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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Al-Seif Palace on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir received His Highness the Prime

Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Mubarak Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir received First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

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

His Highness the Crown Prince also received Chief of

the National Guard Sheikh Mubarak Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

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VISA APP FLAWS TO BE FIXED SOON, FIRST DEPUTY PM TELLS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



A farm worker harvests dates in Capital Governorate, Kuwait, July 30, 2025. The date harvest season, locally known as 'Saram', usually begins in late July and ends in late September. (Xinhua)

Indians, Egyptians dominate job scene

Domestic labor pool nosedives in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: According to a report released by AlShall, domestic workers made up 25.2 percent of Kuwait's total expatriate workforce by the end of Q1 2025, totaling about 745,000 workers, which is a 5.6 percent decrease compared to the end of Q1 2024. This workforce includes approximately 415,000 women and 330,000 men, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The report explained that the Philippines led the female domestic workforce with around 131,000 workers, down from about 175,000 at the end of Q1 2024.

Male domestic workers from India led the male workforce with approximately 213,000 workers, down from 248,000 at the end of Q1 2024.

India leads in the total number of domestic workers of both genders, representing 42.2 percent of the workforce, followed by Sri Lanka and the Philippines, each accounting for about 17.9 percent.

Four nationalities - India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and Bangladesh - account for approximately 89.6 percent of the total domestic workforce, out of a total of ten nationalities.

Regarding expatriate labor in general, AlShall reported that the total number of Indian workers is approximately 884,000, representing 29.9 percent of the total labor force, including Kuwaiti workers, and about 35.3 percent of the total expatriate labor force, leading in both categories.

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57 lose citizenship

Kuwait sets Aug deadline for citizenship status correction

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (Agencies): The Interior Ministry, Sunday, urged females whose Kuwaiti citizenship was revoked under Article 8 of the Kuwaiti Nationality Law to complete status correction procedures within the set timeframe.

In a statement, it noted that acting within the deadline would guarantee their treatment as "Kuwaiti" citizens, warning that delays or failure to show seriousness would lead to cancellation of benefits.

The status correction process does not prevent individuals from submitting appeals before the Citizenship Withdrawal Grievance Committee. The final deadline is August 31, 2025.

An online platform for submitting the required documents will be launched in the coming days, the Ministry added.

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Kuwait cracks int'l drug syndicate

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Interior announced on Sunday that it had successfully dismantled an international criminal network operating from outside the country and seized large quantities of narcotics intended for local distribution.

In a statement issued by the General Directorate of Security Relations and Media, the Ministry said the operation was carried out by the Criminal Security Sector under the direct supervision and on-site follow-up of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

The statement explained that intensive investigations led to the arrest of two Asian nationals in the residential areas of Shuwaikh and Keifan. Authorities seized 14 kilograms of pure heroin, 8 kilograms of methamphetamine (shabu), and two sensitive digital scales in their possession.

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Dust storm to fuel Monday meltdown

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): The acting Director of the Meteorological Department Dhirar Al-Ali, has forecast that Kuwait will experience moderate to strong winds on Monday, causing dust storms with speeds potentially exceeding 50 kilometers per hour. These conditions are expected to reduce horizontal visibility to less than 1,000 meters in some areas, particularly in open areas.

Al-Ali explained to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that weather maps and numerical models show the country is influenced by the extension of the Indian monsoon low-pressure system, accompanied by an extremely hot and dry air mass. Moderate to strong

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Grid guardians at work at Kuwait National Control Center.

KUNA photo

Kuwait's grid in safe hands, 24/7

Employees at Kuwait National Control Center work diligently round the clock to oversee and operate the state's electric grid.

Through a large display screen, the employees can ascertain malfunction points and

blackouts, in addition to overseeing regular maintenance programs.

The center also ensures efficient use of energy, to guarantee continuous supply to customers. (KUNA)

Gold glitters at KD33 per gram

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): Precious metal prices in Kuwait witnessed a noticeable increase at the end of last week, driven by strong gains in global gold markets.

According to a report issued by Dar Al-Sabaik Company on Sunday, the price of 24-karat gold in the local market reached approximately KD 33.130 per gram, while 22-karat gold stood at KD 30.370 per gram. The price of one kilogram of silver rose to KD 407.

The report attributed the local rise to significant movements in international

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Fix address or pay up: PACI

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) has deleted the residential addresses of 471 individuals, either based on the property owner's declaration or due to building demolition, and has published their names.

PACI has called on those affected to update their addresses within 30 days starting from Sunday, August 3, the date of publication in the official gazette

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First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah

means to spend. We intend to take into account all the feedbacks we receive on business or family visits, by adding new categories that were not previously available; including grandchildren, first-degree relatives of the spouse or a resident."

He added "every application, when launched, faces some shortcomings; which we are committed to address in the near future by collaborating with specialists in this field in order to enhance the positive aspects and address the shortcomings."

"We will continue working moment by moment until we reach a level that satisfies us. Meetings with stakeholders are ongoing to raise the concerns that reach the ministry and work to resolve them. It is true that no one can achieve perfection, but we are determined to be the best, as Kuwait deserves to lead," he concluded.

Civil aviation revamp takes flight in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): The new civil aviation law is a historic juncture that will help transform and align the sector with international standards and procedures, said head of Kuwait Public Civil Aviation Authority, Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Sunday.

Speaking to KUNA on issuance of Decree No.85/2025, which renamed the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) as the "Public Authority for Civil Aviation", Sheikh Humoud said that the step was in line with requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and affiliated regional organizations.

The law comes 65 years after the enactment of Laws No. 20/1960 and 27/1960, regulating civil aviation and aircraft accidents in Kuwait, he revealed.

He added that the new law would help reinforce the independence of the aviation sectors to accommodate the best international civil aviation practices, organization and administration.

He affirmed that the authority would continue to seek global standards in accordance with the vision of the Kuwaiti leadership.



Sheikh Humoud

This a new achievement for the leadership and government of Kuwait, said Sheikh Humoud, noting that it is part of the sustainable development path to develop legislative infrastructure and ambitious plans to elevate services and civil aviation systems in line with the international obligations of the State of Kuwait.

Sheikh Humoud said that the authority would be able to promote transparency and self-auditing to serve the national interests of Kuwait in international arenas and provide services to travelers, aviation companies, and all entities working at Kuwait International Airport.

Day by Day

FAJER Al-Saeed's apology to Nawal is a noble act of duty that will not be forgotten.

What the Kuwaiti singer Nawal did proves that she is a remarkable woman, and her work is deeply appreciated in the Gulf states and throughout the Arab world.

Nawal was engaged in a profession respected by many, and while she may have had differences with the Kuwaiti state, that does not mean she lost her respect or standing. Indeed, Allah has His own ways with His creation.

Fajer Al-Saeed, you were in tune with yourself and with reality when you offered this apology to such an esteemed artistic figure.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Strict penalties for public employees who fail to implement judicial rulings

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Kuwait expands weapons law

5

Gulf Bank transitions entire recruitment process to a fully paperless digital experience

8

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:41	Asr	15:30
Sunrise ..	05:09	Maghrib ..	18:39
Zohr	11:54	Isha	20:04

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Very hot with moderate to fresh northwesterly wind, with speeds of 20-55 km/h causing rising dust.
By Night: Hot to rather hot

Weather			
with light to moderate north-westerly wind, with speeds of 12-35 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	49	38	
Kuwait Airport	49	37	
Abdaly	48	32	

Jahra	49	36
Salmiyah	46	35
Ahmadi	43	33
Nuwaisib	47	34
Wafra	48	33
Salmiyah	45	31
Managish	49	34

Around 29,000 donors contributed

Over KD1 mln collected for Gaza in hours

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The relief campaign for the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip was launched in accordance with the directives of the wise political leadership and reflects Kuwait's commitment to supporting the Palestinian people and providing urgent humanitarian aid.

So far, the "Gaza Relief: Kuwait by Your Side" campaign raised KD1,080,440 in donations from around 29,000 donors – an affirmation of the deep-rooted humanitarian and solidarity values in Kuwait



Al-Enezi

society.

Iman Al-Enezi, acting Director of the Charitable Societies and Endowments Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs, announced the launching of the campaign on Sunday morning.

Al-Enezi revealed in a statement to Al-Akhbar Channel that the campaign is in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; with the participation of Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) and more than 51 accredited charities.

She said a special link for donations had been opened, as announced by the ministry on its social media platforms; while praising the great response the campaign has been witnessing since its launch. She added this campaign is an urgent response to the escalating humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip; with the aim of providing food, medical supplies, and relief

support to those affected.

She disclosed that fundraising will continue until Tuesday through official channels approved by each participating organization. She clarified that at the end of the campaign, participating societies and charities are required to purchase food supplies exclusively from the Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company, according to Cabinet Resolution No. 1461. She said all in-kind donations will be handed over to KRCS; which will be responsible for delivering them to the areas surrounding Palestine, in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense through the air bridge designated for this purpose.

She also stressed that this initiative, implemented under the directives of the political leadership, is supported directly by Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah.

New rules tighten noose on activities of charities

‘Donation collection strictly forbidden without MoSA nod’

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Minister of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, has issued new regulatory regulations for charitable societies. These regulations require all charitable societies subject to their provisions to comply with all regulatory instructions as well as security and safety procedures issued by the ministry in coordination with relevant authorities.

The regulations prohibit applicants from engaging in any charitable or social activity before the society is officially registered according to established rules and procedures.

Likewise, societies are not allowed to enter into contracts or conduct any transactions in their name prior to their registration by the ministry.

Relocating the society's headquarters, changing its specifications, or establishing a branch also requires prior written approval from the ministry.

Soliciting or calling for public donations by any means is prohibited without prior approval from the ministry.

Founders and members of the society's general assembly must be Kuwaiti nationals and at least 21 years old. The members of the board of directors must be at least 30 years old. The number of founders must be no fewer than

ten, and none should have been convicted of a felony or crime involving moral turpitude or dishonesty, unless their reputation has been restored.

Founders must commit to the society's objectives and agree not to demand a headquarters, rent, or annual financial assistance from the ministry.

The society's objectives must address gaps in local community work in various care areas, avoiding sectarianism, tribalism, or involvement in religious or political disputes, thereby preserving social cohesion and strengthening national unity. The society's purpose must be charitable, not for financial gain.

Management of the society must be by a board of directors with at least five members, all holding university degrees and at least 30 years old at the time of election.

The board must submit the previous year's final accounts, the draft budget for the coming year, and the administrative report within one month of the fiscal year's end.

Nominations for board members must be open for 30 working days and closed at least one week before the General Assembly meeting.

The regulations require board approval of new members only after ministry consultation and security clearance from the Ministry of Interior.

Board elections may follow a list or individual system. The board elects its chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and treasurer by se-

cret ballot at its first meeting. Other General Assembly decisions, including the selection of an audit firm, are voted on publicly by a show of hands.

The Ministry oversees registered societies through department employees authorized to inspect societies anytime without prior notice, access their headquarters, and review all records and data related to their activities.

For violations, the ministry sends a notification requiring correction within a week. Failure to comply results in suspension of the society's accounts until the violation is resolved.

The ministry may suspend society registration for serious, repeated violations, failure to submit budgets and reports for two consecutive years, financial concealment or manipulation, or knowingly providing misleading information.

A society may be dissolved by decision of its Board of Directors upon the minister's proposal if membership falls below the required minimum, if the society cannot meet financial obligations, violates laws or bylaws, engages in activities outside its objectives, fails to engage in effective activity, or if public interest or security demands it.

The minister may dissolve the board of directors and appoint an interim board or director for a renewable term to manage the society in cases of legal or bylaw violations, insufficient board members for valid meetings, or for the public interest.

Upon dissolution, the minister will form a liquidation committee to manage asset disposal, specifying liquidation methods, duration, and fees, with possible extensions until completion.

After liquidation, society funds will be transferred to the ministry, which will decide their allocation if not previously specified in the bylaws.



Dr Al-Huwailah

Effect of climate change on health studied

How to avert sunstroke in 50 plus temperature?

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Ministry of Health, represented by its Health Promotion Department, will conclude its annual campaign to raise awareness on the impact of climate change on health on Thursday at Sheikh Jaber Hospital.

Director of the Health Promotion Department Dr. Abeer Al-Bahou said the campaign was launched on July 13 under the patronage of the health minister and in the presence of Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Affairs Dr. Munther Al-Hasawi.

The campaign aims to raise awareness on the dangers of climate change and its impact on individual and community health, as well as how to cope with climate change to prevent high temperatures and avoid heatstroke on hot days.

In a statement to the newspaper, Al-Bahou disclosed that the campaign includes numerous activities to raise public awareness about following the necessary first aid guidelines for heatstroke; such as rapid cooling, drinking water, and transporting the injured person.

She enumerated many symptoms of heatstroke like high body temperature, dizziness, headache,

vomiting, skin redness and burns, fatigue, shortness of breath, and increased heart rate.

She explained that preventing sunstroke requires a great deal of awareness about the importance of avoiding going out during peak hours (11:00 am to 4:00 pm), staying under the shade, wearing sunglasses, using an umbrella and applying sunscreen.

She added studies emphasize the importance of addressing climate change through renewable energy and sustainable practices; stressing the need for urgent and coordinated action at the global, national, and individual levels to understand the causes and effects of climate change and implement solutions.

Other Voices

History teaches many lessons, few take heed

By Ahmad alsarraf

ON August 2, 1990, the world witnessed Saddam Hussein's Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. His Republican Guard troops stormed our country, bringing destruction and devastation.

After seven long months, Kuwait was liberated through the intervention of a broad international coalition led by the United States in Operation Desert Storm.

