returns for shareholders.”

Behbehani added that ABK’s profits were achieved as part of the ongoing development of the Bank’s strategy to keep pace with advancements in the banking industry locally, regionally, and globally. He explained that the Group’s prudent approach in mitigating global economic challenges contributed to continued growth across of its key financial indicators during the first six months of 2025.

He stressed that digital transformation remains a core pillar of ABK Group’s operations, with a focus on integrating advanced digital technologies across the organization to ensure seamless customer experience across our different lines of business. The Bank is also committed to harnessing artificial intelligence in its operations to elevate the quality of banking services and diverse solutions provided to all customer segments.

Behbehani further emphasized that ABK Group dedicates all its resources to supporting the successful realization of the New Kuwait 2035 vision and is committed to working alongside relevant stakeholders to facilitate the financing and development of upcoming national projects.

Awards, Ratings and ESG

Behbehani revealed that the Group has continued to earn the confidence of global institutions, as evidenced by several awards received since the beginning of the year. These include the ‘Best Digital Transformation Initiative’ award at the 2025 MEED Middle East Banking Excellence Awards, as well as the ‘Best Call Center’ in the banking sector in Kuwait award from Global Brands Magazine. He noted that these



Talal Mohammad Reza Behbehani, Chairman

■ **Talal Behbehani:** The results reflect the strength of our financial position and our success in achieving our strategic objectives.



Abdulla Al Sumait, Deputy Group CEO

■ **Abdulla Al Sumait:** ABK has demonstrated its ability to improve its profitability and capital strength indicators and effectively respond to evolving market dynamics.

awards came as a result of recent enhancements to ABK’s customer service center, the launch of an entirely new mobile application and the ongoing development of the Bank’s website to provide world class round-the-clock customer service.

He also highlighted that ABK has successfully maintained its strong credit ratings of ‘A’ from Fitch and ‘A2’ from Moody’s, which underscores the Group’s solid financial position and its ability to navigate challenges while meeting the expectations of financial rating agencies evaluating the performance of Kuwait’s banking sector.

Behbehani pointed out that ABK Group is committed to applying sustainability standards across all of its daily operations and in all markets where it operates. He emphasized the Bank’s recent recognition as a leading institution in environmental sustainability through its ranking in Kuwait’s first-ever Climate Sustainability Index. He confirmed that the Group will continue to publish comprehensive annual sustainability reports to provide transparent updates on developments across all aspects of its operations.

In conclusion, Behbehani expressed his gratitude to the Board of Directors, executive management and all ABK employees for their ongoing efforts and contributions to the success of the Group’s plans and its growing position as a leader in the banking sector. He also acknowledged the continuous support ABK receives from all regulatory authorities in Kuwait, Egypt and the UAE, whose collaboration helps foster growth and advancement across the banking sector.

Future Plans

In turn, **Mr. Abdulla Al Sumait**, Deputy Group CEO of ABK, affirmed, “The Group’s profits for the first half of 2025

are the result of close collaboration between various divisions and teams to successfully execute the Group’s strategic plans. They reflect ABK’s ability to improve its profitability and capital strength indicators and effectively respond to evolving market dynamics.”

Customer Engagement

The first half of 2025 also witnessed increased engagement between ABK and its customers, with the Bank organizing several exclusive events, including a private forum for Private Banking clients and ABK Capital, the Group’s investment arm, to update them on the latest developments in the banking and investment sectors.

In addition, during the first six months of 2025, the Bank signed multiple partnership agreements to provide exclusive offers for its customers, including renewing its partnership with Emirates Skywards and introducing discounts for ABK cardholders. These initiatives reinforce the Bank’s reputation as the preferred banking partner for customers.

Regional Expansion

In addition, ABK Group continued to expand its operations internationally by opening new branches in Egypt, launching additional products to grow its customer base in the UAE, and establishing a subsidiary of ABK Capital in the Dubai International Financial Centre. These steps will enhance the integration of the Group’s operations.

Community Initiatives

ABK also continued to sponsor numerous community events, reflecting its ongoing commitment to corporate social responsibility and active engagement with all segments of society. Sponsorships in 2025 included the final of His Highness the Crown Prince Football Cup, the Annual Diabetes Conference in collaboration with Amiri Hospital, the Porsche Club Kuwait annual festival, a Drug Awareness Conference, and several school visits aimed at enhancing financial literacy among students of all age groups. The Bank also participated in various career fairs and exhibitions across multiple sectors.

Furthermore, the Bank maintained its support for the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Kuwait Banking Association’s ‘Let’s Be Aware’ campaign to promote financial literacy in Kuwait. ABK actively promoted the campaign through its social media platforms, digital screens across its branches, traditional media outlets, television, radio and cinema advertisements. The Bank also organized several padel tournaments and interactive events to raise awareness of the campaign’s objectives, demonstrating its leadership role in supporting national community initiatives and leveraging its resources to achieve the desired impact.

In conclusion, Al Sumait emphasized that the coming period will see further development of the Group’s operations, with the introduction of more innovative banking solutions and products, contributing to sustained profit growth in the future.



Aimed at motivating Kuwait's youth towards taking interest in science, technology, engineering & mathematics

NBK hosts Generation Science in collaboration with KFAS

Weyay Bank hosts 8th edition of KFAS Generation Science Program Students

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Under their long-lasting strategic partnership, National Bank of Kuwait hosted the “Generation Science” Program launched by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences aimed to inspire students and involve them in fields like science, technology, engineering, and mathematics at an early age.

Through this partnership, NBK aims to motivate students to take interest and enhance their knowledge and skills in these key fields. The program is one of the pioneering programs that work towards developing Kuwait’s youth and preparing a diverse generation of future leaders in science and technology able to impart knowledge in society and plan and manage projects according to scientific standards.

Moreover, “Science Generation” aims to develop the students’ leadership and communication skills by placing them at the heart of community work and partnering with the academic, industrial, and social sectors to further enhance teaching these essential fields of learning. Additionally, the program plays a role in raising the students’ awareness when it comes to different career paths, job market requirements, and available academic choices, as well as the future of careers and necessary skills in relation to the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics.

In two batches, NBK received 100 students from KFAS, who participated in interactive

workshops and learning sessions presented by engineers and experts in AI, technology, and cybersecurity, which gave them a unique chance to explore the banking work environment and the ways in which technology and innovation are applied in the banking sector.

On this occasion, Mr. Emad Al-Ablani, Group Chief Human Resources Officer commented: “We are pleased to host this distinguished group of aspiring Kuwaiti youth who look forward to enhancing their skills in essential fields such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. This visit stands as a valuable opportunity for the students to put what they learned into real practice, which helps raise their professional awareness.”

Al-Ablani also added: “This initiative reflects our deep commitment to the importance of investing in the youth of Kuwait and equipping them with the knowledge and tools necessary to face future challenges. Not only this, but this program also mirrors our dedication to supporting educational initiatives that help build an innovative and aware generation able to spearhead the country’s development in line with its Vision 2035, which focuses on diversifying the economy and establishing a knowledge and innovation-based society.”

Furthermore, Al-Ablani emphasized that NBK will always continue to utilize its efforts towards developing society and establishing a nurturing environment that promotes innovation and crea-

Al-Ablani:

■ We strive to prepare a generation of qualified national professionals able to spearhead Kuwait’s development in line with its Vision 2035.

■ The visit is a remarkable opportunity for students to apply the theories they learned in real-life situations.

■ We diligently work with our strategic partners to make positive change in society and establish a nurturing and motivational environment for the new generation.

tivity through different programs and initiatives that aim to enable the youth and prepare qualified generations ready for the competitive job market.

Reflecting its leading role in social responsibility, it is worth noting that NBK is keen on launching programs and initiatives in different fields and sectors and collaborating with strategic partners to make positive change in society and establish a motivational environment for new generations.

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: As part of its commitment to empowering young talent and fostering innovation in the financial sector, Weyay Bank welcomed students from the 8th edition of the Generation Science Program, organized by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS). The students, from Kuwait and across the GCC, were introduced to the Bank’s features and services through an immersive visit.

The visit featured a comprehensive tour of the Bank’s departments, giving students a behind-the-scenes look at daily operations. Special emphasis was placed on the Bank’s digital approach and how modern technology is leveraged to deliver seamless and innovative banking experiences.

Students engaged directly with Weyay team members, asking insightful questions about the challenges and opportunities in digital banking. This interaction enriched their understand-

ing of the evolving financial landscape.

A highlight of the visit was an introduction to Weyay’s journey as Kuwait’s first digital bank. Students learned about the Bank’s vision, goals, and how it aims to redefine banking in Kuwait through a fully digital experience. They also explored the Weyay app features and how it empowers users to manage their finances with ease and flexibility.

This experience offered students a real-world glimpse into the workings of a digital bank, and the role innovation plays in shaping the future of financial services. It also inspired them to pursue their passions in science and technology.

Weyay Bank’s hosting of the Generation Science Program reflects its ongoing commitment to supporting educational initiatives that build a knowledgeable, innovative generation that is ready to lead Kuwait and the region into the future.



Photos during the event.

US economy grows 3% in Q2, surprising economists

Consumer spending grows 1.4%, still weak

WASHINGTON, July 30, (AP): The U.S. economy expanded at a surprising 3% annual pace from April through June, bouncing back at least temporarily from a first-quarter drop that reflected disruptions from President Donald Trump’s trade wars.

Still, details of the report suggested that U.S. consumers and businesses are wary about the economic uncertainty arising from Trump’s radical campaign to restructure the American economy by slapping big taxes — tariffs — on imports from around the world.

“Headline numbers are hiding the economy’s true performance, which is slowing as tariffs take a bite out of activity,” Nationwide chief economist Kathy Bostjancic wrote.

America gross domestic product — the nation’s output of goods and services — rebounded after falling at a 0.5% clip from January through March, the Commerce Department reported Wednesday. The first-quarter drop, the first retreat of the U.S. economy in three years, was mainly caused by a surge in

imports — which are subtracted from GDP — as businesses scrambled to bring in foreign goods ahead of Trump’s tariffs.

The bounceback was expected but its strength was a surprise: Economists had forecast 2% growth from April through June.

From April through June, a drop in imports — the biggest since the COVID-19 outbreak — added more than 5 percentage points to growth. Consumer spending registered lackluster growth of 1.4%, though it was an improvement over the first quarter’s 0.5%.

Private investment fell at a 15.6% annual pace, biggest drop since COVID-19 slammed the economy. A drop in inventories — as businesses worked down goods they’d stockpiled in the first quarter — shaved 3.2 percentage points off second-quarter growth.

A category within the GDP data that measures the economy’s underlying strength weakened in the second quarter, expanding at a 1.2% annual pace, down from 1.9% from January through March and the weakest since the end of 2022. This category includes consumer spending and private investment but excludes volatile items like exports, inventories and government spending.

Trump announces 25% tariff on India, extra import tax tied to Russian oil buys

WASHINGTON, July 30, (AP): President Donald Trump said Wednesday that he’ll impose a 25% tariff on goods from India, plus an additional import tax because of India’s purchasing of Russian oil.