In several articles, I have described that war as one of the most reckless military adventures in history.

It showed the damage and disaster that can befall a dictator who recognizes no opinion but his own and hears no voice but his own.

We witnessed this in his reckless war with his neighbor, Iran, where he made fatal mistakes, which he repeated in Kuwait.

With a bit of prudence and by listening to military experts, he could have continued his unjust occupation, seized the opportunity, and possibly withdrawn at the right time, thus saving himself from an inevitable downfall and sparing his country from destruction.

However, arrogance prevailed, as is typical of any foolish and ignorant dictator.

One of Saddam's gravest errors, and, for us, a fortunate one, was awarding himself the highest military ranks and insisting on commanding an army of one million soldiers, despite never having received military training or even completing his education.

The legitimate Kuwaiti leadership successfully evacuated the country safely under the cover of night. Their resilient presence abroad became a unifying national symbol.

It stood for Kuwait's independence and right to exist, embodying the unanimous support of its citizens from all walks of life at the Jeddah Conference, where they rallied behind their leadership and reaffirmed loyalty to its legitimate authority.

Saddam's errors, from a military standpoint, also played a role in ensuring that no Kuwaiti citizen was willing to cooperate with him.

This provided the world with justification for the mobilization of approximately 34 countries to contribute to the



alsarraf

liberation war, leading to the eventual killing of Saddam Hussein and most of his male heirs, and the displacement of the rest of his family.

One of the most notable events during the final days of the invasion, as Iraqi forces withdrew from Kuwait, was the bombing by US warplanes of long convoys of civilian and military vehicles on Highway 80, which leads to Iraq and is widely known in the media as the "Highway of Death."

This occurred on the night of February 26, 1991.

The attack targeted retreating military convoys, destroying hundreds of vehicles, including tanks, trucks, buses, and other civilian and military transport.

While no official statistics exist on the human and material losses, US sources estimate that around 2,700 vehicles were destroyed and approximately 10,000 people were killed.

Other sources believe these figures are exaggerated, suggesting losses of several thousand Iraqi soldiers and about 1,400 armored and other vehicles.

According to observers, this bombing is considered to be one of the most brutal and controversial events of the war, criticized for targeting a large number of mixed civilian and military vehicles during the withdrawal of Iraqi forces.

This event remains a mark in the memory of the Second Gulf War, symbolizing the end of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and the beginning of a new phase in the region's history.

Some military personnel and eyewitnesses reported that the absence of bodies among the vehicles hit during the mass retreat was because most soldiers fled and abandoned their vehicles as soon as the intense air attack began.

Also, many vehicles scattered into the desert toward the north immediately after the initial strikes, causing chaos and a mass exodus away from the highway, which left much of the scene unrecognizable.

Some newspaper correspondents present in the days following the bombing also reported finding several burned bodies inside or near the vehicles.

However, many bodies were either completely charred by the flames or quickly buried, sometimes individually by comrades or advancing forces, or reduced to ash by the intense heat, making identification difficult later.

History holds many lessons, yet few choose to learn from them.

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TSC plans to launch infinite energy workshop very soon

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): The Scientific Center (TSC), affiliated to the Kuwait Foundation for Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), announced on Sunday that it would launch in a few days "the Renewable Energy Month" workshop designed to promote its significant role for a more sustainable future.

The deputy director general Moham-



Al-Sanousi

mad Al-Sanousi, said in a statement to KUNA that the initiative aimed at promoting knowledge about the renewable energy, engaging families and children in interactive activities, this summer.

The workshop, which blends education with pleasure, is held in coordination with strategic partners from the government and research sectors, namely the ministry of electricity and Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR).

He indicated that substantiated information about renewable energy and its application in Kuwait would be presented to the visitors.



Farwaniya Governorate photo

Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah receives Supervisor of the Farwaniya Governorate Customer Service Office at the Ministry of Electricity Eng. Salem Al-Sawagh.

Plan to improve services at Farwaniya customer office

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah on Sunday received at his office in the Farwaniya Governorate headquarters Supervisor of the Farwaniya Governorate Customer Service Office at the Ministry of Electricity Eng. Salem Al-Sawagh to discuss joint cooperation.

During the meeting, the officials talked about the work mechanism at the Customer Service Office in the governorate. Sheikh Athbi Nasser was briefed on the services provided to those residing in the governorate and future plans to develop services in line with the State's general

policy to provide the best services to the public.

Sheikh Athbi Nasser affirmed his commitment to improve the level of services and keep pace with developments in service provision. He praised the tremendous efforts exerted by the Customer Service Office to better serve the residents in the governorate.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Al-Sawagh thanked the Governor for his hospitality, warm welcome and continuous cooperation with all parties to improve services in the governorate and provide the needs of citizens and expatriates.

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Once again and in a pattern of repeated negative results, Kuwait International Airport ranked last among Gulf airports in terms of passenger traffic in the first half of this year; and it is the only airport that experienced a decline, compared to other Gulf airports, which achieved growth ranging from two to 13 percent, reports Al-Rai daily.

This indicates the effectiveness of Gulf plans to maintain high operating levels, while Kuwait International Airport continued its negative performance after having been a leading Gulf airport for years.

Reliable sources attributed the decline to a number of factors as follows:

- Over the course of just more than a year, European airlines have consistently refrained from operating direct flights to Kuwait due to economic inefficiency, while continuing to operate flights to other Gulf airports. British Airways halted flights to Kuwait at the end of March, followed by Lufthansa and KLM. British Airways announced the suspension of flights to Kuwait and Bahrain, but quickly reversed its decision regarding Bahrain following prompt action by the relevant authorities in Manama. No similar action was taken regarding Kuwait.

- Restrictions on the activity of Kuwait's na-

tional carriers during the past year and the first half of this year.

- Slow decision making in stimulating travel, which is common practice at other Gulf airports. This led to the expiration of several operating contracts at the airport without a clear vision for new tenders.

- Obstacles to the airport's infrastructure, with many airlines incurring additional costs due to damage to aircraft caused by flying gravel, delays in operating schedule due to the limited capacity of the airport facilities, and high price of jet fuel compared to those at other Gulf airports.

Sources emphasized that Kuwait Vision 2035, which aims to transform the country into a regional and international financial and commercial hub attracting investments, has the airport at its center as the airport is the country's major gateway. They cited the need to identify and address the causes of decline in order to end the negative performance, which conflicts with the ambitious development plans of the government.

Sources underscored the need for the government to approach this issue differently than in the past. They pointed out that it is not always logical to listen to the opinion of a single entity — the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). They said other credible entities, both governmental and non-governmental, must be involved to uncover the true causes of this decline, develop practical and realistic solutions, and place them within the framework of an applicable executive vision with a clear timetable.

With the exception of Kuwait Airport, which recorded 7.4 million passengers in the first half of this year — three percent decrease compared to the first half of 2024; all other Gulf airports recorded a jump in passenger traffic as follows:

1 - Dubai Airport: 46 million passengers — the highest in its history with 2.3 percent increase

2 - Hamad International Airport in Qatar: 25.9 million passengers with 1.5 percent increase

3 - King Abdulaziz Airport in Riyadh: 25.5 million passengers with 6.8 percent increase

4 - Abu Dhabi Airport: 15.8 million passengers with 13 percent increase — the highest percentage among Gulf airports

5 - Kuwait Airport: 7.4 million passengers with three percent decrease

6 - Bahrain Airport: 4.6 million passengers with 1.5 percent increase

7 - Muscat Airport: 1.1 million passengers with two percent increase

LOCAL

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

‘Arabs fail to exploit their resources ... remain poor’

“IN MANY countries, the land is brown in color, and is referred to as “clay soil” which is highly suitable for agriculture, unlike sandy soil,” columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

“Let us assume that an Arab country had such a land, along with mountains and a coastline. Yet, the government complains that the country is poor and the people are suffering. Those in power may not have given serious thought to the country’s development, or perhaps they came to power by overthrowing the previous regime and now do not know how to properly govern.



Ahmad Al-Dawas

“Years go by, and the country, along with its officials, remains in the same state. I am not referring to a specific Arab country, but perhaps to most, if not all, Arab countries. They are rich in natural resources, yet fail to make proper use of them. What we are describing is known as “idle resources.”

“The country is rich, yet it remains poor; poor because those in charge have not seriously considered how to utilize its resources properly. If the country’s land were cultivated, and hotels and tourist resorts were developed along the coast, its mountains could be used to build dams and reservoirs to store rainwater and generate electricity, which will benefit the people and support agriculture, among other uses.

“We have said time and again that Syria could make use of its 183-kilometer coastline, stretching from northern Lebanon to the Turkish border, by developing it for tourism, which would generate billions of dollars for the country. Yet this opportunity remains unutilized.

“What prompted me to write these lines is the news that Israel intends to occupy Gaza, settle approximately one million Jews there, displace its current population to the south, and build tourist resorts that would generate billions in revenue. Israeli Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu hinted at plans to resume Jewish settlement in Gaza. In a Thursday morning interview on July 24 on Kol Barama Radio, he stated, “The entire Gaza Strip will be Jewish.”

“Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich also took part in the “Riviera in Gaza – From Vision to Reality” conference, which aims to establish a permanent Jewish presence in the Gaza Strip.

“Meanwhile, we have abandoned Arab lands with their idle resources, allowing the Israeli entity to exploit them. Arabs are missing valuable opportunities. Their countries are rich, yet they fail to invest in their wealth.

“Yemen, for example, is a country with an excellent geographical location, rich natural and tourist resources, and a pleasant climate, situated close to Africa, Asia, and Europe. But where is the leadership capable of transforming this country into an advanced nation? Yemen was praised by the Creator in the Holy Quran, Surah Saba, yet its people did not preserve this blessing at that time.

“Currently, the Yemenis are harming their own country and Egypt, as well as maritime navigation, by attacking some ships. Egypt is losing USD 800 million a month, as many ships are avoiding the Red Sea route and no longer pass through the Suez Canal. All this stems from the actions of the Houthis group, who felt neglected by their government.

“They took up arms and overthrew the government. The Houthis then advanced to Aden, while Iran continued to supply them with weapons, and Yemen’s situation worsened.

“Lebanon is rich in natural resources, yet its people continue to suffer. Hezbollah has undermined the country’s stability, remaining defiant and refusing to disarm. It carries weapons despite the presence of a national army. Why shouldn’t the party have patriotic sentiments? As a result, we have left the resources of Arab countries idle, allowing foreigners to exploit them instead of benefiting their own people.”

Also:

“The danger of partisanship to the minds of young people can be summed up in one phrase - from organization to detonation. This is what many governments and Islamic societies suffer from,” Kuwaiti writer **Saleh Alghanem** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

“In an age marked by expanding intellectual trends and a growing search among young people for identity and belonging, the phenomenon of closed, rigid partisanship has emerged as one of the most dangerous threats. It infiltrates quietly into young minds, shaping their thinking, steering their emotions, and influencing their worldview, especially when fueled by ideological texts rooted in confrontation and revolution.

“One of the most alarming effects of being drawn into such a partisan environment is the slide into intellectual isolation, where only one perspective is accepted, others are rejected, and any form of dissent is met with suspicion. In such an environment, young people may become compliant tools in the hands of those who promote a revolutionary and excommunicatory ideology, and know little of Islam except rebellion against governments and the permissibility of bloodshed, backed by fatwas from the group’s sheikhs.

“The danger becomes even more severe when this mindset is fueled by the constant repetition of quotes and theories from certain radical thinkers known for their incendiary rhetoric, those who legitimize rebellion against rulers, justify the killing of opponents, and reduce religion to little more than a set of provocative slogans that fuel hatred and violence.

“Young minds cannot withstand this level of incitement and unchecked agitation, especially when the surrounding environment lacks family stability or proper religious and scholarly guidance.

“Therefore, it is among the most important duties of religious, educational, advocacy, and media institutions to do the following:

1. Promote critical thinking among young people.

2. Expose the manipulative tactics employed by certain groups.

3. Connect youth with the methodology of the righteous predecessors in dealing with issues such as sedition, loyalty and disavowal, and Islamic political thought.

4. Instill a deep sense of national belonging, loyalty to truth, and a commitment to moderation in thought and behavior.

“Partisanship is not merely an organizational difference. When it evolves into an identity that transcends religion, reason, and national loyalty, it becomes a form of intellectual slavery that produces distorted minds and ideological time bombs ready to explode in the face of society.

“What we urgently need is a comprehensive system that ensures intellectual security and protects the minds of young people from malicious groups that seek to do us harm.”

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“First of all, this is in reference to citizens’ right to file a complaint about any injustice they have experienced and to express observations regarding the performance of public authorities, whether executive or legislative,” legal advisor **Dr. Kazem Bou Abbas** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

“It is worth noting that exercising this right may serve a legitimate personal interest, such as seeking redress for a specific harm. It may also serve the public interest, such as calling for improved performance at a public institution or highlighting shortcomings in the conduct of certain public employees.

“This right serves as a true guarantee of rights and freedoms, protecting them from violation by any authority.

“It also enables citizens to play a constructive role in public life, and enhances the spirit of stability and civic responsibility within society.

“Secondly, comparative constitutions have acknowledged the right to address public authorities, though the wording and scope vary.

“Article 45 of the Kuwaiti Constitution states, “Every individual has the right to address public authorities in writing and under his signature.”

“This right is also recognized in the constitutions of Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and the United States.

“Several Arab constitutions affirm the right of citizens to communicate with public authorities. These constitutions differ in whether the right applies to private or public matters, and whether it may be exercised individually or collectively.