Trump said on his Truth Social platform that India “is our friend” but its “Tariffs are far too high” on U.S. goods.

The Republican president added that India buys military equipment and oil from Russia, which he said has enabled the war in Ukraine. As a result, he intends to charge an additional “penalty” starting on Friday as part of the launch of his administration’s revised tariffs on multiple countries.

The announcement comes after a slew of negotiated trade frameworks with the European Union, Japan, the Philippines and Indonesia — all of which Trump said would open markets for American goods while enabling the U.S. to raise tax rates on imports. The president views tariff revenues as a way to help offset the budget deficit increases tied to his recent income tax cuts and generate more domestic factory jobs.

While Trump has effectively wielded tariffs as a cudgel to reset the terms of trade, the economic impact is uncertain as most economists expect a

slowdown in U.S. growth and greater inflationary pressures as the costs of the taxes are passed along to domestic businesses and consumers.

The Census Bureau reported that the U.S. ran a \$45.8 billion trade imbalance in goods with India last year, meaning it imported more than it exported.

At a population exceeding 1.4 billion people, India is the world’s largest country and a possible geopolitical counterbalance to China. India and Russia have close relations, and New Delhi has not supported Western sanctions on Moscow over its war in Ukraine.

When Trump in February met with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the U.S. president said that India would start buying American oil and natural gas.

Trump discussed his policies on trade and tariffs with reporters accompanying him Tuesday on the flight home following a five-day visit to Scotland. He declined to comment then when asked about reports that India was bracing for a U.S. tariff rate of at least 25%, saying, “We’re going to see.”

Trump also said the outlines of a trade agreement with India had not yet been finalized.

Posting a net income of KD 21 million

Burgan Bank announces stable financial performance for H1’25

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Burgan Bank (“Burgan” or “the Bank”) has announced its financial results for the first half of 2025 (H1’25), for the period ending June 30, 2025. The results indicate continued operational progress and consistent performance across key business areas.

During the first half of the year, the Bank recorded revenues of KD 126 million, representing a 14% increase year-on-year (y-o-y) compared to H1’24. The growth was primarily supported by an increase in Net Interest Income, which rose to KD 83 million, marking a 16% y-o-y increase. This was driven by stronger Net Interest Margins, which improved to 2.2% in H1’25 from 2.1% in the same period last year, along with continued expansion of the loan portfolio. Non-interest income also grew by 9% y-o-y to KD 43 million in H1’25, largely reflecting the contribution from United Gulf Bank (UGB) starting this quarter.

Driven by healthy top-line momentum, Burgan Bank delivered Operating Profit of KD 49 million and Net Income of KD 21 million, reflecting operational stability relative to the same period last year.

On the balance sheet front, the Bank demonstrated resilient asset growth. Total assets increased by 14% y-o-y, reaching KD 8.7 billion as of June 30, 2025. The loan portfolio stood at KD 4.6 billion, up 4% y-o-y. The deposit base also expanded by 16%, reaching KD 5.4 billion, reinforcing the Bank’s stable and diversified funding base.

Burgan Bank also sustained a healthy capital and liquidity position. The Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) ratio stood at 11.7%, while the Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) reached 17.4%, both comfortably above the regulatory minimum requirements of 10.5% and 14.0%, respectively. Additionally, the Bank’s liquidity remained strong, with a Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) of 225% and a Net Stable Funding Ratio (NSFR) of 113%, both well in excess of the 100% regulatory threshold.

Commenting on the H1’25 financial results, Burgan Bank’s Chairman, Sheikh Abdullah Nasser Al-Sabah, said: “The first half of 2025 marks another strong step forward in Burgan Bank’s transformation journey. As we navigate a complex regional and global landscape, our performance reflects the Bank’s resilience, disciplined execution, prudent

risk management, and forward-looking strategy. Backed by a solid financial core and a clear vision, we remain focused on creating sustainable long-term value for our shareholders, empowering our people, and delivering an elevated banking experience for our customers.”

He added: “Through financial management and strategic focus, we continue to make meaningful progress – reinforcing the strength of our core Kuwait operations, sustaining growth across the Group, and deepening our role as a trusted partner to customers and communities. Beyond the numbers, we are committed to building a modern banking model that responds to the needs of tomorrow – driven by innovation, rooted in strong governance, and powered by our most valuable asset: our people.”

Mr. Tony Daher, Group Chief Executive Officer at Burgan Bank, said: “Our first-half performance in 2025 reflects the strength of our financial position, strategic clarity, and operational discipline. We achieved solid revenue and asset growth, backed by a robust capital base—demonstrating our agility in a challenging and fast-evolving environment. At the same time, we continue laying the groundwork for the future by accelerating our digital transformation, modernizing our core banking infrastructure, and building scalable platforms to drive long-term innovation and growth.”

Adding: “Our strategy is driven by people: our employees, our customers, and our communities and we are building a culture that fuels ambition and advances our role as a future-ready, human-centric institution.”

Burgan Bank Secures Inclusion in FTSE4Good Index, Affirming Sustainability Leadership

In June 2025, Burgan Bank was included in the prestigious FTSE4Good Index Series—a recognition that underscores the Bank’s steadfast commitment to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) excellence. The FTSE4Good Index Series is a globally respected benchmark that identifies companies demonstrating strong ESG performance and is widely used by institutional investors and asset managers to integrate ESG factors into investment strategies and support the development of responsible investment products and funds. Burgan Bank’s inclusion reflects its comprehensive ESG strategy, built on



Sheikh Abdullah Nasser Al-Sabah, Chairman



Tony Daher, Group Chief Executive Officer



Burgan Bank Headquarters

a clear roadmap and robust framework that have enabled measurable progress across its core sustainability pillars. This milestone reinforces the Bank’s continued efforts to embed ESG principles across all aspects of its operations—fur-

ther strengthening its position as a forward-thinking, impact-driven financial institution.

Commenting on the Bank’s inclusion in the FTSE4Good Index Series, Mr. Daher said: “Being one of only five

Kuwaiti organizations recognized by the globally respected FTSE Russell is a proud milestone and a clear testament to our unwavering dedication to sustainability. This achievement reflects our relentless commitment to embedding ESG principles throughout our operations, culture, and stakeholder relationships. It strengthens our resolve to drive sustainable growth that creates real value for our community while building a resilient, inclusive, and environmentally responsible future.”

Burgan Bank Sustains Momentum in Rolling Out Digital Transformation Initiatives

During H1’25, Burgan Bank introduced SoftPOS by KNET, an innovative digital payment solution that empowers business owners and entrepreneurs to accept payments directly through an Android smartphone—completely eliminating the need for traditional POS hardware. Designed specifically for mobile and small-scale merchants, SoftPOS offers a cost-effective, secure, and flexible alternative that simplifies transactions and enhances operational agility. This forward-looking solution is a testament to Burgan Bank’s ongoing drive to lead in digital transformation, offering smart banking tools that elevate the customer experience while enabling businesses to grow and adapt in an increasingly digital marketplace.

Burgan Bank Strengthens Commitment to Future-Ready Human Capital and Youth Empowerment

True to its mission to become an employer of choice and its dedicated strategy for investing in national human capital, Burgan Bank maintained a strong emphasis on its people-first culture throughout the second quarter of the year.

The Bank reinforced its commitment to talent development and employee empowerment by celebrating the accomplishments of team members who completed advanced training programs, including executive education at Harvard Business School and certifications from the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies. Employees also advanced through Burgan Bank’s flagship Ro’ya program, which continues to nurture a new generation of in-house leaders. Further demonstrating its inclusive approach, the Bank launched several initiatives under its “Empower Her” initiative to honor the achievements and contributions of its female workforce.

Burgan Bank’s commitment to people extended beyond its internal teams, reaching into the broader community to support the development of the next generation of national talent. The Bank sponsored Academy X, Kuwait’s largest women-led tech empowerment initiative, in partnership with CODED Academy and Kuwait University. It also participated in several major university career fairs, strengthening its engagement with aspiring professionals and reaffirming its long-standing commitment to youth development and national workforce empowerment.

Burgan Bank Wins 2024 Visa Award, Reinforcing Leadership in Premium Card Innovation

Burgan Bank was recognized with the 2024 Visa Award for “Best-in-Class Premium Active Cards Growth in Kuwait”, reaffirming its position as a leader in premium card innovation. This prestigious accolade highlights the Bank’s ongoing efforts to enhance the customer experience through cutting-edge, secure, and lifestyle-oriented payment solutions. The award also reflects the strong synergy between the Bank’s Retail Banking and Private Banking divisions, whose collaboration has fueled notable growth in the premium card segment. In addition, the recognition underscores Burgan Bank’s long-standing partnership with Visa, through which the Bank has introduced a wide array of tailored card offerings, enriched with exclusive rewards, loyalty benefits, and premium privileges designed to meet the evolving aspirations of its clientele.

Sheikh Abdullah Nasser Al-Sabah concluded by saying: “Our achievements are not a destination, but stepping stones in our continuous journey of success and sustainable growth. We remain committed to serving our customers, our community, and the broader economy as a proactive, responsible corporate citizen—delivering on our promises and driving meaningful, sustainable progress. I would also like to extend my gratitude to all those who have helped us achieve our success and our solid financial standing.”

Building on these achievements and the momentum they have created, Burgan Bank is committed to adhering to the same levels of excellence and innovation throughout the remainder of the year, adding value and making change wherever possible in the market and across society.

Deadheads flock to Golden Gate Park for 3-day festivities

Grateful Dead toasts its 60th with concerts in San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO, July 30, (AP): Fans of the Grateful Dead are pouring into San Francisco for three days of concerts and festivities marking the 60th anniversary of the scruffy jam band that came to embody a city where people wore flowers in their hair and made love, not war.

Dead & Company, featuring original Grateful Dead members Bob Weir and Mickey Hart, will play Golden Gate Park's Polo Field starting Friday with an estimated 60,000 attendees each day. The last time the band played that part of the park was in 1991 - a free show following the death of concert promoter and longtime Deadhead Bill Graham.

Certainly, times have changed. A general admissions ticket for all three days is \$635 - a shock for many longtime fans who remember when a joint cost more than a Dead concert ticket.

But Deadhead David Aberdeen is thrilled anyway.

"This is the spiritual home of the Grateful Dead," said Aberdeen, who works at Amoeba Music in the bohemian, flower-powered Haight-Ashbury neighborhood. "It seems very right to me that they celebrate it in this way."

Formed in 1965, the Grateful Dead is synonymous with San Francisco and its counterculture. Members lived in a dirt-cheap Victorian in the Haight and later became a significant part of 1967's Summer of Love.

That summer eventually soured into bad acid trips and police raids, and prompted the band's move to Marin County on the other end of the Golden Gate Bridge. But new Deadheads kept cropping up - even after iconic guitarist and singer Jerry Garcia 's 1995 death - aided by cover bands and offshoots like Dead & Company.

"There are 18-year-olds who were obviously not even a twinkle in somebody's eyes when Jerry died, and these 18-year-olds get the values of Deadheads," said former Grateful Dead publicist and author Dennis McNally.