“Examples include the constitutions of Jordan, Egypt, Bahrain, Qatar, Somalia, and Saudi Arabia’s Basic Law, as well as the Kuwaiti Constitution.

“Some constitutions do not explicitly stipulate this right, such as those of Algeria, Tunisia, Syria, and Lebanon.

“It is important to note, however, that the absence of an explicit provision does not prevent individuals from exercising this right, as it is widely recognized as a fundamental principle in modern legal systems (Source - Dr. Shaima Saleh “Lectures on Human Rights”, Dr. Jamal Nasser and Dr. Maha Bahjat “Constitutional and Legal Regulation of the Right to Address Public Authorities”).

“Third is the right to equality. Equality means the absence of discrimination or differentiation among individuals who are in similar circumstances and meet the same conditions.

“Equality does not imply identical treatment in all cases. As Dean Duguit explains, it refers to equal legal treatment for those in similar legal positions.

“The principle requires that the law be applied without discrimination, both before the law and in public office.

“This is stipulated in Article 7 of the Kuwaiti Constitution, which states, “Justice, freedom, and equality are the pillars of society.”

“Fourthly, the Head of Fatwa and Legislation issued Circular No. 16/2025, undated, prohibiting communication with any state official without special permission.

“This circular raises two main objections - first, it violates the Constitution, as previously explained; and second, it exceeds the limits of legal jurisdiction.

“Jurisdiction refers to the legal authority granted to a decision-maker to issue a decision, defined by the nature of the authority, the time, and the location in which it is exercised.

“An administrative decision must be issued by the competent authority; otherwise, it is considered to lack jurisdiction, rendering it invalid and subject to annulment, as such a defect relates to public order. (Appeal No. 127/89 Commercial, session of November 12, 1989).

“Finally, an employee’s obligation to obey superiors includes showing them the respect necessary to maintain a professional and amicable working relationship.

“However, if an employee has a grievance concerning their superior’s conduct, there is no harm in turning to higher authorities to present their case and seek redress for the perceived injustice.

“The employee is not at fault for bypassing their direct superior when filing such a complaint, even if there are instructions prohibiting this.

“This is because the employee may reasonably fear that submitting the complaint through the very person being complained about would prevent it from reaching the appropriate authority (Source - Dr. Adel Al-Tabtabaei “Mediator in the Kuwaiti Civil Service Law, 1998”).

“We therefore hope that the Head of Fatwa and Legislation will immediately withdraw the circular, as it not only violates the Constitution but also exceeds the limits of the relevant authority’s jurisdiction. Each level of authority has the right to regulate how it may be contacted, provided that such regulation does not infringe upon the citizen’s constitutional right to address public authorities.”

— Compiled by **Mohammad Wangengi/Simi K. Kutty**

‘Tests null and void as final results doctored’

Minister comes down hard on violations

Al-Seyassah Exclusive

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Following the decision of the Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait to cancel the results of a junior legal researcher exam after confirming several violations within the committee’s work last month, sources close to the minister revealed serious irregularities.

These included “successful candidates who were deliberately failed and failed candidates who were marked as passed”, and violation of laws, justice standards, equal opportunity, and the reform principles set by the political leadership, notably the commitment to “no parachute recruitment”.

Regarding the manipulation of test scores, the sources explained that some candidates originally scored 33, which was enough to qualify for the position, but their results were tampered with and lowered to 24 to prevent them from receiving the score they rightfully earned. Meanwhile, other candidates scored 20, but their results were manipulated to raise their scores to 25 or 27 to allow them to pass.

The manipulation went beyond just raising and lowering the scores. Some scores were written in pencil, while others were in ink, making it easy to erase and alter them at will, often influenced by kinship ties with powerful figures within the ministry or recommenda-



Nasser Al-Sumait

tions from outside the ministry, the judiciary, or both.

The sources said, “The minister responded firmly to this tampering. While canceling the exam results, he tasked the Institute of Judicial Studies with developing a comprehensive and secure electronic admissions system to eliminate any possibility of manipulation or abuse going forward.

All relevant documents are now in the minister’s possession, and he has informed the leadership and the government, who have praised his decisive action. Those responsible for these blatant violations in the Ministry of Justice will be held accountable. This is a scandal that cannot be ignored.

There are no middlemen in the Ministry of Justice or any other ministries, in line with the approach to eradicating corruption and holding wrongdoers accountable regardless of their position. This principle, upheld by the leadership and government on multiple occasions, ensures that everyone receives their due.

This is why Minister Nasser Al-Sumait, from the moment he assumed office, has turned the reform process into practical reality within his ministry, setting a commendable example of an official who takes full responsibility and exercises all the authority granted to him.”

The sources concluded by saying, “Judicial positions will be filled by those who are capable and deserving, not by those who are influential or consider themselves above the law.”

Strict penalties for public employees who fail to implement judicial rulings

By Jaber Al-Humoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: A new decree-law amending certain provisions of Penal Code No. 16/1960 was published in the Official Gazette on Sunday. The amendment imposes stricter penalties for public employees who fail to enforce judicial rulings. It states that Article 58bis of Law No. 31/1970 has been replaced with the following provision: “Any competent public employee -- who intentionally fails to implement an enforceable judicial ruling within 90 days of being notified by a public representative through traditional methods or modern electronic communication in accordance with the Civil and Commercial Procedures Law -- shall face imprisonment of up to two years and a fine ranging from KD3,000 to KD20,000 or either penalty. If the employee uses his official authority to obstruct the enforcement of the ruling, the penalty shall be imprisonment for up to one year and a fine between KD2,000 and KD10,000 or either penalty.”

The amendment gives the court the power to order the dismissal of any public employee found guilty of the violation.

According to the decree-law, only the Public Prosecution has the authority to investigate, adjudicate and prosecute in such cases. However,

the criminal case may be dropped at any stage if the employee complies with the judicial ruling.

The accompanying explanatory memorandum stressed that enforcing judicial decisions is a cornerstone of justice and the rule of law. It warned that non-compliance by public employees undermines judicial autonomy and violates the constitutional principle of separation of powers enshrined in Article 50 of the Constitution.

The memorandum also contrasts the new provisions with the previous version of the law, which imposed lighter penalties. Under the earlier article, an employee who failed to comply after 30 days of being warned faced imprisonment and potential dismissal; while misuse of official authority to obstruct a ruling carried a maximum prison term of six months and a fine of KD1,000 to KD3,000.

It clarified that experience has proven that the previous penalties were insufficient to ensure enforcement of rulings. The new amendment aims to strengthen deterrence by imposing heavier financial sanctions and clearer consequences for non-compliance.

□ □ □

Trespassers acquitted: The Misdemeanor Court acquitted three citizens of entering a prohibited military zone in the southern part of the

country with the intention of going to the sea for picnic and fishing.

The case revolves around the defendants, who were fishing, based on the information provided by the officer and his colleagues.

The officers and his colleagues were inspecting a security fence at a prohibited area in the South when they noticed a hole under it. They were about to report the security breach to their commanders, but were surprised to find citizens emerging from the hole with fishing gear.

According to the officer, the citizens reported that there were several others fishing in the area. The officer then arrested them and referred them to the investigation authorities.

Attorney Mohammad Yaqoub Al-Sayegh, lawyer for the defendants, pointed out the absence of the elements of the crime attributed to his clients -- both material and moral, and proved the invalidity of the accusation of entering the restricted area.

He also proved the absence of the moral element regarding the intention to commit any act of sabotage, indicating that the citizens were only fishing.

He proved as well the absence of guidance signs, according to what the incident officer stated, and demanded the acquittal of his clients.

The court then acquitted the citizens as per the arguments presented by their lawyer.



Maj Gen Al-Sabah

Army Dep. on Scotland visit

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Major General Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation left the country on Sunday, heading to the Scottish capital, Edinburgh, in the United Kingdom.

This visit comes to participate in the ninth meeting of the “Dragon Group”, said General Staff of the Army in a press statement.

The Dragon Group, named after its first meeting aboard HMS Dragon in 2018, is an annual meeting of Defense Chiefs from the Middle East.

Decree issued to promote judges

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: A decree has been issued for the promotion of 47 judges, including ten judges who have been promoted to the rank of “Public Prosecutor (A)” and 37 judges promoted to the rank of “Second-Class Judge”, effective March 21, 2025, reports *Al-Rai* daily.

‘Ashal’ portal for firms in record transactions

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) announced the completion of more than 1.8 million electronic transactions in the first half of 2025.

Official statistics revealed that the ‘Ashal’ portal for employers (companies) recorded the highest number of approved transactions with 1,293,325; followed by the electronic forms portal with 59,908; and ‘Sahel-Individual’ application with 154,608.

The number of services approved through the ‘Sahel-Business’ application reached 16,100; compared to 1,293 through the ‘Sahel-Workers’ portal and 502 through the government agencies portal.

The authority’s employee portal recorded 22,190 transactions; in addition to 81,272 through the inspection application; 78,846 through the automated and 27,144 through ‘Fakhruna’ platform for national workers.

As part of its services to support national workers, PAM revealed that it provided 3,252 training opportunities for students, while the number of services under Chapters Three and Five reached 65,412; reflecting its commitment to enhance citizens’ participation in the labor market and developing their skills.

Moreover, the sector handling complaints and absenteeism reports recorded 18,711 absenteeism reports; while 8,646 individual dispute complaints were received and 9,430 complaints related to work permits, including requests for cancellation, transfer, final cancellation for travel, and transfer outside the sector.

Furthermore; 2,639 absence notices were printed, compared to 872 cases of cancellation of absence reports, while the number of cases of waiving absence reports reached 7,827.

Also, the authority recorded 3,341 cases sent for inspection; 1,200 individual dispute complaints manually; 3,153 cases listed as ‘not printed notification’; 843 cases rejected due to the facility being closed or non-existent; 1,622 requests to open complaints for workers who were unable to file official complaints due to file suspensions or the employer not having completed a full year of service; and 36 cases of rejection of absenteeism reports as the concerned workers are at their respective workplaces.

Regarding social protection and humanitarian care, the authority reported that it received 1,252 workers at its shelter for women; 110 at its shelter for men and 15 children at its shelter, as part of its commitment to ensure the safety and protection of workers in accordance with approved laws and regulations.

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Massive budget allocation to address rising energy needs

MEWRE receives nearly 45%, totaling KD1.74 billion

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Allocations for the second item in the general budget for the current fiscal year (2025/2026) increased by about KD304 million.

These allocations are for 36 government agencies for the purchase of goods and services; reaching KD3.87 billion, compared to KD3.56 billion in the general budget for fiscal 2024/2025.

The general budget report for the current fiscal year stated that the budget for the goods and services item for the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy alone amounted to KD1.74 billion or 44.9 percent of the total. This allocation is only for fuel needed to operate power plants and water distillation plants.

The Goods and Services Item includes expenditures of government entities in the opera-

tion and conduct of their business, particularly the acquisition of necessary goods and services. It is divided into two sections: one is 'goods' -- the materials and goods acquired by the government entity to achieve the objectives for which it was established or to assist it in achieving these objectives; such as spare parts, big tools, small tools, raw materials, fuel, oil and power generation items. 'Services' include the costs of services provided by third parties and are necessary for the government entity to perform its activities and conduct its business like transportation, rentals, media and commercial services, research, studies and consultations.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy intends to implement 28 maintenance contracts for South Zour Power and Water Distillation Plant.

This contract aims to modernize and improve the plant's performance and extend the lifespan of several of its units to meet the increasing demand for electricity, resulting from the steady annual population growth and the construction

of new residential and industrial cities.

Sources reported that the aforementioned contracts are included in the current year's budget and will be tendered through the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAAPT), in accordance with the regulations.

They revealed that the important tenders include the modernization and extension of the service life of six steam units at the station to maintain the efficiency of the units and carry out unit modernization work.

They added that the control system for the first-stage distillers at the station is being replaced due to the obsolescence of the current control system and the lack of spare parts.

They indicated that South Zour is one of the most important stations in the energy production system of the ministry; producing 5,990.8 megawatts of installed capacity. "The station was commissioned in 1988 with five distillation units. In 1989, three units, with a capacity of six million imperial gallons per day, were installed," sources said.

Qatari envoy praises Kuwaitis' sacrifices during Iraqi invasion

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): Qatari Ambassador to Kuwait Ali Al Mahmoud hailed Sunday the sacrifices Kuwaitis made during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait to restore their country's freedom and sovereignty.

Marking the 35th anniversary of the Iraqi invasion, the Qatari ambassador made the remarks to KUNA remembering the late leaderships and martyrs of the State of Kuwait and asking Almighty Allah to protect His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and the State of Kuwait.

He also recalled the support of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states and their roles to liberate the country, as well as remembering Qatar's active participation through its armed forces, praising the solid unity of GCC.

He reaffirmed Qatar's firm commitment to boosting ties between the two countries across various domains.



KUNA photo
Ali Al Mahmoud, Qatari Ambassador to Kuwait

35 years after the invasion

Young Kuwaitis reflect on pain, pride and legacy of August 2

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Thirty-five years have passed since the dawn of Aug 2, 1990 -- the day when the act described as 'the crime of the century' was committed when Saddam Hussein's armies invaded Kuwait; sowing death, destruction and fear in a peaceful homeland. The memory remains etched in the conscience.

How does the generation born after the liberation view this tragedy? Up to what extent are they affected by the stories passed down by their parents and grandparents about the days of the invasion? How do they imagine their position if they lived through the months of occupation and the years afterward?

The newspaper posed these and other questions to a number of young Kuwaitis among the post-invasion generation.