Deadheads can reel off why and how, and the moment they fell in love with the music. Fans love that no two shows are the same; the band plays different songs each time. They also embrace the community that comes with a Dead show.

Sunshine Powers didn't have friends until age 13, when she stepped off a city bus and into the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood.

"I, all of a sudden, felt like I fit in. Or like I didn't have to fit in," says Powers, now 45 and the owner of tie-dye emporium Love on Haight. "I don't know which one it was, but I know it was like, OK."



A man walks past the house where the original members of the Grateful Dead music group lived in San Francisco, Saturday, July 19. (AP)

Similarly, her friend Taylor Swope, 47, survived a tough freshman year at a new school with the help of a Grateful Dead mixtape. The owner of the Little Hippie gift shop is driving from Brooklyn, New York, to sell merchandise, reconnect with friends and see the shows.

"The sense of, 'I found my people, I didn't fit in anywhere else and then I found this, and I felt at home.' So that's a big part of it," she said of the allure.

Sometimes, becoming a Deadhead is a process.

Thor Cromer, 60, had attended several Dead shows, but was ambivalent about the hippies. That changed on March 15, 1990, in Landover, Maryland.

"That show, whatever it was, whatever magic hit," he said, "it was injected right

into my brain."

Cromer, who worked for the US Senate then, eventually took time off to follow the band on tour and saw an estimated 400 shows from spring 1990 until Garcia's death.

Cromer now works in technology and is flying in from Boston to join scores of fellow "rail riders" who dance in the rows closest to the stage.

Aberdeen, 62, saw his first Dead show in 1984. As the only person in his college group with a driver's license, he was tapped to drive a crowded VW Bug from Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, to Syracuse, New York.

"I thought it was pretty weird," he said. "But I liked it."

He fell in love the following summer, when the Dead played a venue near his college.

Aberdeen remembers rain pouring down in the middle of the show and a giant rainbow appearing over the band when they returned for their second act. They played "Comes a Time," a rarely played Garcia ballad.

"There is a lot of excitement, and there will be a lot of people here," Aberdeen said. "Who knows when we'll have an opportunity to get together like this again?"

Fans were able to see Dead & Company in Las Vegas earlier this year, but no new dates have been announced. Guitarist Bob Weir is 77, and drummers Mickey Hart and Bill Kreutzmann are 81 and 79, respectively. Besides Garcia, founding members Ron "Pigpen" McKernan on keyboards died in 1973 and bassist Phil Lesh died last year at age 84.

Mayor Daniel Lurie, who is not a Deadhead but counts "Sugar Magnolia" as his favorite Dead song, is overjoyed at the economic boost as San Francisco recovers from pandemic-related hits to its tech and tourism sectors.

"They are the reason why so many people know and love San Francisco," he said.

The weekend features parties, shows and celebrations throughout the city. Graham Lesh & Friends will perform three nights starting Thursday. Lesh is the son of Phil Lesh.

On Friday, which would have been Garcia's 83rd birthday, officials will rename a street after the San Francisco native. On Saturday, visitors can celebrate the city's annual Jerry Day at the Jerry Garcia Amphitheater located in a park near Garcia's childhood home.

People

Shakur case

Combs requests \$50 million bail

LOS ANGELES, July 30, (AP): Music mogul **Sean "Diddy" Combs** is asking a judge to free him on a \$50 million bond while he awaits sentencing in October after a jury found him not guilty of the most serious federal charges he faced earlier this month.

In a court filing Tuesday, Combs' lawyer argued that conditions at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn are dangerous, noting that others convicted of similar prostitution-related offenses were typically released before sentencing.

"Sean Combs should not be in jail for this conduct," Marc Agnifilo said. "In fact, he may be the only person currently in a United States jail for being any sort of john, and certainly the only person in jail for hiring adult male escorts for him and his girlfriend."

A spokesperson for the US attorney's office in Manhattan did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Prosecutors have previously insisted he remains a flight risk.

Combs, 55, faces up to a decade in prison on two counts of transportation to engage in prostitution for flying people around the country, including his girlfriends and male escort workers, for sexual encounters. A conviction on racketeering conspiracy or sex trafficking could have put one of hip-hop's celebrated figures in prison for life.

Immediately after he was acquitted on July 2, Agnifilo had asked that Combs be released on bond.

But Judge Arun Subramanian denied it, saying Combs at the time had not met the burden of showing by clear and convincing evidence a "lack of danger to any person or the community."

Combs is the latest celebrity inmate to be locked up at MDC Brooklyn, the only federal jail in New York City, joining a list that includes R. Kelly, Ghislaine Maxwell and cryptocurrency fraudster Sam Bankman-Fried.

■ ■ ■

The man charged with ordering the 1996 killing of rap icon Tupac Shakur in Las Vegas is asking the Nevada Supreme Court to dismiss his murder charges.

Duane "Keffe D" Davis filed an appeal with the court Tuesday after a lower court judge upheld his charges.

Davis, the only man ever to be charged in Shakur's killing, was arrested in September 2023. Other conspirators in the drive-by shooting have since died.

The 62-year-old has admitted in interviews and in his 2019 tell-all memoir, "Compton Street Legend," that he provided the gun used in the shooting.

His attorney, Carl Arnold, said Davis' constitutional rights were being violated.

"Mr. Davis cooperated with law enforcement over the course of more than a decade, relying on repeated assurances that his statements would not be used against him - yet those very statements now form the core of the State's case," Arnold said in a statement.

Arnold first filed a motion to dismiss the case in January of this year, alleging constitutional violations because of a 27-year delay in prosecution. He also said Davis had immunity agreements granted to him by federal and local authorities.

Film



This image released by Netflix shows characters Zoey, (from left), Rumi and Mira in a scene from 'KPop Demon Hunters.' (Netflix via AP)

Animated film becomes surprise hit of the summer

'KPop Demon' slays charts and streams

NEW YORK, July 30, (AP): In the colorful, animated, musical world of "KPop Demon Hunters," everyone is a fan. The general public rocks T-shirts supporting their favorite idols. They hold light sticks and stare starry-eyed at stadium stages; they scream, they cry, they cheer, they buy the merch.

It shouldn't come as much of a surprise, then, that the Sony Pictures/Netflix film itself has inspired similar fanfare, having topped the streamer's global rankings. Fans have flooded the internet with art, covers, cosplay and choreography in response to the movie, which follows the fictional K-pop girl group HUNTR/X as they fight demons.

And it's not just the film that's a summer hit. The "KPop Demon Hunters" soundtrack has topped the charts - debuting at No. 1 on Billboard's Soundtracks chart and No. 8 on the all-genre Billboard 200.

Here's how "KPop Demon Hunters" became the year's surprising success story.

The "KPop Demon Hunters" soundtrack utilizes some of the best and brightest in the genre. That included a partnership with K-pop company The Black Label, co-founded by super producer Teddy Park, known for his work with YG, Blackpink and 2NE1 - empowered girl groups used as references for the film's protagonists, the trio HUNTR/X.

It's one of the many reasons the musical film's soundtrack stands on its own. Filmmakers "really did their homework," says Jeff Benjamin, a music journalist who specializes in K-pop.

Indeed, they did a lot of research. One of the film's directors, Maggie Kang, said that her team prioritized "representing the fandom and the idols in a very specific way," as to not disappoint K-pop fans.

They pulled from a treasure trove of influences heard at every corner: The fictional, rival boy band Saja Boys' hit song "Soda Pop," for example, references the '90s K-pop group H.O.T.

And it has worked. "KPop Demon Hunters" is the highest charting soundtrack of 2025, with eight of its songs landing on the Billboard Hot 100. It peaked at No. 2 on the all-genre Billboard 200. To put that in perspective: Lorde's "Virgin" and Justin Bieber's "Swag" did the same.

In some ways, it recalls Disney's "Encanto," which topped the Billboard 200 and produced a No. 1 hit, "We Don't Talk About

Bruno" in 2022. Similarly, "KPop Demon Hunters" embraces "the original soundtrack, which is a lost art form," adds Benjamin.

Tamar Herman, a music journalist and author of the "Notes on K-pop" newsletter, says the movie succeeds because it embraces animated musical tradition and authentic K-pop music production styles in equal measure. She considers "Kpop Demon Hunters" to be "a musical with songs inspired by K-pop," not unlike a Jukebox musical, where the songs of ABBA are reimagined for "Mamma Mia."

The novelty of the film, too, seems to be resonating. Where many animated films rely on adapting existing intellectual property, "KPop Demon Hunters" is original. And it comes from an original perspective. "It's not completely Korean, it's not completely Western and it's kind of right in that middle," says Kang. "It's like not pulled from one side; it's kind of flavors of both. So, I think that's what makes the movie feels a little different."

Journey

And "the core story is what's drawing everybody in," says Kang. San Francisco-based cosplayer and content creator Nanci Alcántar, who goes by Naanny Lee online agrees. "It's not only a K-pop group, but it also tells a story of their journey, of how they transform into powerful warriors," said Alcántar in Spanish. For her, it goes beyond K-pop - it's about the narrative.

Kang's approach to cultural authenticity, too, may have contributed to the film's crossover appeal. Rather than explaining Korean elements like HUNTR/X's visit to a traditional medicine clinic or translating K-pop light stick culture for Western audiences, she opted for full immersion. "We just wanted everybody to just accept that they were in Korea," Kang said.

The director said this method of "throwing people into the deep end of a culture" breaks down barriers better than heavy-handed explanation. "We just wanted to keep everything feeling normal," she explained. "If you don't shine a light on it, it just becomes more easily accepted."

Zabrinah Santiago, a San Diego-based longtime K-pop fan and freelance illustrator who goes by ItmeZ online, was so inspired by the animation style of the movie that she raced to make fan art. She sold illustrated fan cards of HUNTR/X and Saja Boys at her booth at the Los Angeles Anime Expo, held in July, two weeks after the movie was released on Netflix.



Reeves

Noem was also the victim of a robbery attributed to a Chilean national residing illegally in the US, when her purse was stolen last April at a Washington restaurant.

Reeves' six watches are valued at a total of \$125,000, said Marcelo Varas, a police officer from Chile's robbery investigation squad.

The watches stolen from Reeves' Hollywood Hills home turned up in Santiago, Chile's capital, when police raided homes and uncovered stolen cars, iPhones, luxury watches and designer purses. (AP)

■ ■ ■

LOS ANGELES: Wallis Annenberg, the billionaire philanthropist who supported the arts, science, education and animal welfare causes over decades in Los Angeles, died Monday, her family said.

She was 86.

Annenberg died at home from complications related to lung cancer, the family said in a statement to the Los Angeles Times.

"Wallis transitioned peacefully and comfortably this morning to her new adventure," the statement said. "Cancer may have beaten her body but it never got her spirit. We will hold her and her wisdom in our hearts forever."

Her name adorns institutions across the Los Angeles area, including the Wallis Annenberg Building at the California Science Center, the Wallis Annenberg GenSpace senior center and the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts.

The Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing, the world's largest bridge for animals on the move, will open next year over an LA freeway.