They expressed feelings of grief and rejection for what Kuwait experienced; while emphasizing the need to distinguish between Saddam Hussein's regime and the Iraqi people, asserting that the regime, not the people, committed the crime.

They said that whenever they heard stories of the heroism of the popular resistance and the solidarity of Kuwaitis in the most difficult circumstances, they wished they had been there... to play their role in defending the homeland.

In words filled with a sense of national responsibility, young Ghanem Adnan Al-Enezi expressed his wish to have lived through the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, so he would have been among those who participated in defending the homeland.

He said that the stories he heard about the Kuwaitis' solidarity during that ordeal make such period a source of pride and honor, since the people came together as one body -- without discrimination, tribalism or factionalism. "They were 'like the teeth of a comb' in a rare national unity," he asserted.

He added that he was deeply moved by what his father told him about the way His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad, may Allah give rest to his soul, escaped and how he led the liberation process from abroad with wisdom and courage.

He emphasized that these details reinforce his sense of belonging to this generous country. He pointed out that the memory of the invasion, despite its bitterness, remains a historical witness that Kuwait was right and that the world stood with it -- from the Gulf to the Atlantic, from Arab countries to the international community -- to liberate it from the clutches of aggression.

Rashid Al-Hajri asserted that the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on Aug 2, 1990, will remain a deep wound in the nation's memory. He stated that although he did not live through that period, its details are deeply rooted in his conscience through the family's stories of loss, displacement and heroism.

Al-Hajri revealed that this ordeal was an attempt to erase the Kuwaiti

identity, but it revealed the true character of the Kuwaiti people and their steadfastness in the face of the occupation machine through the resistance committees, which have become a symbol of defiance and courage.

He added "I wish I was there during that period to contribute to defending my country, even if minimally. That is a national duty -- an honor for any young Kuwaiti."

He pointed out that this experience, despite its harshness, was a great lesson on unity and sacrifice, values that must remain alive in the souls of future generations.

He said "freedom is not granted... it is protected. We, as young people, must carry this legacy with pride."

Student Najla Al-Mannai described the Iraqi invasion as one of the harshest ordeals Kuwait has ever experienced, leaving a profound psychological and social trauma in every Kuwaiti home.

She emphasized that although she did not experience these events, her family's stories about them formed part of her national consciousness.

She said she feels proud to belong to a nation that resisted injustice with dignity, indicating that the stories passed down to her generation about the people's solidarity and resistance to the occupation instilled in her a sense of responsibility and strengthened her conviction that love for Kuwait is not limited to fear.

She added "If I was there, I would not have hesitated to stand with my country. Defending Kuwait is instinctive. Resistance is an honor that is not granted, as it is rather chosen."

Khaled Al-Mohammad, born seven years after the liberation, disclosed that the stories he heard about the invasion from his father and grandfather shaped his national consciousness and instilled within him the value of steadfastness.

He added that stories on the formation of resistance committees, the provision of supplies, and the martyrdom of prisoners proved that the Kuwaiti people, in times of adversity, embodied the meaning of solidarity and unity.

He stressed that the invasion was an unexpected shock from a neighboring country, but it also produced a historic gift that showed the world that Kuwaitis do not accept humiliation or surrender, as they rise even from the rubble.

He explained that what he learned about the liberation war went deeper than the scenes of destruction, looting and burning wells. He saw how the world stood with Kuwait and how it regained its sovereignty, thanks to the unity of its people and the legitimacy of its position.

He asserted that the responsibility does not lie with the Iraqi people, but with Saddam Hussein's regime. He described Saddam as a "bloody dictator" who implicated his people in a catastrophe for which they are still paying the price today.

He concluded that "what happened on Aug 2, 1990 was not just an aggression... it was the crime of the century."

PAAET renews co-op contract with KNPC

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), represented by Director General Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam, signed an agreement renewing its cooperation contract with Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), represented by CEO Wadha Al-Khatib, to employ graduates of the Diploma in Refinery Operations program at the College of Technological Studies.

Also present at the contract signing were acting Deputy Director General for Applied Education and Research Dr. Ahmed Al-Hunayan, Dean of the College of Technological Studies Dr. Mohammad Al-Momen and a number of other officials.

The agreement aims to renew coordination

between the two parties to provide job opportunities for graduates of the Diploma in Refinery Operations program at various facilities of the company; particularly the vital refinery sites, such as Mina Al-Ahmadi and Mina Abdullah refineries.

This agreement is part of the cooperation between the two parties, and KNPC's commitment to support qualified Kuwaiti youths and enhance Kuwaitization efforts in the oil sector.

Al-Fajjam affirmed that PAAET is moving forward in developing its academic programs,

students and graduates to fully cover the needs of the Kuwaiti labor market.

He explained that the renewal of the cooperation agreement demonstrates confidence in the ability of PAAET to train and provide national manpower with scientific and professional skills to work in the oil sector through its teaching and training staff.

He said PAAET keeps pace with scientific and practical developments, as well as meeting the manpower needs of the public and private sectors.

He praised the distinguished role and support of the company's CEO and team in renewing the agreement, the company's investment in Kuwaiti youths, and the continuation of this partnership; which is a successful model of integration between the government, educational institutions and oil sector.



Dr. Al-Fajjam



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Ministry clarifies eligibility rules

Islamic Affairs offers housing units to imams and muezzins

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The number of vacant housing units allocated to those holding religious positions (imams and muezzins) totaled 28, say sources from the Ministry of Islamic Affairs.

Sources confirmed to the newspaper that applications for these housing units, which are located in various governorates, are open until Thursday.

Sources said these housing units are divided into three categories in terms of size: the first model measures up to 150 square meters, the second ranges from 151 to 199 square meters, and the third measures 200 square meters or more.

Sources disclosed that the vacant units include one in the Capital Governorate, five in Hawalli Governorate, eight in Farwaniya Governorate, four in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate, six in Ahmadi Governorate and four in Jahra Governorate.

Sources stated that applicants for these housing units should be a religious official at all levels within the ministry, be sponsored by the ministry, not a property owner or joint owner of a property with a share of 50 percent or more, and did not previously benefited from the housing welfare system.

Sources explained that priority in allocation is given to employees in the same governorate where the housing unit is located, unless the Housing Welfare Affairs Committee determines otherwise based on public interest and work needs.

Sources pointed out that priority is also given to Kuwaiti employees who have spent a full year in a religious position, taking into account the number of family members, the date of employment and the date of housing application submission.

Sources indicated that the committee will review all submitted applications and make a decision according to the criteria, in preparation for allocating the units in the coming period.

Part of Kuwait’s oil sector restructuring plan, employee rights fully protected in transfer

KNPC gains full control of LNG filling plants from KOTC

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) has officially announced, through its website, that it received two liquefied gas cylinder filling factories in Shuaiba and Umm Al-Aish from Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) -- the previous owner of the two factories. This is a confirmation of a report

that the newspaper published earlier regarding the official transfer of the assets of the gas cylinder factories, along with all their operations and employees from KOTC to KNPC. KNPC republished the statement of its Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Wadha Al-Khatib to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), in which she announced that the transfer of ownership of the two factories is taking place within the framework of the

comprehensive restructuring project for the oil sector led by Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC). This project marks the beginning of a new phase of cooperation and integration that will develop the projects and operations of the oil companies and open future prospects that will enhance the leading position of Kuwait in the global oil industry. Al-Khatib explained that the transfer of ownership of the two factories

includes the transfer of all employees and all of the factories’ assets and operations, including the marketing and distribution of liquefied natural gas in the local market, to be fully owned and directly managed by KNPC. She commended the role played by KOTC in completing the transfer process smoothly and flexibly; stressing her commitment to overcome all obstacles to ensure the success of this important step, which adds new respon-

sibilities to KNPC and contributes to expanding the scope of its business. Sources confirmed that the contracts of the employees who will be transferred from KOTC to KNPC as a result of the merger will be signed this week. They said the CEOs of KNPC and KOTC met with the Petroleum Workers Union, during which they emphasized that the rights and benefits of employees transferred within the oil sector companies will not be

affected; given the policy of KPC and its subsidiaries to restructure the oil sector. Sources clarified that the goal of the recent merger is to unify marketing efforts, enhance competitiveness, and mitigate any unexpected risks in gas filling operations. They also highlighted its importance in streamlining operations and reducing expenditures, while unifying maintenance teams.

MoSA reshuffles 13 supervisory positions to improve efficiency

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs Dr. Sayed Issa, issued administrative decisions on reshuffling 13 supervisory positions in various sectors of the ministry. In a press statement, the ministry revealed that the decision aims to enhance administrative efficiency and activate the



Dr. Issa

new organizational structure; indicating it is part of the vision of the ministry to rejuvenate administrative blood, ensure smooth workflow, and achieve the highest level of performance in the interest of the public. The ministry said the reshuffle aims to promote the principle of equal opportunities and develop leadership cadres in accordance with the newly approved organizational structure. It also affirmed its commitment to continue to develop the administrative system to better serve the public and keep pace with the State efforts to improve the work environment in the government sector.

Kuwait Farmers Union opens registration for membership

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The interim committee for the management of the Kuwait Farmers Union has announced that it has begun receiving applications for registration and membership in the union’s General Assembly from Sunday, August 3, reports Al-Seyassah daily. The committee invited eligible and productive farmers to visit the union’s headquarters in Rabiya during official working hours,

and bring the original copies of the required documents for photocopying and completion of the registration process. The required documents include a copy of the farm contract, the farm owner’s civil ID, a recent agricultural census issued by the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources addressed to the union, and a copy of the latest payment receipt for rent on state-owned property.

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: In a vital legislative move to curb the use of dangerous bladed weapons and air guns, Kuwait has enacted Decree-Law No. 90/2025 published in the latest issue of the Official Gazette, ‘Kuwait Al-Youm’.

The decree stipulates comprehensive amendments to Decree-Law No. 13/1991 concerning weapons and ammunition -- the first time these categories of weapons are explicitly regulated under Kuwaiti law. The amendment responds to what the accompanying explanatory memo-

randum describes as the “increasing use of these weapons in assaults and in spreading fear among the public,” which it characterizes as a serious and escalating threat to societal safety. The government pointed out the urgent need for legislative action to address this phenomenon and bolster public protection. One of the key changes is the title of the law to incorporate “dangerous bladed weapons and air guns”, reflecting its expanded scope. Substantial amendments have been made to Articles 2, 11, 12 and 21; and several new articles have been introduced to define and regulate the classification, possession and use of these weapons. The law now prohibits the possession, acquisition or use of such weapons in prohibited places; unless justified by personal or professional necessity. The Minister of Interior is granted broad discretionary powers to issue or revoke licenses accordingly.

Under the amended Article 11, the Minister of Interior is authorized to determine: ■ What qualifies as a “dangerous bladed weapon or dangerous air gun”; ■ The scope of ‘prohibited places’ that include: ■ Public gathering areas ■ Government and service facilities ■ Markets and public transportation ■ Places of worship and educational institutions ■ Other locations as designated by the ministry Personnel from the police, National Guard, military, fire services and other approved government entities are exempt from these restrictions; provided they are officially licensed. The amendments impose stricter penalties aimed at deterrence as follows: ■ Imprisonment of up to two years and fines for unauthorized possession or carrying of such weapons in public; ■ Increased penalties for repeat of-

fenders; ■ Specific penalties for individuals who use these weapons to intimidate or terrorize others, regardless of whether the weapon is used or not; ■ Severe penalties for the import, sale or promotion of such weapons without proper licensing, including potential permanent license revocation; ■ Mandatory confiscation of all weapons used in the offense in all cases. The decree stipulates that the amended law will be enforced three months after its publication date. All prior legal provisions that conflict with the new text will be officially repealed. This legislative development is considered a major step toward preventive regulatory control, in line with evolving security threats. The government reiterated that the primary aim is to guarantee public safety without compromising legitimate freedoms; thereby, balancing enforcement with legal rights and responsible ownership.

CSC sets KD2,500 minimum salary for GM

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) issued a decision stipulating that those holding the ‘General Manager’ position with a total monthly salary of less than KD2,500 (excluding children’s allowance) will be granted an increment; such that their salary is raised to this amount, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources. Sources said the ‘General Manager’ is a newly created position in the organizational structure of min-

istries, governmental departments, and public bodies and institutions subject to the law and system of the CSC. Sources revealed that nominations for this position may be made from outside the government entity, provided these three conditions are met: ■ If the conditions for filling the position do not apply to candidates from within the government entity; nominations may be made from outside the entity,

provided the candidates meet all the conditions for filling the position. ■ Each of such cases must be presented to the CSC individually. ■ In all cases, the number of appointees to the position of ‘General Manager’ from outside the government entity must not exceed 40 percent of the total number approved for the position in the entity’s organizational structure.

PAAET announces 2025 application process

MoHE opens registration for overseas scholarships

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Ministry of Higher Education announced the opening of registration for the overseas scholarship program for holders of the English high school diploma and the International Baccalaureate (IB/DP) diploma for the 2025/2026 academic year. Registration started on Sunday and will continue until Aug 16. The ministry stated that registration and review of the terms and guidelines can be done by logging on its official website. Meanwhile, the Deanship of Admission and Registration at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) has announced the dates for accepting applications for the 2025/2026 academic year. The Deanship set the period from Aug 5-18 for accepting applications, indicating that appointments for calculating the high school per-

centage are available starting Monday. It specified separate days for boys and girls; stating that the days designated for girls are Aug 5, 6, 7, 13 and 17. The days designated for boys are Aug 10, 11, 12 and 14; while Aug 18 is for both boys and girls. It urged students to book appointments in advance through its official website, stressing that applicants will not be accepted without an appointment. It also stressed the need to adhere to published instructions to avoid delays in the admissions process. In other news, Kuwait University President Dr. Dina Al-Mailem chaired the third meeting of the University Council at its meeting room in Sabah Al-Salem University City, with the council members in attendance. Al-Mailem opened the meeting by congratulating the students accepted into the first semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. She also welcomed attendees to the third meeting to discuss several items on the agenda.

Meanwhile, acting Secretary General of the university Dr. Bader Al-Rajhi disclosed that the council approved memoranda of understanding between Kuwait University and the University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Tongji University in the People’s Republic of China, and Texas A&M University in the United States of America. Al-Rajhi stated this is in addition to the approval of a memorandum of understanding between Kuwait University (Medical Sciences Center) and the University of Texas Health Sciences at Houston in the United States of America. He added that the council approved the regulations for the management of public shelters in Sabah Al-Salem University City, annual report of the university for the 2023/2024 academic year, regulations for the Scientific Research Ethics Committee when using human resources, and promotion of 24 faculty members to the rank of professor and associate professor in the practical and humanities colleges.

KU admits 8,228 HS graduates

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Acting Dean of Admissions and Registration at Kuwait University Dr. Fadel Abbas Aziz announced the completion of the distribution of admission applications for Kuwaiti high school graduates who met the admission requirements during the application period for the 2025/2026 academic year; revealing that 8,228 students were accepted. Aziz confirmed that all students who selected their desired programs and met the admission requirements were accepted. He explained that the aforementioned number excludes students accepted on external scholarships or at Abdullah Al-Salem University, as well as those who selected a number of options that do not match their equivalent high school grade point average (GPA) or percentage compared to the minimum admission requirements, based on the capacity of each course. He indicated that these students may reapply for admission for the second semester at a date that the Deanship of Admissions and Registration will announce later. He emphasized that no course changes are permitted once the application period ends, as per the



Dr. Aziz

decision of the University Council. He added that in line with the principles of transparency, the minimum equivalent grades for admission to all colleges and courses will be published. He pointed out that the numerical code next to each student’s name indicates the course in which they are accepted. “This can be identified through the minimum grades table, by accessing the application form or through the Sahel app,” he elaborated. He affirmed that competition for all college seats was based on the equivalent GPA or high school percentage, without discrimination between males and females. He said the GPA is calculated based on the results of the academic aptitude tests required for each college, as well as the student’s high school certificate percentage. He indicated that Kuwaiti students, graduates of the Unified System and the Religious Institute -- who submitted their applications online or at the Admissions and Registration Hall -- must pay KD10 through the electronic payment system (KNET) once the admission results are announced. “This is to confirm their admission through the electronic admissions system, without the need to visit the admissions hall or submit their documents,” he added. He stated that Kuwaiti students who graduated from American or English high schools are required to visit the Admissions and Registration Hall to submit their documents and receive acceptance approval on Aug 4-7, according to the dates sent to them through text message.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait sets

In other news, two decrees were published in the official gazette “Kuwait Alyoum” on Sunday to revoke the citizenship of 57 individuals, reports Al-Seyassah daily. The first decree revoked the citizenship of one individual, and the second decree withdrew the citizenship of 56 individuals, including those who had acquired it through dependency.

Fix address

“Kuwait Al-youm”, either by visiting its offices to register the new address or carrying out this step through the Sahel app, after submitting the required documents. Failure to comply will result in penalties outlined in Article 33 of Law No. 32/1982, which stipulates a fine of up to KD 100 per individual.

Domestic labor

Egyptian workers rank second, with around 472,000 workers, accounting for 16 percent of the total labor force and approximately 18.8 percent of the expatriate workforce. They are followed by Kuwaiti workers, numbering about 450,000 compared to 458,000 at the end of Q1 2024, representing 15.2 percent of the total labor force. This percentage may increase if military personnel figures are included in the data. The AlShall report revealed that the total Kuwaiti workforce at the end of the first half of the year amounted to approximately 491,000, a figure that differs from the data provided by the Central Statistical Bureau. It stated, “We have no explanation for the discrepancy between the two figures unless the higher number includes military person-

nel and the unemployed”. In addition, Bangladesh ranked fourth with a total workforce of approximately 278,000, representing 9.4 percent of the total labor force. The Philippines ranked fifth with around 194,000 workers, accounting for 6.6 percent of the total workforce and approximately 7.7 percent of the total expatriate workforce.

Gold glitters

markets, where gold ended the week with a strong gain, closing at \$3,362 per ounce. This upward trend was fueled by weaker-than-expected U.S. employment data and a decline in the value of the U.S. dollar, both of which boosted investor demand for safe-haven assets such as gold. In detail, the U.S. economy added only 73,000 jobs in July, falling short of the expected 110,000. This spurred increased speculation that the U.S. Federal Reserve may cut interest rates at its upcoming September meeting. Futures contracts showed a 76 percent probability of a 25-basis-point rate cut. Also, U.S. Treasury yields dropped significantly, with the ten-year bond yield falling to 4.228 percent. The dollar also weakened sharply, losing more than 0.8 percent against major currencies on Friday, further driving gold prices higher. The report also highlighted mounting global trade tensions, including a new U.S. tariff package targeting dozens of countries. Some tariffs reached as high as 41 percent on countries not covered by trade agreements with Washington, and 40 percent on goods suspected of being rerouted through third parties. These developments coincided with escalating geopolitical tensions between Washington and Moscow, notably the deployment of U.S. nuclear submarines, which is seen by analysts as an escalatory move amid the Ukraine conflict. By the end of the week, gold prices in the

spot market had risen more than 2 percent on Friday alone, rebounding from a midweek dip to a one-month low of \$3,268 per ounce. Looking ahead, Dar Al-Sabaik expects global markets to remain cautious this week due to the lack of major economic data, with investor attention likely to stay focused on the ongoing trade war and statements from Federal Reserve officials.

Dust storm


northwesterly winds will also cause sea waves to rise above six feet at times. Wind speeds will gradually ease by Tuesday, with weather conditions improving from Tuesday evening. Winds will shift to southeast along the coasts, increasing the feeling of relative humidity in all areas, especially coastal regions, continuing through Wednesday, Thursday, and into Friday. The weather on Monday will be very hot during the day and hot to warm at night, with dust gradually settling by evening. Maximum temperatures are expected to range between 47 and 50 degrees Celsius, while minimum temperatures will be between 35 and 37 degrees Celsius.

Kuwait cracks

The suspects and the confiscated materials have been referred to the competent authorities for legal action. The Interior Ministry reaffirmed its commitment to intensifying operations against drug traffickers and promoters, vowing to thwart all smuggling and distribution attempts. The Ministry also urged citizens and residents to report any suspicious activity to the General Directorate for Drug Control via the 24/7 hotline (1884141), emphasizing that all reports are treated with complete confidentiality.

CONDOLENCES


The Owners,
Management and Staff of

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Extend their Heartfelt
condolences to

Mr. Bins Joseph
(Documentation Executive)
and his Family

on the sad demise of his Father



Mr. Joseph Chacko
(Manager Marafie Insurance)
who passed away in Kerala on 03rd August 2025.

May his soul Rest in Peace

GOP plan clears state House committee

Limited options for Dems to retaliate if Texas Republicans redraw congressional map

WASHINGTON, Aug 3, (AP): As Republicans move to redraw legislative maps in red states to pad their narrow House majority in Washington, some Democrats are rethinking their embrace of a nonpartisan approach to line-drawing that now complicates their party's ability to hit back before next year's midterm elections.

In many Democratic-controlled states, independent commissions rather than the state legislature handle redistricting, the normally-once-a-decade task of adjusting congressional and legislative districts so their populations are equal. Parties in the majority can exploit that process to shape their lawmakers' districts so they are almost guaranteed reelection.

The commission model limits parties' ability to game the system, leading to more competitive districts. Not all redistricting commissions were created at Democrats' insistence. And, like Republicans, the party has exploited line-drawing for its own gain in the handful of states where it controls the process. But unlike Republicans, many Democratic Party leaders have embraced the nonpartisan model.

That means Democrats have fewer options to match Republicans, who are redrawing the US House map in Texas at President Donald Trump's urging to carve out as many as five new win-

nable seats for the GOP. That could be enough to prevent Democrats from winning back the majority next year.

The GOP plan cleared a state House committee Saturday.

Democrats have threatened payback. During a gathering Friday in Wisconsin of Democratic governors, several of them said they wanted to retaliate because the stakes are so high.

Wisconsin Gov Tony Evers, who has pushed for a nonpartisan redistricting commission in his state, said Democrats must "do whatever we can" to counter the Republican efforts to redraw congressional maps.

"When you have a gun against your head, you've got to do something," he said.

Despite the ambitious talk, Democrats largely have their hands tied.

California Gov Gavin Newsom has said he and the Democratic-controlled Legislature will try to redraw his state's congressional map. But they would need to repeal or defy the 2008 ballot measure creating an independent redistricting commission. Voters extended its authority to congressional districts two years later.

Newsom supported the constitutional amendment at the time, when he was mayor of San Francisco. The Texas redistricting, which is expected to pass the Legislature next week, led him to modify that position.



Texas state Rep Chris Turner holds a map as he asks questions during a public hearing on congressional redistricting in Austin, Texas on Aug 1. (AP)

"We can act holier than thou, we can sit on the sidelines, talk about the way the world should be, or we can recognize the existential nature that is this moment," Newsom said earlier this month.

In New York, which also has a commission, the state constitution bars another map this decade. Democrats have moved for a change, but that could not happen until 2027 at the earliest, and

then only with voter approval.

In other states where Democrats control the governor's office and legislature, including Colorado and Washington, the party has backed independent commissions that cannot redraw, let alone rig, maps in the middle of the decade.

When the redistricting cycle kicked off in 2021, after the last census, independent commissions were in charge

of drawing 95 House seats that otherwise would have been drawn by Democrats, but only 13 that would have been created by Republicans.

In a marker of the shift among Democrats, former Attorney General Eric Holder, who heads the party's redistricting effort and has called repeatedly for a more nonpartisan approach, seemed to bless his party's long shot efforts to overrule their commissions.

"We do not oppose - on a temporary basis - responsible, responsive actions to ensure that the foundations of our democracy are not permanently eroded," Holder said in a statement last week.

In states where they weren't checked by commissions, Democrats have redistricted just as ruthlessly as Republicans. In Illinois, they drew a map that gave them a 14-3 advantage in the congressional delegation. In New Mexico, they tweaked the map so they control all three House seats. In Nevada, they held three of its four seats in November despite Trump winning the state.

Even in states where they have a lopsided advantage, Democrats are exploring ways to maximize it.

On Friday, Maryland's House Majority Leader, Democratic Del. David Moon, said he would introduce legislation to trigger redrawing of the congressional lines if Texas moves

forward. Democrats hold seven of the state's eight congressional seats.

"We can't have one state, especially a very large state, constantly trying to one-up and alter the course of congressional control while the other states sit idly by," he said.

Advocates of a nonpartisan model are alarmed by the shift among Democrats. They say the party would redistrict just as aggressively as the GOP if not held in check, depriving voters of a voice in districts whose winners would essentially be selected in advance by political leaders.

"We're very desperate - we're looking for any port in a storm," said Emily Eby French, Common Cause's Texas director. "This Democratic tit for tat redistricting seems like a port but it's not a port. It's a jagged rock with a bunch of sirens on them."

The group's director of redistricting, Dan Vicuña, said using redistricting for partisan advantage - known as gerrymandering - is highly unpopular with the public: "This is about fair representation for communities."

Politicians used to shy away from discussing it openly, but that has changed in today's polarized environment. Trump earlier this month told reporters about his hopes of netting five additional GOP seats in Texas and more out of other Republican-controlled states.

Ex-Trump prosecutor Smith faces investigation by political watchdog

BRIDGEWATER, NJ, Aug 3, (AP): An independent watchdog agency responsible for enforcing a law against partisan political activity by federal employees has opened an investigation into Jack Smith, the Justice Department special counsel who brought two criminal cases against then-candidate Donald Trump before his election to the White House last year.

The Office of Special Counsel confirmed Saturday that it was investigating Smith on allegations he engaged in political activity through his inquiries into Trump. Smith was named special counsel by then-Attorney General Merrick Garland in November 2022 and his special counsel title is entirely distinct from the agency now investigating him. The office has no criminal enforcement power but does have the authority to impose fines and other sanctions for violations.

It was not clear what basis exists to contend that Smith's investigations were political in nature or that he violated the Hatch Act, a federal law that bans certain public officials from engaging in political activity. Sen. Tom Cotton, an Arkansas Republican, had earlier this week encouraged the office to scrutinize Smith's activities and had alleged that his conduct was designed to help then-President Joe Biden and his vice president Kamala Harris, both Democrats.

Smith brought two cases against Trump, one accusing him of conspir-



Special counsel Jack Smith speaks to the media about an indictment of former US president Donald Trump on Aug 1, 2023, at an office of the Department of Justice in Washington. (AP)

ing to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election and the other of hoarding classified documents at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida. Both were brought in 2023, well over a year before the 2024 presidential election, and indictments in the two cases cited what Smith and his team described as clear violations of well-established federal law. Garland has repeatedly said politics played no part in the handling of the cases.

WASHINGTON, Aug 3, (AP): The US Senate left Washington Saturday night for its monthlong August recess without a deal to advance dozens of President Donald Trump's nominees, calling it quits after days of contentious bipartisan negotiations and Trump posting on social media that Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer can "GO TO HELL!"