During her 16-year tenure as president and chief executive of the Annenberg Foundation, the nonprofit organization has donated about \$1.5 billion to thousands of organizations in Southern California, the Times reported. (AP)

Docuseries showcases solo journeys across 3 countries

Thinking of traveling solo? Tracee Ellis Ross shows the way

LOS ANGELES, July 30, (AP): Tracee Ellis Ross, the actor best-known for her roles in shows like “black-ish” and “Girlfriends,” happens to be single and without children, but she doesn’t let either hold her back from experiencing a fulfilling, joyful life, especially when it comes to vacations.

When friends and family can’t join her, or if she just wants to decompress, Ross will jet-set by herself and have a fabulous time doing it. She says she takes at least one solo trip a year, and if vacationing with others, might stay a little longer to include alone time.

In a new three-part docuseries streaming on The Roku Channel, “Solo Traveling with Tracee Ellis Ross,” a camera crew follows the actor on solo trips to Marrakech, Morocco; Cancún, Mexico; and Marbella, Spain.

Ross says her first solo travel experience was in her 20s, and she’s learned over the years that even the uncomfortable moments of being by herself have given her coping skills for everyday life.

“What I find is that I gain a muscle strength around being uncomfortable,” she told The Associated Press in a recent interview. “It’s like when a baseball player swings with two bats, and then by the time they get to the one bat, it feels lighter. When you get back into your regular day life and uncomfortable things happen, I have muscle memory to know how to walk through this on my own.”



Tracee Ellis Ross arrives at the Chanel Pre-Oscar Dinner at The Beverly Hills Hotel on Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020, in Beverly Hills, Calif. (AP)

Ross shared tips to traveling as a party of one: “Start by going to dinner by yourself,” Ross says. “And if you feel nervous about doing that, go to dinner by yourself on a Tuesday night at 6 o’clock and

work your way up to going to dinner by yourself on a Saturday or Friday night at 8 o’clock.

“Walk up to the host and say, ‘I need a table for one.’ See what it feels like to be in that experience because it will only be that times 10 on vacation.”

She suggests bringing something like a book or an iPad when you’re eating alone, and also for when you’re spending time in your room.

That way, “if you end up having to stay in your hotel room the whole time and only going to a restaurant in your hotel or somewhere just around the corner, you don’t feel like you have ruined your trip and done something stupid.”

Ross says there are different reasons for solo trips and you need to understand what yours is.

“Are you going on a solo trip because you’re single and want to meet other people? Are you going on a solo trip because your life is overwhelmed with your children, your dogs, your cats, your job, your life, your survival, all the things, and you’re going to have a moment to sort of recharge and get away by yourself? Or are you going for an adventure?” she asks.

Once you’ve decided what kind of experience you’re seeking, you can make plans to achieve it realistically and safely.

No matter how independent you are, certain kinds of travelers are more vulnerable than others, especially if they’re by themselves, Ross notes. Take safety seriously when mapping out your itinerary.

“You might not feel vulnerable, but depending on where you’re going, it might leave you vulnerable. That’s a very specific distinction and something to plan for in order to have a good experience,” she says.

“If you are a Black woman, if you are a woman, if you are LGBTQIA, if you are non-binary, if you are differently abled - that might leave you vulnerable in a foreign place. Make sure you do the best diligence you can to make sure you’re going somewhere that can create a sense of safety for you with whatever those vulnerabilities,” she says.

Ross prefers to travel to destinations with resorts where she can feel safe on her own. “It allows me to not have to adventure off property,” she said. And she returns to places where she’s found comfort “all the time.”

Ross says she’s a planner by nature and does a lot of research online. She also asks around for info about best navigating the experience from beginning to end.

She likes to know whether particular airports are busy and what to expect when she gets there. If it’s a big airport and there’s a lot of walking, she makes sure she has comfortable shoes. She also will pack a personal fan if it’s going to be hot.

Knowing what to expect won’t just lead to feeling prepared and comfortable in general but feeling prepared and comfortable by yourself.

Travel



Afghan tour guide Somaya Moniry, 24, (left), and 82-year-old Australian tourist Suzanne Sandral pose for a photo next to a military helicopter during a visit to the War Museum in Kabul, Afghanistan, May 28, 2025. (AP)

Changing Afghanistan’s tourism landscape

Afghan female guides open doors for women travelers

KABUL, Afghanistan, July 30, (AP): They wandered through the museum, listening attentively as their guide explained the antiquities in display cabinets. It could have been any tour group, anywhere in the world. But there was something unusual about this one.

The group of foreigners visiting the National Museum of Afghanistan was made up only of women. Its guide was a woman, too - one of the first Afghan female tour guides in a country whose Taliban rulers impose the severest restrictions on girls and women anywhere in the world.

Somaya Moniry, 24, hadn’t known that tour guides existed, as a profession or even as a concept. But while browsing the internet for help on improving her English language skills, she stumbled upon Couchsurfing, an app where travelers connect with locals and stay in their homes.

After hosting a traveler, “I became very passionate about it and it was very interesting for me,” Moniry said. “It was very unique. I have never heard about it before, so I said: ‘Why not (do) this?’”

As she showed that first visitor around her hometown in western Afghanistan, she saw a new side to her country.

“Most of the things that we have heard (about Afghanistan) was just ... negativity. The focus of the people, focus of the media, focus of headlines, all of them were just the negativity. And definitely we get influenced by that,” Moniry said.

But for her, Afghanistan is far more nuanced. While there are undoubtedly problems in a place recovering from decades of war and chaos, there is also another side to the complex, stunning country. Her love for her homeland runs deep, and she is eager to share it. She hopes to gradually change people’s perceptions.

“Whenever ... I saw all of that natures, all those beauty, all those positivity, it changed my view totally,” Moniry said in her enthusiastic English. “And definitely this can be also for other people.”

One of those visitors is Australian Suzanne Sandral. She originally wanted to see Afghanistan in the 1960s but the pressures of having a family kept her away. Now at 82, she was part of Moniry’s women-only tour group in Kabul.

Afghanistan surprised her.

“It’s not what I expected at all. I expected to feel rather fearful. I expected to be given a lot of ... accusatory looks. Not at all,” she said during a pause in sightseeing. “Wherever you go in the streets, if you smile at someone and give them a little nod or say hello, you get a

terrific response. So it’s very different.”

Jackie Birov, a 35-year-old independent traveler from Chicago who was not part of the tour group, called the Afghan people “unbelievably hospitable.”

However, “I’m very aware that I have a lot more freedom than local women,” she said.

Four decades of war have kept tourists away from Afghanistan. But while the Taliban’s takeover of power in August 2021 sent thousands of Afghans fleeing and shocked the world, the end of its insurgency against the previous U.S.-backed government also marked a sharp drop in violence.

Attacks still occasionally occur, mainly by an Islamic State affiliate, and Western countries advise against all travel to Afghanistan. Still, the improved security is increasingly attracting foreign visitors drawn by the dramatic scenery, millennia of history and a deeply ingrained culture of hospitality.

Tourism is a fledgling industry, with annual visitors in the low thousands. Most are independent adventure travelers. But guided package tours are increasing from countries as diverse as China, Greece, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Afghanistan’s Taliban government is keen to welcome them. Isolated on the international stage - officially recognized only by Russia, which did so in July - the



Afghan tour guide Somaya Moniry, 24, (right), and Maryam, a local trainee tour guide, (center), accompany 82-year-old Australian tourist Suzanne Sandral, (left), during a visit to the National Museum in Kabul, Afghanistan, May 28, 2025. (AP)



Zoe Stephens, 31, from Britain, takes a selfie with other foreign, female tourists and Maryam, a local trainee tour guide, (at left), at Darul Aman Palace in Kabul, Afghanistan, May 28, 2025. (AP)

government sees how potentially lucrative tourism could be.

Tourist visas, typically single-entry ones valid for stays of up to 30 days, have become relatively simple to obtain from the few embassies that issue them. Regular flights connect Kabul with major transit hubs such as Dubai and Istanbul.

For some, the idea of visiting Afghanistan as a tourist is morally abhorrent, particularly given the government’s treatment of women.

Girls are banned from education above primary school level, and women live under myriad restrictions. The government dictates what they can wear in public, where they can go and who they can go with. They cannot walk in parks or eat in restaurants. Beauty salons are banned. A very limited number of professions, such as teaching and carpet weaving, are open to them.

And the rules can change quickly.

But those involved in tourism point to the positive effects that visiting Afghanistan can have.

“I truly believe in ethical tourism,” said Zoe Stephens, 31, a British tour leader at Koryo Tours, a company specializing in unusual destinations. “I believe that you can divide politics and people, and that is the main thing for me. ... A country is not a sum of its politics. It’s a sum of so much more, it’s a sum of its culture, its history, its food, and especially in Afghanistan, its people.”

Of the three recent tours Stephens led in Afghanistan, two were women-only. Working with local female guides, including Moniry, they combine key attractions with visits to women’s centers and cooking and embroidery classes from local women - worlds that are closed to male travelers.

“We always try and do something a little bit different that really makes our tours unique, as well as something that kind of gives back to the community,” Stephens said. “So I felt that working with the female tour guides does both of those things really well.”

The groups are small - one had eight women, the other three - but the company is looking to build a network of female guides across Afghanistan.

“What we try and do with this tour, especially the women’s tour, is conquer those ethical concerns,” Stephens said. “The idea is to learn about the lives of Afghan women in context.”

Other Lives

Rewriting norms

UAE women push past gender limits

DUBAI, July 30, (Xinhua): Amid the roaring hum of towering cranes at Dubai’s Jebel Ali Port, Emirati engineer Hind Al-Kaabi skillfully directs a series of precise maneuvers to load enormous containers onto a cargo ship heading to South Asia.

In a professional setting long dominated by men in the country, Al-Kaabi distinguishes herself as one of many Emirati women challenging traditional gender roles.

“When I started working here five years ago, most of my colleagues were men,” said Al-Kaabi, now a senior operations supervisor in the automation department at DP World, a multinational logistics company based in Dubai.

“Today, we have a fully Emirati women’s team managing smart crane systems and even developing algorithms to optimize shipping operations,” she added proudly. “We don’t just ask for equality -- we practice it on the ground.”

Women’s empowerment is a key pillar of the United Arab Emirates (UAE)’s Vision 2031, which promotes increased female participation in economic, scientific, and technological sectors, especially in traditionally male-dominated fields.

“We are working to remove cultural and institutional barriers to women’s participation,” said Mona Al Marri, vice president of the UAE Gender Balance Council, in an earlier statement. “We encourage women to enter fields once seen as off-limits, like aviation, artificial intelligence, mechanical engineering, and maritime transport.”

Al-Kaabi is not alone in challenging the workplace norms. In Sharjah, materials science graduate Noura Al-Suwaidi now supervises a production line at one of the UAE’s new industrial robotics factories -- part of the country’s national industrial strategy.

Performance

“I oversee more than 20 robots on assembly lines,” said Al-Suwaidi. “My role is not just operating them, but also monitoring performance and refining the software. This used to be a male-only environment, but now it’s a natural space for ambitious Emirati women.”