Without a deal in hand, Republicans say they may try to change Senate rules when they return in September to speed up the pace of confirmations. Trump has been pressuring senators to move quickly as Democrats blocked more nominees than usual this year, denying any fast unanimous consent votes and forcing roll calls on each one, a lengthy process that can take several days per nominee.

"I think they're desperately in need of change," Senate Majority Leader John Thune said of Senate rules Saturday after negotiations with Schumer and Trump broke down. "I think that the last six months have demonstrated that this process, nominations is broken. And so I expect there will be some good robust conversations about that."

Schumer said a rules change would be a "huge mistake," especially as Senate Republicans will need Democratic votes to pass spending bills and other legislation moving forward.

"Donald Trump tried to bully us, go around us, threaten us, call us names,



US Sen Minority Leader Chuck Schumer of NY, speaks during a news conference on tariffs on Capitol Hill on July 31, in Washington. (AP)

but he got nothing," Schumer said.

The latest standoff comes as Democrats and Republicans have gradually escalated their obstruction of the other party's executive branch and judicial nominees over the last two decades, and as Senate leaders have incrementally changed Senate rules to speed up confirmations - and make them less bipartisan.

In 2013, Democrats changed Senate rules for lower court judicial nominees to remove the 60-vote threshold for

confirmations as Republicans blocked President Barack Obama's judicial picks. In 2017, Republicans did the same for Supreme Court nominees as Democrats tried to block Trump's nomination of Justice Neil Gorsuch.

Trump has been pressuring Senate Republicans for weeks to cancel the August recess and grind through dozens of his nominations as Democrats have slowed the process. But Republicans hoped to make a deal with Democrats instead,

and came close several times over the last few days as the two parties and the White House negotiated over moving a large tranche of nominees in exchange for reversing some of the Trump administration's spending cuts on foreign aid, among other issues.

The Senate held a rare weekend session on Saturday as Republicans held votes on nominee after nominee and as the two parties tried to work out the final details of a deal. But it was clear that there would be no agreement when Trump attacked Schumer on social media Saturday evening and told Republicans to pack it up and go home.

"Tell Schumer, who is under tremendous political pressure from within his own party, the Radical Left Lunatics, to GO TO HELL!" Trump posted on Truth Social. "Do not accept the offer, go home and explain to your constituents what bad people the Democrats are, and what a great job the Republicans are doing, and have done, for our Country," Thune said afterward that there were "several different times" when the two sides thought they had a deal, but in the end "we didn't close it out."

It's the first time in recent history that the minority party hasn't allowed at least some quick confirmations. Thune has already kept the Senate in session for more days, and with longer hours, this year to try and confirm as many of Trump's nominees as possible.

WH freezes \$339m in UCLA grants and accuses school of rights violations

WASHINGTON, Aug 3, (AP): The Trump administration is freezing \$339 million in research grants to the University of California, Los Angeles, accusing the school of civil rights violations related to antisemitism, affirmative action and women's sports, according to a person familiar with the matter.

The federal government has frozen or paused federal funding over similar allegations against private colleges but this is one of the rare cases it has targeted a public university.

Several federal agencies notified UCLA this week that they were suspending grants over civil rights concerns, including \$240 million from the Department of Health and Human Services and the National Institutes of Health, according to the person, who spoke about internal deliberations on the condition of anonymity.

The Trump administration recently announced the US Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division found UCLA violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Last week, Columbia agreed to pay \$200 million as part of a settlement to resolve investigations into the government's allegations that the school violated federal anti-discrimination laws. The agreement also restores more than \$400 million in research grants.



Children play outside Royce Hall at the University of California, Los Angeles, campus in Los Angeles on Aug 15, 2024. (AP)

The Trump administration plans to use its deal with Columbia as a template for other universities, with financial penalties that are now seen as an expectation.

The National Science Foundation said in a statement it informed UCLA that it was suspending funding awards because the school isn't in line with the agency's priorities.

UCLA's chancellor Julio Frenk called the government's decision "deeply disappointing."

"With this decision, hundreds of grants may be lost, adversely affecting the lives and life-changing work of UCLA researchers, faculty and

staff," he said in a statement.

The Department of Energy said in its letter it found several "examples of noncompliance" and faulted UCLA for inviting applicants to disclose their race in personal statements and for considering factors including family income and ZIP code. Affirmative action in college admissions was outlawed in California in 1996 and struck down by the Supreme Court in 2023.

The letter said the school has taken steps that amount to "a transparent attempt to engage in race-based admissions in all but name," disadvantaging white and Asian American applicants.

UK hopes crackdown on people-smugglers' soc-med ads will help curb Channel crossings

LONDON, Aug 3, (AP): Britain says people who advertise fake passports or people-smuggling services on social media could face up to five years in prison, in the government's latest effort to deter migrants from crossing the English Channel in small boats.

The government said Sunday that anyone convicted of creating online materials intended to break UK immigration law will face prison time and a large fine. Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said the aim was to stop the "brazen tactics on social media" used by smuggling gangs.

"Selling the false promise of a safe journey to the UK and a life in this country - whether on or offline - simply to make money, is nothing short of immoral," she said.

Assisting illegal immigration to the UK is already a crime, but officials believe a new offense - part of a border security bill currently going through Parliament - will give police and prosecutors more powers to disrupt gangs that send migrants on perilous journeys across one of the world's busiest shipping lanes.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer has said the crime gangs are a threat to global security and should be treated like terror networks.

Since taking office a year ago, Starmer's center-left Labour Party government has adopted powers to seize the assets of people-smugglers, beefed up UK border surveillance and



Police form a barrier in front of protesters outside the Thistle City Barbican Hotel in central London, which houses asylum seekers on Aug 2. (AP)

increased law-enforcement cooperation with France and other countries to disrupt the journeys.

Despite that, more than 25,000 people have reached Britain by boat so far this year, an increase of 50% on the same period in 2024. Small boat crossings have become a potent political issue, fueled by pictures of smugglers piling migrants into overcrowded, leaky inflatable boats on the French coast.

Opposition parties say the govern-

ment's plans aren't working - though the government argues the problems built up during 14 years when the Conservative Party was in power.

The Conservatives say Starmer should not have scrapped the previous government's contentious and expensive plan to send migrants arriving by boat on a one-way trip to Rwanda.

"This is a panicked attempt to look tough after months of doing nothing," Conservative immigration spokesman Chris Philp said.

Ukrainian drone attack sparks massive fire at Russian oil depot near Sochi

MOSCOW, Aug 3, (AP): An overnight Ukrainian drone attack on an oil depot near Russia's Black Sea resort of Sochi sparked a major fire, Russian officials said Sunday, as the two countries traded strikes.

More than 120 firefighters attempted to extinguish the blaze, sparked after debris from a downed drone struck a fuel tank, Krasnodar regional Gov. Veniamin Kondratyev said on Telegram. Videos on social media appeared to show huge pillars of smoke billowing above the oil depot.

Russia's civil aviation authority, Rosaviatsia, temporarily stopped flights at Sochi's airport.

Further north, authorities in the Voronezh region reported that four people were wounded in another Ukrainian drone strike.

Russia's Defense Ministry said its air defenses shot down 93 Ukrainian drones over Russia and the Black Sea overnight into Sunday.

Meanwhile, in southern Ukraine, a Russian missile strike hit a residential area in the city of Mykolaiv, according to the State Emergency Services, wounding seven people.

The Ukrainian air force said Sunday Russia launched 76 drones and seven missiles against Ukraine. It said 60 drones



In this photo provided by Ukraine's 24th Mechanized Brigade press service, a firefighter puts out the fire after a Russian drone hit the market in the town of Druzhkivka, Donetsk region, Ukraine on Aug 2. (AP)

and one missile were intercepted, but 16 others and six missiles hit targets across eight locations.

Europe

Portugal declares wildfire alert: Mainland Portugal will enter a state of alert from Sunday through Aug. 7 due to a severe heatwave and heightened wildfire risk, with temperatures expected to reach up to 44 degrees Celsius.

Interior Minister **Maria Lucia Amaral** announced the alert Saturday, warning of difficult days ahead. Firefighting forces and security services will be reinforced, with bans on activities that could spark fires, including burning, machinery use, and fireworks.

Until next Wednesday, Portugal is expected to experience a "considerably severe heatwave," with maximum temperatures ranging from 36 to 40 degrees Celsius across most of the country.

A hot air mass from North Africa is driving temperatures higher, with some regions potentially reaching 45 degrees



Amaral

Celsius and "tropical nights". (Xinhua)

Croatia holds military parade: Thousands watched a military parade in Croatia's capital marking 30 years since a key war victory as the country looks to further boost its forces with a possible loan from a new European Union defense fund.

A flyover in Zagreb by French-made Rafale jets was a highlight of the show that included 3,400 army personnel along with police units, emergency service teams and war veterans. Navy battle ships sailed simultaneously by the Adriatic Sea port of Split.

Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic said that "we have passed a big process of transition from eastern to western technology in order to be compatible with the capabilities of those armies who are our partners and allies."

Croatia joined the EU in 2013, four years after becoming a member of NATO.

Back in August 1995, Croatia recaptured lands that had been held by minority Serbs since their rebellion in 1991 against the country's independence from the former Communist-run Yugoslavia. The Operation Storm offensive presented a turning point in the war and also triggered a mass exodus of ethnic Serbs from Croatia. (AP)

Asia

China activates level-IV emergency response for flood control: China’s Ministry of Water Resources on Sunday activated a level-IV emergency flood response in Gansu and Qinghai provinces and Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region in the northwest.

Heavy to torrential rains are forecast in northeastern Qinghai, central Gansu and northern Ningxia on Sunday. Some tributaries of the upper Yellow River are expected to see rising water levels, with some small and medium rivers likely to exceed flood warning levels.

The ministry urged local authorities to closely monitor weather conditions and take measures to protect people’s lives and property.

The ministry has dispatched two working groups to Qinghai and Ningxia to assist in flood control.

Fujian Province in east china has activated a Level-IV emergency response to cope with torrential rains, the provincial headquarters for flood control and drought relief has said.

The headquarters urged local authorities to closely monitor the impact of heavy rainfall, promptly initiate or adjust flood control emergency responses, and ensure the safety of people’s lives and property.

china has a four-tier emergency response system for flood control, with Level I being the most severe.

Meanwhile, Northwest China’s Gansu Province has upgraded its mountain torrent alert from yellow to orange on Sunday morning, according to the provincial water resources department and meteorological administration.

Intense rainfall were reported in the central and eastern parts of the province on Saturday and Sunday. The provincial meteorological administration forecast that Zhangye, Wuwei and other cities and prefectures in the province will experience heavy rainstorms with precipitation up to 80 mm per hour from 2 p.m. Sunday to 5 a.m. Monday.

Additionally, thunderstorms, gales or hailstorms are forecast for areas including the southern part of Lanzhou, the provincial capital. From 2 p.m. Sunday to 11 a.m. Monday, there is a high probability of mountain torrents in cities and prefectures such as Lanzhou, Baiyin, Wuwei, Dingxi and Linxia.



An aerial drone photo taken on July 28, 2025 shows a road and a bridge affected by flood at Xiaying Village of Xiaying Town, Jizhou District of north China’s Tianjin. Houses, bridges and power lines at part of villages in Jizhou District were damaged by floods inflicted by recent heavy rain-fall and upstream runoff. (Xinhua)

Local authorities are urged to evacuate people from vulnerable spots and take measures to prevent hail damage to greenhouses and cash crops.

China has a four-tier weather warning system, with red representing the most severe warning, followed by orange, yellow and blue. (Xinhua)

Residential building fire kills 5 in China: Five people were killed after a fire broke out in a residential building in Wuzhou City, south China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, on Sunday morning.

The fire occurred on the ground floor of a five-story building in the city’s Longxu District at about 8:30 a.m., according to the district’s emergency management bureau.

The fire has been extinguished and its cause is being investigated. (Xinhua)

Indonesia’s light-sport aircraft crash kills 1: A light-sport aircraft crashed in Bogor, West Java province, on Sunday morning, killing one person and seriously injuring another, according to a spokesman for the Indonesian Air Force.

The aircraft, operated by the Indonesian Aero Sport Federation, went down in Ciampea area at around 10:00 a.m. local time, shortly after taking off from Atang Sendjaja Airport in Bogor at approximately 9:08 am.

It was piloted by former Indonesian Air Force spokesman Fajar Adriyanto, with civilian Roni Ahmad serving as co-pilot. Adriyanto died in the crash, while Ahmad sustained serious injuries. Both were taken to a nearby hospital.

Indonesian Air Force spokesman I Nyoman Suadnyana said the plane was in airworthy condition before departure, adding that authorities are investigating the cause of the accident. (Xinhua)

Severe weather causes power outages in Australia: More than 27,500 homes in the east coast Australian state of New South Wales (NSW) were without power because of damage from heavy rain, strong winds and snowfall, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) reported on Saturday evening.

ABC quoted local power provider Essential Energy as saying that impacted customers should prepare for the power outages to continue overnight, because though its crews were working to restore power “where it is safe to do so,” severe weather would cause delays.

The NSW State Emergency Service (SES) said on its website that moderate to heavy rainfall was forecast to persist in the Coffs Coast, Mid North Coast, Upper Hunter and New England regions in the state Saturday afternoon, and it had issued 28 warnings about storms, and predicted minor flooding, as well as possible moderate flooding.

Nicole Hogan, assistant commissioner of NSW SES, said that heavy and persistent rainfall could cause roads to become flooded and impassable.

ABC also reported that snow had never been seen at these depths in the Northern Tablelands, and there were reports of up to 200 vehicles stuck in heavy snowfall. (Xinhua)

ASEAN group inspects conflict-affected areas on Cambodia-Thailand border

PHNOM PENH, Aug 3, (Xinhua): An ASEAN interim observer group on Sunday launched the second-round two-week-long inspection at conflict-hit areas on the Cambodia-Thailand border, a Cambodian defense spokesperson said.

Led by the military attaché of Malaysia, the current chair of ASEAN, the group included the Indonesian military attaché, Myanmar military attaché, Lao deputy military attaché, Philippine assistant military attaché, Vietnamese assistant military attaché, and Singaporean non-resident military attaché.

Cambodian Defense Ministry’s Undersecretary of State and Spokesperson Lt. Gen. Maly Socheata said the group will visit several locations in Cambodia’s Oddar Meanchey and Preah Vihear provinces to monitor the implementation of a recent ceasefire agreed by Cambodia and Thailand.

“The participation of these partner countries reflects a common desire to ensure that the ceasefire is successful and lasting with the goal of bringing back peace, stability, cooperation, and development for the benefit of the peoples of both countries,” she said in a press briefing.

On July 24, armed clashes erupted between Cambodian and Thai soldiers in border areas. The two countries agreed on an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in the afternoon of July 28, taking effect at midnight of the same day.

Cambodia has welcomed Thailand’s proposal to hold talks on border issue in Malaysia next week, a Cambodian defense ministry spokesperson said on Friday.

“I would like to take this opportunity to confirm that cambodia welcomes Thailand’s proposal to hold a meeting of the General Border Committee (GBC) in Kuala Lumpur,”

cambodian Defense Ministry’s Undersecretary of State and spokesperson Lt. Gen. Maly Socheata said at a press briefing.

“We’re very confident that this meeting will be constructive and yield fruitful outcomes,” she said.

According to Socheata, Cambodia’s Defense Minister Tea Seiha and Thailand’s Deputy Defense Minister Nattaphon Narkphanit will attend the upcoming meeting.

The office of the spokesperson of Thailand’s Ministry of Defense said Thursday on social media that Deputy Minister of Defense Nattaphon Narkphanit had officially responded to “Cambodia’s invitation” for a special GBC meeting.

In his reply, Nattaphon welcomed the opportunity to join the meeting and emphasized a shared commitment to reduce tensions and resolve border security issues in a peaceful and constructive manner.



People gather at a local shelter in Si Sa Ket Province, Thailand on Aug 1. Located in northeastern Thailand, Si Sa Ket Province was among the first regions affected during the Cambodia-Thailand border clashes, with civilian casualties reported. (Xinhua)

US warns of corruption and reported bribery aimed at destabilizing Haiti as crisis deepens

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, Aug 3, (AP): US officials announced Friday they are aware of “reported bribery attempts” aimed at destabilizing Haiti, raising concerns that the troubled country could sink further into crisis.

The announcements were made on X by the US Embassy in Haiti and the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs.

Officials did not provide details except to say that they commended members of Haiti’s transitional presidential council “for their rejection of corruption” and for collaborating with the current prime minister to “work together” to stabilize the country.

“We will hold accountable anyone who attempts to undermine this collaboration,” the embassy wrote on X.

The announcement comes as infighting threatens the stability of the council while gangs that control up to 90% of Haiti’s capital continue to seize more territory in Port-au-Prince and in Haiti’s central region.

The council’s voting members did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Neither did the US Department of State nor the office of Haiti’s prime minister.

Some people on social media mocked the announcement as they accused some council members of being corrupt.

In October last year, Haiti’s anti-corruption unit accused three council members of bribery and corruption involving the government-owned National Bank of Credit. No one has been charged, and the council members remain in their positions.

Haiti’s political stability has been fragile ever since a powerful gang federation known as “Viv Ansanm”



Commuters pass by police patrolling an intersection in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on May 9. (AP)

launched attacks early last year on critical government infrastructure including police stations and the country’s main international airport, forcing it to close for nearly three months.

The attacks prevented then-Prime Minister Ariel Henry from returning to Haiti. He eventually resigned, unable to enter his homeland following an official visit to Kenya to talk about a U.N.-backed mission that police from the eastern African country are currently leading to try and quash gang violence.

The council is under pressure to hold general elections by February 2026, with the previous ones held nearly a decade ago. No date has been set yet.

The council was created in April

2024 as the international community scrambled to meet with Haitian officials to rebuild the country’s government after Henry resigned. Political stability remains fragile, with three prime ministers having been appointed in the past year.

Meanwhile, gang violence continues to surge in the aftermath of the July 2021 killing of President Jovenel Moise.

In a report released Friday, the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti noted that at least 1,520 people were killed and more than 600 injured from April to the end of June. Nearly 80% of those incidents happened in Port-au-Prince, with nearly 20% reported in Haiti’s central region.

Lat/Am

Chile rescue workers find body of miner: Rescue teams found a body inside a section of a Chilean copper mine that collapsed two days earlier during a moderate earthquake, the mine’s director said Saturday.

Rescuers have been trying to reach five miners who were trapped Thursday evening in the El Teniente mine in central Chile as rocks collapsed around them during a 4.2 magnitude quake. The copper mine is one of Chile’s largest.

A spokesman for the rescue team that is trying to drill through 90 meters (295 feet) of rock to reach the miners said the body found on Saturday is one of the five miners who were trapped in the mine. El Teniente Director Andres Music said authorities were still trying to identify the body.

The body of another miner - not one of the five still trapped - identified as Paulo Marin Tapia was found Friday, shortly after the mine’s partial collapse.

Nine other mine workers suffered injuries, said Chile’s National Copper Corp., known as Codelco, describing the incident as a result of “a seismic event.” (AP)

Judge sentences 3 escaped prisoners: Three escaped prisoners from the eastern Caribbean island of Grenada who were accused of killing an elderly US couple last year after hijacking their catamaran have been sentenced.

Ron Mitchell, a sailor in his 30s who was accused of being the ringleader, received two life sentences late Wednesday in the killings of Ralph Hendry and Kathy Brandel.

Atiba Stanislaus, a farmer in his late 20s, received 60 years for manslaughter and nearly 18 years for the rape of Brandel, among other sentences, for a variety of crimes including kidnapping.



Aerial view of El Teniente copper mine, operated by Codelco, where a collapsed mine killed one worker and trapped five others underground, leading to a suspension of operations in Rancagua Chile on Aug 2. (AP)

Trevon Robertson, an unemployed man in his early 20s, received 56 years for manslaughter and other sentences for different crimes, according to local media reports.

The New Today, a local newspaper, reported that prosecutors said the men bound and gagged the couple before throwing them overboard, with Mitchell accused of steering the yacht over Hendry.

The two bodies were never found.

Police at the time said the men had escaped in late February 2024 from the South Saint George Police Station. They hijacked the catamaran Simplicity on the following day and then headed to nearby St. Vincent, where they were arrested, according to authorities.

The nonprofit Salty Dawg Sailing Association had said that Hendry and Brandel were “veteran cruisers” and longtime members of the association, calling them “warm-hearted and capable.”

It said the couple was spending the winter cruising in the eastern Caribbean. (AP)

African regional blocs agree on unified peace initiative to resolve DRC crisis

NAIROBI, Aug 3, (Xinhua): Kenyan President William Ruto and Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa have agreed to adopt a unified peace process to resolve the ongoing security crisis in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Ruto and Mnangagwa, co-chairs of the joint East African Community (EAC)-Southern African Development Community (SADC) summit, agreed on the framework for the merger of the Nairobi and Luanda processes that are designed to restore lasting and sustainable peace in the DRC.

Ruto said in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi that the African Union, SADC, and EAC are committed to silencing the guns and ending the decades-long conflict in the eastern DRC through a well-structured collaboration.

“We have an opportunity as Africa, and with the participation of the international community, to provide the necessary mechanisms for the resolution of the challenges that we have in the eastern DRC,” he said during the joint EAC-SADC Co-Chairs’ Meeting with the panel of facilitators on the restoration of peace and stability in the eastern DRC.

Ruto noted that the Nairobi meeting resolved to create a coherent mechanism for mobilizing resources and coordinating well-meaning efforts, adding that the African process is not in conflict with other peace efforts on the eastern DRC, namely the Doha and Washington initiatives.

The Kenyan leader said the primary objective of the high-level meeting was to formally brief the panel of facilitators



Residents listen to Tom Fletcher, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator at the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), (not seen) during his visit to North Kivu’s town of Buhumba, Democratic Republic of the Congo on June 26. (AP)

tors on their mandate, which includes guiding and overseeing a credible, inclusive political process in the eastern DRC. This process should engage all relevant stakeholders toward resolving the root causes of the crisis and restoring durable peace in the region.

Mnangagwa appealed to all parties in the peace process to engage in an honest manner to ensure lasting peace, noting that collaboration and synergy between the EAC and SADC regional blocs and other organizations, including the United Nations, are essential to the success of the peace process.

“In the spirit of pan-African unity

and progress, we urge all parties to fully support the leadership of our esteemed facilitators and to engage in honest, inclusive, and constructive dialogue,” he said.

The meeting brought together African Union Commission Chairperson Mahamoud Ali Youssouf and a panel of African facilitators, including former Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta, former President of the Central African Republic Catherine Samba-Panza, former Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde, and former Botswana President Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi.

Subcontinent

11 dead as vehicle falls in north India canal: At least 11 people died and four sustained injuries when the private vehicle carrying them fell into a canal in India’s northern state of Uttar Pradesh on Sunday, confirmed the local police.

The mishap occurred in the state’s Gonda district. The victims were returning after offering prayers at a nearby temple when they met with the mishap. There were a total of 15 people, including a few women, inside the ill-fated vehicle.

The state government announced an ex-gratia payment of 500,000 Indian rupees (nearly 5,734 U.S. dollars) to the families of those dead. The injured were admitted to a local hospital. India’s prime minister is Narendra Modi. (Xinhua)



Modi

Indian army officer charged: A senior Indian army officer was charged with “murderous assault” after he injured four staff members of a private airline at the Srinagar airport in Indian-controlled Kashmir, said the airline in a statement issued on Sunday.

SpiceJet said in the statement that the army officer was carrying luggage much beyond the permissible limits, and grew aggressive on being asked to pay for the extra luggage. He allegedly hit the airline’s staff at the boarding area, inflicting spinal injuries and jaw injuries on them, it added.

According to the airline, the incident occurred on July 26. The accused was to travel from Srinagar to Delhi. (Xinhua)

Policeman, 2 terrorists killed in Pakistan: One policeman and two terrorists were killed while four police officers were injured when militants attacked a police post in Pakistan’s northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province in the wee hours of Sunday morning, police sources said.

The incident happened at about 2:30 am local time (GMT 2130 Saturday) in Bannu district of KP, where militants opened fire with both small and heavy weapons on the police post, the sources from the district’s police told Xinhua.

Police retaliated, and the exchange of fire continued for about 30 minutes before subsiding, the sources added.

During a search operation afterwards, police recovered the bodies of the two unidentified militants killed in the firefight.

According to the sources, another group of militants ambushed a police patrol under the same police station during the attack, but no casualties were reported in that incident.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack. (Xinhua)

Pakistan mortar shell blast kills 5: A mortar shell blast killed five children and injured 13 others in Pakistan’s northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Saturday morning, police sources said.

The incident happened at about 9:30 a.m. local time (0430 GMT) in Lakki Marwat district of the province when a group of children, while playing in the nearby mountainous area, found an unexploded mortar shell, police sources told Xinhua.

The device went off as the children began tampering with it, resulting in multiple casualties, including five fatalities, the sources added.

Rescue teams shifted the injured to a nearby hospital for medical treatment. (Xinhua)

The sources said an investigation has been launched to trace the origin of the explosive device. (Xinhua)

US dollar stabilizes at 0.305 dinars

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): The US dollar exchange rate against the Kuwaiti dinar remained steady at KD 0.305 on Sunday, according to the Central Bank of Kuwait's daily bulletin.

The euro advanced 1.31% to KD 0.354 compared with Thursday's rate, while the British

pound was stable at KD 0.405.

The Swiss franc increased by 1.05% to KD 0.380, and the Japanese yen held steady at KD 0.002.

The CBK clarified that these rates represent the day's average currency values and do not correspond to actual buying or selling prices.

Business

Fully digital hiring underscores Gulf Bank's innovation push

Gulf Bank transitions entire recruitment process to a fully paperless digital experience

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: As part of its continued commitment to sustainability, Gulf Bank has fully digitized its recruitment process – transforming every stage, from application to contract signing, into a completely paperless experience. This comprehensive shift streamlines and enhances the recruitment journey, making it more efficient and user-friendly.

This milestone highlights Gulf Bank's commitment to innovation and sustainability, while placing job applicants' experiences at the heart of its priorities. The initiative also reinforces Gulf Bank's position as a leading financial institution in the region, constantly striving to offer the most advanced digital solutions.

The Bank highlighted that this achievement reflects its vision of offering a fully digital recruitment experience that meets the aspirations of national talents looking to become part of the Gulf Bank family. Beyond improving efficiency and reducing reliance on paper, the initiative offers a competitive advantage in attracting professionals who share the Bank's vision for a more innovative and sustainable future.

The new digital recruitment platform offers a smoother and more engag-



Gulf Bank's digital recruitment process.

ing experience for applicants, speeds up the hiring process, and enhances application tracking and management. It also allows the Bank to respond more efficiently to operational demands, further boosting its ability to attract top talent in the market.