In Abu Dhabi, Fatima Al-Naqbi leads a research team at the Nawah Energy Company’s nuclear research center.

“Working in nuclear energy was never considered a traditional path for Emirati girls,” said Al-Naqbi. “But today, the state, family, and society all encourage it.”

Recent data from the UAE Ministry of Community Empowerment shows that the percentage of Emirati women working in engineering and technical fields rose from about 17 percent in 2015 to over 35 percent by 2025 -- a clear sign of accelerating integration of women into advanced sectors.

Leadership roles have also seen growth: women now hold nearly 28 percent of leadership positions in semi-governmental companies, thanks to localization and gender balance policies designed to promote women’s involvement in decision-making.

At DP World, female participation in operational and field roles has doubled in the past three years, driven by the company’s “Towards Full Partnership” initiative aimed at attracting and developing female talent in nontraditional workplaces.

Federal and local UAE institutions now offer mentorship and training programs to young women as early as high school, paving the way for careers in technical and industrial fields. These efforts are supported by organizations such as the UAE Gender Balance Council and the Emirati Talent Competitiveness Council.

“Empowerment is not a feminist slogan -- it’s an economic and developmental necessity,” said Maryam Al-Hammadi, policy director at the Ministry of Community Empowerment. “The country cannot realize its future competitiveness without investing in the full potential of both men and women.”

For Al-Kaabi, the transformation is more than just numbers.

“Every morning when I put on my helmet and walk along the dock,” she said, “I feel like I’m not just carrying a work bag -- I’m carrying the responsibility of opening a new path for the women of my generation.”

Dubai hosts global summit on digital health transformation

HIMSS and WHX Tech to drive digital health innovation in ME

DUBAI, UAE, July 30, (AP): The Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) will deliver world-class content, professional development and roadmaps for digital health transformation to WHX Tech, a newly launched digital health, technology and innovation exhibition in Dubai, that offers a global platform for leaders, innovators, and disruptors to explore what’s next in the industry.

Held under the patronage of the UAE Ministry of Health and Prevention, Dubai Health Authority, Dubai Health, Emirates Health Services and in partnership with HIMSS, the inaugural WHX Tech event brings together healthcare leaders, tech innovators and investors from 8-10 Sept. at the Dubai World Trade Centre to tackle the biggest challenges and shape the future of healthcare.

The partnership with Informa Markets and WHX provides a new platform for HIMSS to share critical insights, education and networking for healthcare providers, governments, startups and health services organisations worldwide.

“The Middle East is rapidly becoming an epicenter for global digital health transformation and HIMSS proudly serves as a partner to provide opportunities for collaboration, professional development, and innovation that will enable the region to improve care delivery and patient outcomes,” said Hal Wolf, HIMSS President and CEO. “We are excited to partner with WHX Tech, a groundbreaking healthcare digital event that aligns with the HIMSS mission to reform the global health ecosystem through the power of information and technology.”

HIMSS members can unlock exclusive discounts to join thousands of digital health professionals, hundreds of global innovators and leading expert speakers exploring AI breakthroughs, interoperability, cybersecurity, investment trends and workforce development. Thought leaders, including government leaders and health system executives, will deliver actionable insights on scaling digital health innovations.

Meet the health experts who will shape the future of healthcare at WHX Tech:

WHX Tech attendees can also attend a bootcamp for Cer-

tified Professionals in Healthcare Information and Management Systems (CPHIMS®) and Certified Professional in Digital Health Transformation Strategy (CPDHTS®) certification exams, which support career moves and signal deep professional value to health organizations.

The HIMSS Connect experience within the exhibition hall will showcase real-world digital health transformation success stories driven by the HIMSS Maturity Models that bridge the gap between technology and healthcare. The space will also feature the HIMSS TV recording booth, conducting interviews with thought leaders from across the healthcare industry.

Join thousands of professionals this September in Dubai to launch the future of health and technology. Learn more about WHX Tech.

Vision To realize the full health potential of every human, everywhere.

Mission Reform the global health ecosystem through the power of information and technology.

HIMSS is a global advisor, thought leader and member-based society committed to reforming the global health ecosystem through the power of information and technology. As a mission-driven nonprofit, HIMSS offers a unique depth and breadth of expertise in health innovation, public policy, workforce development, research and digital health transformation to advise leaders, stakeholders and influencers across the global health ecosystem on best practices. With a community-centric approach, our innovation engine delivers key insights, education and engaging events to healthcare providers, payers, governments, startups, life sciences and other health services organizations, ensuring they have the right information at the point of decision.

HIMSS has served the global health community for more than 60 years, with focused operations across North America, Europe, the United Kingdom, the Middle East and Asia-Pacific. Our members include more than 125,000 individuals, 480+ provider organizations, 470 nonprofit partners and 650 health services organizations.

4 in 10 kids report harm on YouTube: govt

Australia bans YouTube for under-16s

MELBOURNE, Australia, July 30, (AP): The Australian government announced YouTube will be among the social media platforms that must ensure account holders are at least 16-years-old from December, reversing a position taken months ago on the popular video-sharing service.

YouTube was listed as an exemption in November last year when the Parliament passed world-first laws that will ban Australian children younger than 16 from platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok and X.

Communications Minister Anika Wells released rules Wednesday that decide which online services are defined as “age-restricted social media platforms” and which avoid the age limit.

The age restrictions take effect Dec. 10 and platforms will face fines of up to 50 million Australian dollars (\$33 million) for “failing to take responsible steps” to exclude underage account holders, a government statement said. The steps are not defined.

Wells defended applying the restrictions to YouTube and said the government would not be intimidated by threats of legal action from the platform’s US owner, Alphabet Inc.

“The evidence cannot be ignored that four out of 10 Australian kids report that their most recent harm was



The YouTube app is displayed on an iPad in Baltimore. (AP)

on YouTube,” Wells told reporters, referring to government research. “We will not be intimidated by legal threats when this is a genuine fight for the wellbeing of Australian kids.”

Children will be able to access YouTube but will not be allowed to have their own YouTube accounts.

YouTube said the government’s decision “reverses a clear, public commitment to exclude YouTube from this ban.”

“We share the government’s goal of addressing and reducing online harms. Our position remains clear: YouTube is a video sharing platform with a library of free, high-quality content, increasingly viewed on TV screens. It’s not social media,” a YouTube statement said, noting it will consider next steps and engage with the government.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said Australia would campaign at a

United Nations forum in New York in September for international support for banning children from social media.

“I know from the discussions I’ve had with other leaders that they are looking at this and they are considering what impact social media is having on young people in their respective nations,” Albanese said. “It is a common experience. This is not an Australian experience.”

Last year, the government commissioned an evaluation of age assurance technologies that was to report last month on how young children could be excluded from social media.

The government had yet to receive that evaluation’s final recommendations, Wells said. But she added the platform users won’t have to upload documents such as passports and driver’s licenses to prove their age.

“Platforms have to provide an alternative to providing your own personal identification documents to satisfy themselves of age,” Wells said. “These platforms know with deadly accuracy who we are, what we do and when we do it. And they know that you’ve had a Facebook account since 2009, so they know that you are over 16.”

Exempt services include online gaming, messaging, education and health apps. They are excluded because they are considered less harmful to children.

‘Maiden rocket launch a significant success’

First Australian-made rocket crashes on debut

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, July 30, (AP): The first Australian-made rocket to attempt to reach orbit from the country’s soil crashed after 14 seconds of flight on Wednesday.

The rocket Eris, launched by Gilmour Space Technologies, was the first Australian-designed and manufactured orbital launch vehicle to lift off from the country and was designed to carry small satellites to orbit. It launched Wednesday morning local time in a test flight from a spaceport near the small town of Bowen in the north of Queensland state.

In videos published by Australian news outlets, the 23-meter (75-foot) rocket appeared to clear the launch tower and hovered in the air before falling out of sight. Plumes of smoke were seen rising above the site.

No injuries were reported.

The company hailed the launch as a success in a statement posted to Facebook. A spokesperson said all four hybrid-propelled engines ignited and the maiden flight included 23 seconds of engine burn time and 14 seconds of flight.

Gilmour Space Technologies had planned previous launches of the rock-



In this photo provided by Gilmour Space Technologies an Eris rocket is launched on Wednesday, July 30, near Bowen, Australia. (AP)

et, in May and earlier this month, but called off those operations because of technical issues and bad weather.

CEO Adam Gilmour said in a statement he was pleased the rocket got off the launchpad.

“Of course I would have liked more flight time but happy with this,” he wrote on LinkedIn. Gilmour said in February that it was “almost unheard of” for a private rocket company to successfully launch to orbit on its first attempt.

The firm had earlier said it would consider the launch a success if the rocket left the ground. The launch site

infrastructure “remained intact,” the statement said.

Mayor Ry Collins of the local Whitsunday Regional Council said the completed launch was a “huge achievement” even though the vehicle didn’t reach orbit.

“This is an important first step towards the giant leap of a future commercial space industry right here in our region,” he wrote on Facebook.

Gilmour Space Technologies has private funders and was awarded a 5 million Australian dollar (\$3.2 million) grant this month from the country’s federal government for the development of the Eris rocket. It followed the firm’s AU\$52 million grant agreement with the government in 2023 to advance the development and commercialization of new space technologies in Australia.

The country has been the site of hundreds of suborbital vehicle launches but there have only been two successful launches to orbit from Australia before, according to the aerospace news platform NASASpaceFlight. The maiden Eris test flight was the first orbital launch attempt from Australia in more than 50 years.

Tragic death exposes freshwater lake dangers

What to know about the brain-eating amoeba that killed a child in the US

COLUMBIA, S.C., July 30, (AP): A 12-year-old boy died from a brain-eating amoeba two weeks after a holiday weekend on a popular South Carolina lake.

The brain-eating amoeba enters the body when water is forced up the nose, like when someone jumps or dives in the water.

It causes an infection that swells the brain and destroys tissue. Fewer than 10 cases are reported each year in the US, but almost all are fatal.

Here are some things to know about the amoeba, its latest victim and other dangers on freshwater lakes:

The amoeba’s scientific name is Naegleria fowleri and it is most dangerous in water that stays for a while over 77 degrees Fahrenheit (25 degrees Celsius), including in lakes and rivers in the US and other places with hot, sometimes dry summers like Pakistan and Australia. Infections have been reported in 26 US states as far north as Minnesota.

The amoeba enters the brain through the olfactory nerve in the nose. Once inside, it causes an infection called primary amebic meningoencephalitis.

Symptoms start as a fairly standard headache and nausea. By the time the pain becomes severe, it is almost always too late to save the infected person. Of the 167 cases reported in the US between 1962 and 2024, only four people have survived, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Most of the deaths happened within five days of getting sick, according to the CDC.

One infection in a body of water doesn’t increase the chances of another infection in the same body of water,



Clarence and Ebony Carr hug as they talk about the death of their son from a brain-eating amoeba he got at a popular South Carolina lake on Tuesday, July 29, in Columbia, S.C. (AP)

the agency said. The amoeba cannot move from one person to another.

It was the first death from the amoeba in South Carolina since 2016, the CDC said.

Jaysen Carr went swimming at Lake Murray about 15 miles (24 kilometers) west of Columbia over the July Fourth weekend.

He got sick several days later and died on July 18.

His father and mother had never heard of the amoeba before a doctor in tears told them what tests of his spinal fluid had found.

Clarence Carr said he was shocked to learn South Carolina, like most other US states, has no law requiring public reporting of deaths or infections from the amoeba. The lake wasn’t closed

and no water testing was performed.

“My son was a very smart individual. If he had one warning, he would have thought swimming in the lake was a bad idea,” Carr said.

The amoeba is fairly common and is most dangerous when the water is warm.

There is no science-based threshold for what level of the organism in the water would be safe or unsafe, and it would be difficult to test water regularly, the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services said in a statement.

Researchers are trying to figure out why the infections are so rare. Some people have been found to have had antibodies, signaling they may have survived exposure. Others may die from brain swelling and other problems without the amoeba ever being detected.

US cracks down on kratom-related products

WASHINGTON, July 30, (AP): US health officials are warning Americans about the risks of an opioid-related ingredient increasingly added to energy drinks, gummies and supplements sold at gas stations and convenience stores, recommending a nationwide ban.

The chemical, known as 7- hydroxymitragynine, is a component of kratom, a plant native to Southeast Asia that has gained popularity in the US as an unapproved treatment for pain, anxiety and drug dependence.

In recent months, dietary supplement companies that sell kratom have been urging the Food and Drug Administration to crack down on the products containing 7-OH, portraying it as a dangerously concentrated, synthetic form of the original ingredient.

The FDA action “is not focused on natural kratom leaf products,” according to a statement Tuesday by the US Department of Health and Human Services.

The agency said it was releasing a report to educate about the risks of “7-OH and its distinction from the kratom plant leaf.” Regulators are also recommending that the ingredient be placed on the federal government’s most restrictive list of illegal drugs, which includes LSD and heroin.

“7-OH is an opioid that can be more potent than morphine,” said FDA Commissioner Marty Makary. “We need regulation and public education to prevent another wave of the opioid epidemic.”

The agency’s recommendation will be reviewed by the Drug Enforcement Administration, which sets federal rules for high-risk drugs including prescription medicines and illicit

substances. A national ban wouldn’t take effect until the agency drafts and finalizes new rules governing the ingredient.

Federal regulators have been scrutinizing kratom for about a decade after reports of addiction, injury and overdose. But users and distributors have long opposed efforts to regulate it, saying kratom could be a safer alternative to opioid painkillers that sparked the ongoing drug addiction epidemic.

Last month, the FDA issued warning letters to seven companies selling drinks, gummies and powders infused with 7-OH. Regulators said the products violated FDA rules because they have not been evaluated for safety and, in some cases, claimed to treat medical conditions, including pain, arthritis and anxiety.

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‘We’re really pleased to be able to welcome Bev back to football’

Canada coach banned in Olympic drone spying scandal set to resume career

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, July 30, (AP): The Canada coach banned for her role in a drone spying scandal at the Paris Olympics has been hired as head coach of New Zealand’s only professional women’s team.

Bev Priestman, who recently finished a one-year suspension from all soccer-related activity, signed a two-year deal with Wellington Phoenix in New Zealand’s capital city.

It’s a twist of fate for Priestman, who was suspended after a FIFA investigation found that she along with other coaching staff had used drones to spy on the New Zealand women’s national team prior to Canada’s first match at the Paris Olympics. She was fired as head coach of Canada’s women’s national team after a review by Canada Soccer.

“We’re really pleased to be able to welcome Bev back to football,” Phoenix

chairman Rob Morrison said Wednesday. “We all know she’s had a period of time away from the game. But we understand the circumstances and we’re really comfortable with this appointment.”

Priestman guided Canada to a gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics and has coached at four Women’s World Cups, three Olympic Games and three FIFA youth World Cups. She also has previously worked in New Zealand, in coaching development in Wellington and then as New Zealand Football’s development director.

In a statement, Priestman thanked the club and officials for “giving me this chance to come back to the game I love and hopefully bring some special moments to not only this city, but this country.”

Phoenix “is a fantastic club with big ambitions, world-class facilities and a

phenomenal fan base,” she said. “We have a responsibility now to fly the flag for this country and try to do something special.”

Wellington Phoenix plays in Australia’s top-flight women’s competition, A-League Women, and Priestman is targeting the title.

“There’ll be a hunger and a desire there because we know we want to achieve a first for this club and to do that is going to take something special,” she said in the club’s statement.

Stephen Conroy, chairman of Australian Professional Leagues, said Priestman’s signing was a “fantastic endorsement” for the competition.

“Bev is a world-renowned national team head coach and Olympic champion,” Conroy said, “and her experience and expertise will be a huge boost for the up-and-coming squad at the Phoenix.”

Fernandez upset in Montreal, blames schedule for early exit



Coco Gauff of the USA returns the ball during second round tennis action against Danielle Collins of the USA at the National Bank Open tennis tournament in Montreal. (AP)

Gauff edges Collins in marathon battle

MONTREAL, July 30, (AP): Leylah Fernandez voiced frustration over scheduling at the National Bank Open after her early exit from her home tournament Tuesday, just two days after winning the title in Washington.

The Canadian star was defeated 6-4, 6-1 by Australian qualifier Maya Joint in just 1 hour and 15 minutes. Ranked No. 24 in the world, Fernandez had been hoping for more rest between tournaments after capturing her fourth WTA title on Sunday.

Fernandez said she was promised a slot in the night session to allow for recovery time but was disappointed to learn – while still traveling on Sunday – that she would instead play during the day on Tuesday.

“I did not receive that,” Fernandez said. “That hurt me because I was really looking forward to playing at night. But I guess it came down to some political issues at that point.”

Top-seeded Coco Gauff instead



Aoi Ito, of Japan, plays a shot to Jasmine Paolini, of Italy, during a match at the National Bank Open women’s tennis tournament in Montreal. (AP)

headlined night session, edging fellow American Danielle Collins in a marathon 7-5, 4-6, 7-6 (2) battle, despite serving 23 double faults. It was Gauff’s first victory since finishing runner-up at the French Open.

Tournament director Valerie Tetreault acknowledged Fernandez’s disappointment and said she

had advocated for the player.

“I promised Leylah I would fight so she could have the recovery time she needed,” Tetreault said. “But I didn’t win that fight.”

She explained that while tournament organizers can make requests, the final decision rests with the WTA Tour.

“I received the request for her to play in the evening, and I pushed as much as I could,” Tetreault said.

Tetreault added that organizers had already made accommodations for Fernandez. Although her half of the draw began play Sunday, Fernandez’s match was among the last three first-round contests scheduled for Tuesday.

Tennis Canada echoed this in a statement: “WTA protocols require first-round matches to be completed before second-round play begins, to maintain fairness. Given Leylah won the title in Washington on Sunday, she could not arrive in Montreal until early Monday morning. Therefore, the WTA scheduled her match in the latest possible first-round slot.”

Elsewhere at the tournament, No. 4 seed Mirra Andreeva advanced to the third round after 2019 U.S. Open champion Bianca Andreescu withdrew due to an ankle injury sustained in her first-round win. In other action, No. 7 seed Jasmine Paolini was upset in a third-set tiebreaker by Japan’s Aoi Ito, while No. 8 seed Emma Navarro cruised past Canada’s Rebecca Marino 6-1, 6-2.

More games coming to Manchester & Paris

Orlando, Memphis to play in Berlin & London this season

LONDON, July 30, (AP): The NBA will play at least six regular-season games in Europe over the next three seasons, starting with a pair of games between the Memphis Grizzlies and Orlando Magic this season.

The Grizzlies and Magic will play in Berlin on Jan. 15, then in London on Jan. 18.

The league will play games at Manchester, England and Paris in the 2026-27 season, then return to Berlin and Paris for games in the 2027-28 season. The games will be held at Berlin’s Uber Arena, London’s The O2, Manchester’s Co-op Live and Paris’ Accor Arena.

“Announcing the next three season’s regular-season games in Europe reflects the incredible momentum and appetite for NBA basketball in France, Germany, the UK and across the region,” said George Aiavzoglou, the NBA’s managing director for Europe and the Middle East. “We look forward to welcoming the Grizzlies and the Magic to Berlin and London and to engaging fans, players and the local communities through the games and the surrounding events.”



In this file photo, Memphis Grizzlies guard Ja Morant watches from the bench during the first half in Game 4 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series against the Oklahoma City Thunder in Memphis, Tenn. (AP)

The Berlin game in January will be the NBA’s 14th in Germany since 1984, but the first regular-season game in the country – and will serve as a homecoming for Magic players Franz and Moritz Wagner, both of whom play for Germany’s national team.

The London game this season will be the 10th regular-season contest in that city. Manchester has never played host to a regular-season game, and Paris has been the site of five regular-season contests – including two last season between the Indiana Pacers and San Antonio Spurs. French star Victor Wembanyama plays for the Spurs, which made them a logical choice to go to Paris for last season’s series of games.

The full NBA schedule for this season is expected to be released in mid-August. The dates and participating teams for the games in 2027 and 2028 will be announced prior to the 2026-27 and 2027-28 NBA seasons, respectively.

The Dallas Mavericks hired Ethan Casson in a new role as president Tuesday, giving CEO Rick Welts someone to handle daily operations on the business side while he focuses on the franchise’s plans for a new arena.

Casson was most recently CEO of the Minnesota Timberwolves along with the WNBA’s Lynx and the G-League’s

Iowa Wolves. He served in that role for nine years.

The addition of Casson comes seven months after Welts came out of retirement to replace Cynt Marshall, who was hired by then-owner Mark Cuban in the wake of a sexual harassment scandal in the business office of the Mavericks.

Cuban sold his majority interest in the club to the Las Vegas-based Adelson and Dumont families in late 2023. Patrick Dumont took over as the team’s governor, with Cuban keeping a minority stake and becoming alternate governor.

“The Mavericks are committed to being an elite professional sports franchise, and fundamental to that goal is adding top-tier executives like Ethan Casson to our senior management team,” Dumont said.

Welts has said the club hopes to open a new arena in 2031. In his previous role with Golden State, Welts spearheaded the plan that moved the Warriors across the bay to San Francisco from Oakland.

The Mavericks share American Airlines Center with the NHL’s Dallas Stars, and Welts has said the NBA club anticipates going solo with a new arena. Welts has said the Mavs want the new arena to be in Dallas rather than one of the suburbs.

Before joining the Timberwolves, Casson was CEO of the San Francisco 49ers when the NFL franchise made the move to Levi’s Stadium in Santa Clara from Candlestick Park. Casson struck the naming rights deal with Levi’s.

“He will be my partner in charting the team into the future and will allow me to devote more time to our strategic priorities, including the building of our new arena and entertainment district in Dallas, and our transition from a basketball organization to a sports and entertainment company operating our own venue,” Welts said.

Khaka returns to Premier League with move to Sunderland

Man City completes signing of goalkeeper Trafford from Burnley

MANCHESTER, England, July 30, (Agencies): Manchester City completed the signing of James Trafford from Burnley with the goalkeeper returning to the club where he began his career as an academy player.

Trafford signed a five-year contract and was handed the No. 1 jersey.

“Rejoining City is such a special and proud moment both for me and my family. I always dreamed that one day I would be able to come back to Manchester City,” Trafford said. “This is the place I call home.”

City reportedly activated a 27 million pound (\$36 million) buy-back clause.

Trafford’s return comes after leaving City for Burnley in 2023 where he helped the club secure promotion to the Premier League last season. He kept a record 29 clean sheets in the second-tier Championship last term.

“James is already one of the most accomplished young goal-

keepers in the English game, and we are delighted to welcome him back to Manchester City,” said City director of football Hugo Viana. “He has all the attributes a top-class goalkeeper requires.”

The 22-year-old Trafford is City’s sixth signing of the off-season since its four-year run as English champion was ended by Liverpool.

City manager Pep Guardiola had reshaped his team with the signings of Rayan Ait-Nouri, Tijjani Reijnders, Marcus Bettinelli, Rayan Cherki and Sverre Nypan.

□ □ □

Granit Khaka returned to the Premier League with a move to newly-promoted Sunderland.

The former Arsenal captain joined from Bayer Leverkusen and signed a three-year contract at the Stadium of Light.

The 32-year-old Khaka spent seven years at Arsenal, where he won two FA Cups before moving to Germany and helping Leverkus-

en lift the Bundesliga title in 2024 as part of a league and cup double.

At Sunderland, his primary task will likely be to help the club avoid relegation.

“We are back to where this club needs to be, and we want to stay here to write our own history. I feel that I’m ready to help the team with my experience but with quality as well,” Khaka said.

Khaka is captain of Switzerland and has won 137 caps for his country.

Sunderland sporting director Kristiaan Speakman said the signing of Khaka was a “significant endorsement of our ambition and our desire to build a team our supporters can be proud of in the Premier League.”

“His accomplishments and quality need little introduction – he’s a player of the highest calibre on and off the field,” Speakman said.

□ □ □

Everton has completed the signing of 19-year-old Moroccan in-



In this file photo, Leverkusen’s Granit Khaka gestures during the Champions League opening phase soccer match between Bayer Leverkusen and Sparta Prague at the BayArena in Leverkusen, Germany. (AP)

ternational defender Adam Aznou from Bayern Munich.

The left-back has agreed a four-year contract with the club for a price that hasn’t been confirmed, but thought to be in the region of

eight million pounds (10.7 million U.S. dollars).

Everton coach David Moyes confirmed the club was interested in Aznou, who has played three times for his country, on Sunday

after his side lost a pre-season friendly game to Bournemouth in the United States.

Last season saw Aznou make four first-team appearances for Bayern before spending the second half of the season on loan at La Liga strugglers Valladolid, where he played 13 times.

“I’m so happy to be here. I’m so proud to be part of this team,” commented Aznou on the Everton website.

“The project they gave me is really good. The Premier League is the best league in the world so I’m really excited to start,” he added, commenting that he was looking forward to debuting at the club’s new Everton Stadium.

“The stadium is really nice. It gives you a good feeling and it’s good for our fans to support us. It’s perfect for us,” he said.

Moyes commented that the club still needs to make around five more signings to have its squad ready for the new Premier League season.

Brazil reaches fifth straight Copa Femenina final



Uruguay's Juliana Viera, left, and Brazil's Luany go for a header during a Women's Copa America semifinal soccer match at Rodrigo Paz Delgado stadium in Quito, Ecuador. (AP)



Colombia's Linda Caicedo views the ball during a Women's Copa America semifinal soccer match against Argentina at Rodrigo Paz Delgado stadium in Quito, Ecuador. (AP)

Showdown with Colombia looms

QUITO, Ecuador, July 30, (AP): With three goals in the first half-hour, defending champion Brazil eased past Uruguay 5-1 to qualify for the Copa America Femenina final for the fifth straight tournament.

Amanda Gutierrez opened the scoring in the 11th minute, Giovana Queiroz doubled the lead two minutes later and six-time player of the year Marta converted on a penalty kick in the 27th for the Brazilians, who have

won the past four editions of the Copa America. Gutierrez added a goal in the 65th off a free kick, giving her five for the tournament. She's behind only Paraguay's Claudia Martinez, who has six. Dudinha finished off the scoring in the 86th. Brazil will play for the championship next Saturday against Colombia, which progressed to the final by edging Argentina 5-4 on penalty kicks on Monday. The match will be played at Estadio Rodrigo Paz Delgado, in the capital Quito.

It will be a rematch of the final of the 2022 Copa America Femenina that was played in Colombia and that Brazil won 1-0. The 39-year-old Marta, who has played in six World Cups and six Olympics, has 120 goals in 205 games with Brazil. The Brazilian women have won eight of the nine editions of the Copa America and are considered the best team in South America. Their best finish at the World Cup was runner-up in 2007 and they have reached the Olympic final three times, including in Paris 2024, where they lost to the U.S.

Tunisia's Al-Haj Youssef joins Al-Salmiya handball team



A file photo of Al-Haj Youssef in action.

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Al-Salmiya Sports Club has strengthened its handball squad with the signing of Tunisian player Khaled Al-Haj Youssef in preparation for the upcoming season.

Al-Haj Youssef brings extensive experience from across the Gulf region, having previously played for several prominent clubs. His past teams include Kuwait Club, Qadsia, Al-Duhail, Al-Arabi, and Al-Sadd of Qatar, as well as Saudi Arabia's Al-Safa. He is regarded as one of the top Arab handball players with a strong track record in regional competitions.

This signing is part of Al-Salmiya's broader efforts to build a competitive team for the new

season. The club has also renewed the contracts of its technical staff, including national coach Yaqoub Al-Mousawi, performance analyst Hussein Al-Tamimi, assistant coach Suleiman Al-Mousawi, and fitness trainer Saud Al-Sammak.

In addition to Al-Haj Youssef, the club renewed the contract of fellow Tunisian professional Mohamed Al-Soussi and secured the services of local players Mohammed Al-Atiya, Hussein Al-Salman, and goalkeepers Abdullah Al-Fadli and Hamad Dashti. The club also extended the contract of player Abdullah Al-Enezi.

Al-Salmiya finished fifth in last season's handball league and is aiming to improve its performance in the upcoming season, with aspirations to contend for domestic titles.

Kuwait Oly team to compete in the upcoming Futsal League

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: The draw for the 2025-2026 indoor futsal season was conducted recently, with the presence of Dr. Saleh Al-Majroob, Secretary-General of the Kuwait Football Association, Faraj Al-Faraj, Director of Indoor Competitions, club representatives, and the administrative staff of the Kuwait Olympic team.

The draw included fixtures for the league, the Federation Cup, the third edition of the Age Group Futsal Cup, as well as league and cup tournaments for youth and junior categories.

Participating clubs in the futsal competitions include Kuwait Club, Al-Arabi, Qadsia, Kazma, Al-Tadhamon, Yarmouk, Al-Nasr, and Al-Sulaibikhat. Notably, the Kuwait Olympic team will make its debut in the Age Group competition as part of the federation's strategic plan to prepare



Dr. Saleh Al-Majroob, Secretary-General of the Kuwait Football Association.

and develop the team ahead of future commitments.

Soccer referees tech extended to announce all VAR decisions in Germany and widen use of bodycams

FRANKFURT, Germany, July 30, (AP): Fans and television audiences in Germany will get more information on video reviews and footage from body cameras worn by referees in the Bundesliga next season.

Stadium announcements will explain all video review decisions and more footage from bodycams will be made available, the German league said Wednesday.

Referees will broadcast all their video-reviewed decisions in top-

tier Bundesliga stadiums from the Aug. 22 start of the season and games in the second tier from Oct. 17, the league said. Trials in some Bundesliga stadiums had started in January.

Trials with body cameras can now be extended worldwide to domestic competition organizers who apply, the FIFA-backed soccer rules panel known as IFAB said Wednesday in a separate news release.

Bodycam footage was previ-

ously restricted to FIFA events including the Club World Cup in the United States in recent weeks.

Fans were shown eye-level footage in the heart of the action gathered by small cameras attached to the headsets referees wear to communicate with their assistant match officials.

On video reviews, fans and broadcasters have long wanted more and faster information about why an in-play decision was made, upheld or overturned by the

referee in the VAR system.

When VAR was introduced ahead of the men's 2018 World Cup, fans in the stadium were not shown replays of incidents and referees did not have to explain the reasons for a decision, which was simply displayed on giant screens.

The Bundesliga said its referees will address the stadium after they consult a field-side monitor or change a decision on advice from a video review assistant.

'I'm here to spread joy'

Félix links up with Cristiano Ronaldo at Al Nassr

MANCHESTER, England, July 30, (AP): João Félix took his total transfer cost to around \$260 million Tuesday when completing his latest move - this time to Saudi Arabian club Al Nassr.

The Portugal forward has teamed up with compatriot Cristiano Ronaldo, joining from Chelsea for a reported initial fee of 30 million euros (\$34.6 million) and signing a two-year contract.

"I'm here to spread joy. Let's win together," Félix said in a video announcing his arrival, shared on Al Nassr's social media channels.

He is the latest star player from Europe to move to Saudi Arabia as part of the kingdom's bid to become a major force in soccer. But his transfer from Club World Cup winner Chelsea is the latest in a long line of moves for a player who holds the record for the fourth most expensive signing in history, but has failed to live up to the expectations placed on him so early in his career.

Still only 25, Félix has time to hit the heights he seemed destined



In this file photo, AC Milan's Joao Felix runs during the Serie A soccer match between AC Milan and Inter Milan at the San Siro stadium, in Milan, Italy. (AP)

for when joining Spanish giant Atletico Madrid from Benfica for \$140 million in 2019. But his career has stalled since then with a series of loans to top teams including Chelsea, Barcelona and most recently AC Milan failing to see

him establish himself among the very elite.

According to transfer date website Transfermarkt, Félix is behind only Neymar (222 million euros (\$256 million)), Kylian Mbappe (180m euros (\$208 million))

and Philippe Coutinho and Ousmane Dembele (both 135m euros (\$155.8 million)) on the list of highest transfer fees in soccer.

His value has dropped significantly - joining Chelsea for a reported \$60 million last year, with his fee almost halving again to join Al Nassr.

The move to Saudi Arabia is not guaranteed to reignite his career. While some have flourished, including the likes of Ronaldo and Aleksandar Mitrović, Neymar left after an injury-disrupted time at Al-Hilal and Jordan Henderson and Jhon Durán only stayed for months before moving on.

Al Nassr will hope Félix's arrival will see it win the title it has been waiting for since signing Ronaldo in a spectacular move late in 2022.

While the Portugal great has helped raise the profile of Saudi Arabian soccer and continued to score at a prolific rate, he has had to watch rivals Al Ittihad (twice) and Al-Hilal crowned champion during his time in the league.

Bayern signs Diaz from Liverpool on 4-year deal

LONDON, July 30, (Xinhua): Colombia international winger Luis Diaz has completed a transfer to Bayern Munich, bringing an end to his three-and-a-half-year spell with Liverpool.

"The Colombian departs the Reds having played a significant role in the lifting of four major trophies since arriving from FC Porto in early 2022, highlighted by Premier League title glory last term," Liverpool said in an official statement on Wednesday.

The 28-year-old has signed a four-year contract with the Bundesliga champions, following Liverpool's acceptance of a reported £65.5 million bid.

"I arrived with all the dreams in the world, and I am leaving proud of everything we achieved together," Diaz wrote on Instagram.

"I have met incredible people, fabulous colleagues, coaches who helped me a lot, and extraor-

dinary fans. Liverpool is, indeed, a special team, and I will keep everyone in my heart.

Diaz also made reference to former Liverpool midfielder Diogo Jota, who died in a car accident earlier this month.

"It's good to be leaving with the feeling of a duty fulfilled, and, most of all, to be leaving a champion. It would have been the perfect goodbye if we hadn't lost one of ours in such a tragic way."

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NEWS



Kuwait Basketball Association President Dhari Barjas.

Sports

Kuwait using tournament to build future stars

Barjas commends Bahrain’s exceptional hosting of Arab Basketball Championship

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

MANAMA, July 30: Kuwait Basketball Association President Dhari Barjas praised Bahrain for its outstanding organization of the 26th Arab Basketball Championship, which is set to conclude this Saturday.

Barjas emphasized that Bahrain’s success in hosting the tournament comes as no surprise, given its long-standing reputation for organizing major sporting events with excellence. He noted that Bahrain stepped in on extremely short notice after Tunisia withdrew from hosting duties, yet still managed to deliver a high-level tournament.

“Bahrain’s ability to successfully host this championship under such circumstances highlights its strong organizational capacity,” Barjas said during his visit to the

tournament. “This is also reflected in the confidence shown by the International Basketball Federation, which chose Manama as the venue for its most recent Congress – proof of Bahrain’s credibility in hosting major sports events.”

Barjas also pointed out the high level of competition, saying that all participating teams came well-prepared, making it difficult to predict a winner. “I expect the championship race to go down to the final round,” he added.

He noted that Kuwait’s participation was focused on providing young players the opportunity to gain experience by competing against top Arab teams. He expressed satisfaction with the team’s performance, despite the early losses.

Barjas also reassured fans about the condition of player Hussein Ashkanani, who suffered a serious shoulder dislocation during the game against Egypt. Ashkanani underwent successful surgery in Bahrain and is now on the path to recovery.

Barjas extended his gratitude to Sheikh Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa, President of the Bahrain Olympic Committee, for personally covering the cost of the player’s treatment.

In the fourth round of matches held, Bahrain defeated Egypt 91–85, Algeria beat Qatar 92–66, and Tunisia overcame the UAE 78–70. Tunisia currently leads the standings with 7 points, followed by Algeria, the UAE, and Bahrain with 6 points each. Egypt trails with 5 points, while Kuwait and Qatar share the bottom with 3 points apiece.

Kuwait, who had lost its first three matches, played its fourth game late Wednesday night against Algeria.

All teams are scheduled to rest today, with tournament action resuming on Friday and concluding Saturday.

Kuwait U-17 volleyball team embarks on Cairo camp ahead of Arab Championship



Kuwait U-17 I volleyball team.

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: The Kuwait U-17 I volleyball team departed today for Cairo, Egypt, to launch a two-week training camp as part of its preparations for the 17th Arab Championship, which will be held in Amman, Jordan, from August 14 to 26. The team is scheduled to play six

friendly matches during the camp to build form and cohesion.

According to the tournament draw, Kuwait has been placed in Group B. The team kicks off its campaign against Palestine on August 16, then faces Bahrain on August 17, Saudi Arabia on August 18, and wraps up the group stage against Iraq on August 20.

The top four teams from each group

will qualify for the quarterfinals. In that round, the Group A winner will meet the fourth-placed team from Group B, while the Group B winner will take on the fourth-placed team from Group A. Second- and third-placed teams within each group will also face each other.

Winners of the quarterfinals will progress to the semifinals, while the losing sides will compete for positions five through eight.

Kuwait Oly team ‘sharpens’ form for AFC U-23 quest against Kazma

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 30: Kuwait’s Olympic football team is set to face Kazma in a friendly match today at 6:00 pm at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium, as both sides continue their preparations for upcoming competitions.

Kazma is gearing up for the new Zain Premier League season, which kicks off on September 12. Meanwhile, the Olympic team is in the midst of its training program ahead of the AFC U-23 Asian Cup qualifiers, scheduled to take place in Myanmar from September 1 to 9. Kuwait has been drawn into Group B alongside Japan, Afghanistan, and host Myanmar. The qualifiers serve as a pathway to the AFC U-23 Asian Cup finals, which will be hosted by Saudi Arabia in January 2026.

As part of its build-up, the Olympic squad will play a second friendly next week against Fahaheel before heading to Thailand in mid-August for a training camp that will finalize preparations for the qualifiers.

In a separate development, Al-Arabi kicks off its overseas training camp in Abu Dhabi with a friendly match against UAE’s Hatta Club this evening at 6:00 pm.

The match forms part of Al-Arabi’s buildup for its crucial AFC Challenge League playoff match against Maziya S&RC of the Maldives, set to be played away on August 12. The Kuwaiti side is determined to progress to the group stage of the newly introduced competition.

Al-Arabi will also face Baniyas Club of the UAE in a second friendly on August 6 before traveling to the Maldives on August 8 to conclude their preparations.

The club has now completed its roster of foreign signings, which includes Congolese-Belgian forward Julien Ngoy, French-Guinean midfielder Hassimi Fadiga, Ugandan defender Kenneth Ssemakula, and Nigerian duo Anayo Iwuala and Christopher John.

Portuguese head coach Marco Alves is expected to use today’s match to assess his squad depth, with a particular focus on integrating the foreign players and gauging their



Alves gives instructions to the players with Hayel in attendance.

match readiness. Additionally, playing in humid conditions is part of the team’s strategy to acclimatize ahead of the Maldives trip, where high humidity is a consistent environmental factor.

Assistant coach Ahmad Hael expressed satisfaction with the camp’s progress, noting that the players have shown strong commitment and are strictly adhering to the guidance of the coaching and administrative teams.

Hael emphasized that Al-Arabi’s ambition is not only to advance in the AFC Challenge League but also to compete for silverware across all domestic and regional competitions in the upcoming season.

Marchand shatters 200m IM world record

Tunisia’s Jaouadi wins 800 free

SINGAPORE, July 30, (AP): **Léon Marchand broke the world record in the 200-meter individual medley on Wednesday at the world championships in Singapore, clocking 1 minute, 52.61 seconds to surpass the 1:54.00 set in 2011 by American Ryan Lochte.**

The Frenchman set the mark swimming in the semifinals and, in theory, could break it again in Thursday’s finals.

Marchand won four Olympic gold medals a year ago in Paris, but he’s swimming only the 200 and 400 medley - and relays - in Singapore. Planning the lighter schedule in what he calls a “transition year” keeps him fresh to chase the world marks.

Marchand didn’t just break the 14-year-old record; he shattered it.

“What’s crazy is that it’s a whole

second - and it’s still hard to believe,” he said. “1:52 on the 200 meters - that’s insane.”

Marchand will swim the 400 IM on Sunday, the final day of the world championships. He holds the record of 4:02.50, set at the 2023 World Championships in Fukuoka, Japan. And it seems likely to go.

Asked about swimming a lighter schedule, he replied in an understatement: “It was probably the right decision.”

Marchand was about 1.8 seconds under the world record after 150 meters and powered home with the final freestyle leg.

Though this race did not yield a world title - that will come on Thursday in the final - it did win Marchand a check for \$30,000.

“In the end, I went out hard from the start,” he said. “But I stayed super-relaxed. I didn’t make many mistakes. I didn’t realize I was going that fast, but I gave it absolutely everything. Arms at full speed all the way to the wall. At that point, I wasn’t even thinking about technique anymore.”

Despite being only a semifinal, Marchand overshadowed the five finals on Day 4 of the worlds - the halfway mark with four days more to go. Those finals produced medals for the United States, Australia, Italy, Tunisia, and the Neutral Athletes.

American Luca URLando picked up the third gold medal for the United States in the championships, winning the 200 butterfly in 1:51.87. Krzysztof Chmielewski of Poland was second in 1:52.64 with bronze for Harrison Turner of Australia in 1:54.17.

URLando has battled back from several surgeries for his first big title on the world stage.

He was asked how he overcame the setbacks, and he replied: “The belief that I could get back to a moment like this. Internal belief.”

Mollie O’Callaghan of Australia, the defending Paris Olympic champion in the 200 freestyle, repeated her title in the worlds, pulling away in the last 50 to finish in 1:53.48. Li Bingjie of China was the silver medalist in 1:54.52,



Leon Marchand of France competes in the men’s 200-meter individual medley semifinals at the World Aquatics Championships in Singapore. (AP)

with bronze going to American Claire Weinstein in 1:54.57.

O’Callaghan has had a difficult time coming back after the Olympic victory, dealing with the stress and the post-games letdown.

Weinstein, like many Americans, has been dealing with what team officials call “acute gastroenteritis” picked up at a training camp in Thailand before arriving in Singapore.

Ahmed Jaouadi of Tunisia won the 800 free, clocking 7:36.88 - the third fastest time ever swum in the event. Sven Schwarz of Germany claimed sil-

ver in 7:39.96 with fellow German Lukas Martens taking bronze in 7:40.19. American Bobby Finke, the three-time Olympic gold medalist, was fourth, far off the pace in 7:46.42.

Sam Short of Australia, who had the second-quickest qualifying time in the 800, pulled out of the race with what the team said was food poisoning.

One big shock came in the men’s 100 freestyle semifinals, where world-record holder Pan Zhanle of China failed to reach the top eight for Thursday’s final. American Jack Alexy had the best time of 46.81 with David Pop-

ovici across in 46.84. Pan finished in 47.81, far off his world-record time of 46.40 set last year in Paris.

In the men’s 50 breaststroke, Simone Cerasuolo of Italy won in 26.54 with silver for Kirill Prigoda swimming as a Neutral Athlete, and bronze for Qin Haiyang of China.

In the women’s 200 butterfly semifinals, Canadian Summer McIntosh qualified in 2:06.22. Yu Zidi, the 12-year-old Chinese swimmer, swam 2:07.95 to make the final eight. Her time was the eighth best.

McIntosh has already won two gold

medals and is trying for five in Singapore.

Yu finished fourth earlier in the championships in the 200 individual medley.

In the final event, the Neutral Athletes won the mixed 4x100 medley relay in 3:37.97. China was second (3:39.99), and Canada was third (3:40.90).

The United States failed to reach Wednesday’s final after finishing 10th in qualifying. They were Olympic champions last year in Paris.

Britain and France also missed reaching the final.