This achievement reaffirms Gulf Bank's pioneering role in leading innovation across the Kuwaiti job market, contributing to the development of a sustainable, digital business environment that meets the ambitions of the next generation of professionals. It also sets a benchmark that encourages other public and private sector entities to adopt effective digital practices.

Gulf Bank continues to play a key role in embedding sustainability within the community by supporting initiatives that minimize environmental impact and highlight the importance of digital transformation across its operations and services.

The full shift to digital recruitment stands as a clear example of this commitment, significantly reducing paper usage and emissions tied to traditional methods – contributing to Kuwait's national environmental sustainability goals.

All Share Index slips 0.27%

Boursa Kuwait ends lower

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Sunday's trading session with the All Share Index falling by 23.44 points, or 0.27%, closing at 8,594.39 points. Trading activity included 332 million shares exchanged through 22,382 transactions, reaching a total value of KD 68.3 million (USD 208.9 million).

The Main Market Index moved up by 42.13 points, or 0.55%, finishing at 7,655.84 points. This came on turnover of 238.4 million shares via 16,538 trades, amounting to

KD 33.15 million (USD 101.4 million).

Conversely, the Premier Market Index declined by 40.98 points, or 0.44%, to 9,253.22 points, with 93.6 million shares traded through 5,844 transactions, valued at KD 35.2 million (USD 107.7 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index rose by 12.47 points, or 0.16%, to reach 7,617.14 points. Trading in this segment involved 168.3 million shares exchanged across 8,025 transactions, reaching KD 20.9 million (USD 63.9 million).

547,000 bpd cut set for Sept

OPEC+ reaffirms output cuts to support 'market stability'

VIENNA, Aug 3, (KUNA): Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iraq, UAE, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Algeria and Oman reaffirmed Sunday commitment to market stability on current healthy oil market fundamentals and steady global economic outlook and adjust production.

The eight OPEC+ countries, which previously announced additional voluntary adjustments in April and November 2023, met virtually on 3 August 2025, to review global market conditions and outlook.

In accordance with a decision agreed upon on 5 December 2024 to start a gradual and flexible return of the 2.2 million barrels per day (bpd) voluntary adjustments starting from 1 April 2025, the eight participating countries will implement a production adjustment of 547,000 bpd in September 2025 from August 2025 required production level.

This is equivalent to four monthly increments and the phase-out of the additional voluntary production adjustments may be paused or reversed subject to evolving market conditions. This flexibility will allow the group to continue to support oil market stability.

The eight OPEC+ countries also noted that this measure will provide an opportunity for the



OPEC

participating countries to accelerate their compensation. The eight countries reiterated their collective commitment to achieve full conformity with the Declaration of Cooperation, including the additional voluntary production adjustments that were agreed to be monitored by the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC) during its 53rd meeting held on April 3rd 2024.

They also confirmed their intention to fully compensate for any overproduced volume since January 2024. The eight OPEC+ countries will hold monthly meetings to review market conditions, conformity, and compensation. The eight countries will meet on September 7, 2025.

New Kafa'a program to build risk leaders in banking

KIBS launches fourth cohort of the Risk Management Leaders Program

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: As part of the Central Bank of Kuwait's strategic endeavor to build highly qualified national cadres in various financial and banking fields, and develop risk management capabilities, which has great importance in enhancing the banking environment and in fortifying financial operations, the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies (KIBS), launched the fourth cohort of the Risk Management Leaders Program, within Kafa'a initiative undertaken by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) in collaboration with Kuwaiti banks, and managed by KIBS.

Commenting on the event, the CBK Governor and KIBS Chairman of the Board of Directors, Basel A. Al-Haroon, stated that the program aims to provide participants with the necessary knowledge and skills when making appropriate decisions and develop effective risk management strategies in the banks and financial institutions.

The program will extend over a period of five months, divided into four discrete phases, the first and second phases are based in Kuwait and include training programs and practical lectures in the field of risk management. The program includes multiple training tracks with local and international professional lecturers. The third phase includes the submission of case studies and graduation projects, followed by the fourth phase, over one week of hands-on field training in collaboration with the School of Business, St Andrews University, which provides trainees with practical experience and professional competencies through workshops and interactive educational experiences. The program covers the costs of travel, accommodation and transportation.

With regard to eligibility for admission to the program, the general conditions require that the applicant must be a Kuwaiti citizen, possess an appropriate university qualification, has practical experience of no less than 5 years in the financial sector in Kuwait, and pass the personal interview and any prescribed tests in this regard.

Kafa'a initiative is a comprehensive strategic initiative that aims to build highly qualified national cadres and provide them with the necessary knowledge to progress in their careers and ready them with the necessary skills for the labor market in line with the ever-changing needs of the financial and banking industry. The initiative also aims to create a pipeline of qualified nationals able to fill leadership positions in major economic, financial and banking institutions.

Those wishing to apply can access the program details and submit applications starting Sunday, 03 August 2025, until Thursday, 28 August 2025, through Kafa'a website: www.kafaakw.org



IMF lifts global growth forecast to 3.0% in 2025

Global real GDP growth revised upwards amid the ongoing tariff war

By KAMCO Invest

In its latest World Economic Outlook (WEO) report, the IMF forecasted global real GDP growth at 3.0% for 2025 and 3.1% for 2026, marking an upward revision of 20 bps for the 2025 projection and 10 bps for 2026. This upward revision reflects stronger-than-expected front-loading of trade flows in anticipation of higher tariffs, along with a supportive fiscal environment underpinned by a weak US Dollar. Nonetheless, global real GDP growth remains below the pre-pandemic average of 3.7%, highlighting persistent structural challenges across economies.

Additionally, the IMF projected global headline inflation to decline to 4.2% in 2025 and fall further to 3.6% in 2026. However, it emphasized that inflation dynamics remain uneven across regions, noting that inflation in the US is projected to remain above target levels relative to other advanced economies.

Despite projecting relatively higher global growth for 2025 and 2026, the IMF underscored that risks to the global outlook remain tilted to the downside. Key risks include potential tariff hikes, escalating geopolitical tensions, and rising fiscal vulnerabilities. As per the IMF, the tariffs and a failure in trade negotiations could lower growth by 20 bps in 2025. Geopolitical disruptions such as ongoing conflicts in the Middle East could further strain global supply chains and place upward pressure on commodity prices. Moreover, fiscal deficits in major economies such as the US, Brazil, and France could tighten financial conditions, potentially resulting in higher long-term interest rates and increased market volatility. On the positive side, progress in trade negotiations could reduce global economic uncertainty by encouraging investment and supporting medium-term growth prospects.

The IMF's growth forecast for the MENA region was revised upward by 60 bps for 2025 to 3.2%, largely driven by stronger growth projections for oil exporters. However, the real GDP forecast for the region in 2026 remained unchanged from the April-2025 WEO at 3.4%. Saudi Arabia's growth projection was also revised upward by 60 bps for 2025, reaching 3.6%, while the 2026 forecast was also revised up by 20 bps 3.9%. The revision mainly reflected the unwinding of production cuts from OPEC+ with the aim of fully reversing the 2.2 mb/d of cuts by the end of September-2025.

This is estimated to support GDP growth in oil producers in the GCC, mainly Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE. Furthermore, the IMF expects the broader Middle East and Central Asia region to emerge from several years of subdued growth, with

the growth rate accelerating from an estimated 2.4% in 2024 to 3.4% in 2025 and 3.5% in 2026. Compared to the April-2025 WEO update, these projections represent an upward revision.

Advanced economies are projected to grow moderately

Growth in Advanced Economies was revised upward by 10bps for both 2025 and 2026, reaching 1.5% and 1.6%, respectively. The 2025 projections reflect marginal but encouraging upward adjustments for Canada, the EU, the United Kingdom, and the United States, while Spain's forecast remains unchanged from the April-2025 WEO update. Similarly, growth for Emerging Market and Developing Economies was revised upward by 40 bps for 2025 and 10 bps for 2026, with growth now expected at 4.1% and 4.0%, respectively.

According to the IMF, growth in the US is projected to rise to 1.9% in 2025, witnessing an upward revision of 10 bps. US Growth in 2026 is expect to reach 2.0%, reflecting a 30 bps upward revision. This revision is primarily driven by lower-than-anticipated tariff levels compared to those announced in April-2025, coupled with looser financial conditions and fiscal stimulus resulting from enacted legislation. However, the IMF also observed a cooling in US private demand, largely attributed to a slowdown in immigration.

For the Euro area, the IMF revised its 2025 growth forecast upward by 20 bps to 1.0%, while keeping the 2026 projection unchanged from April-2025 WEO at 1.2%. This upward revision for 2025 is mainly attributed to robust GDP output in Ireland during Q1-2025, despite the country accounting for less than 5% of the region's total GDP. The rise in Irish growth reflects a surge in pharmaceutical exports to the US due to front-loading and the commissioning of new production facilities. The IMF noted that without Ireland's contribution, the revision would have been limited to 10 bps

instead of 20 bps. The unchanged projection for 2026 reflects the expected dissipation of front-loaded trade effects.

In Asia, Japan's growth was revised upward by 10 bps for 2025 to 0.7%. However, for 2026, Japan's real GDP growth was lowered by 10 bps to 0.5% compared to the April-2025 WEO. China's growth outlook improved significantly, with the 2025 forecast revised upward by 80 bps to 4.8%, and a more modest upward revision of 20 bps to 4.2% for 2026. This upgrade reflects stronger-than-anticipated activity in Q1-2025 and a substantial reduction in US-China tariffs. China's Q1-2025 GDP performance alone implies a mechanical upgrade of 60 bps for the year. Growth in inventory restocking is expected to partially offset the reversal of front-loaded demand in Q2-2025, with inventory accumulation helping to mitigate the anticipated payback in the second half of the year.

Real GDP growth in the Middle East and Central Asia is expected to rise from 2.4% in 2024 to 3.4% in 2025 and 3.5% in 2026. This reflects an upward revision of 40 bps for 2025, while the 2026 forecast remains unchanged from the April-2025 WEO. Similarly, growth in Sub-Saharan Africa is forecast at 4.0% in 2025, increasing to 4.3% in 2026. In Latin America and the Caribbean, real GDP growth is projected to decelerate to 2.2% in 2025 before rebounding to 2.4% in 2026. In contrast, growth in Emerging and Developing Europe is expected to decline, with the 2025 forecast slashed by 30 bps to 1.8%, while the 2026 forecast was revised upward by 10 bps to 2.2%.

Inflation Expected to Fall

Global headline inflation is projected to decline to 4.2% in 2025 and further to 3.6% in 2026, supported by softening demand and falling energy prices. However, the IMF notes that this overall downward trend in inflation masks significant cross-country variations. In the US, tariffs are expected to act as a

supply shock, gradually passing through to consumer prices and exerting upward pressure on inflation during the second half of 2025. In contrast, in non-US jurisdictions, tariffs are anticipated to function more as a negative demand shock, thereby easing inflationary pressures.

The IMF forecasts that US inflation will remain above the 2% target in 2026, whereas in the Euro area, inflationary pressures are expected to be more subdued.

In China, headline inflation is projected to remain unchanged from the April-2025 WEO update, largely due to lower-than expected domestic energy prices. However, the IMF revised up China's core inflation forecast to 0.5% in 2025 and 0.8% in 2026, mainly due to tariff reductions.

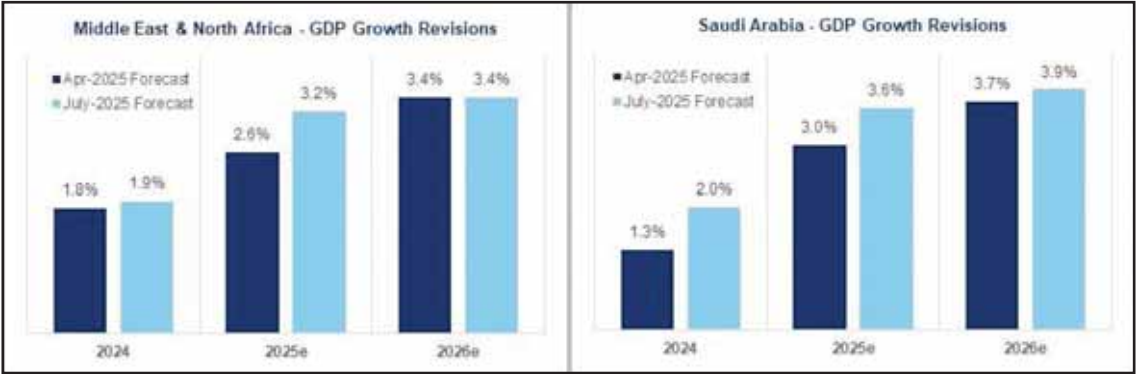
Global Trade Volumes

The IMF reported that global trade activity expanded strongly in Q1-2025 but is expected to contract in Q2-2025 as earlier front-loading of trade flows begins to unwind. World trade volume was revised upward by 90 bps for 2025, but downward by 60 bps for 2026. The short-term boost seen earlier in 2025 driven by elevated trade policy uncertainty and the anticipation of tighter trade restrictions is projected to fade in the second half of the year, with a corresponding deceleration expected in 2026.

Additionally, a weaker US Dollar is amplifying the tariff shock rather than mitigating it, resulting in a positive effect on the US current account balance. However, this benefit is more than offset by the ongoing expansionary fiscal stance. Over the medium term, fiscal stimulus in economies with current account surpluses is expected to contribute to a reduction in global imbalances.

The IMF also warned that rising geopolitical tensions particularly in the Middle East or Ukraine, that could introduce new negative supply shocks that would further disrupt global trade and economic activity. Potential damage to key infrastructure could impact shipping routes and supply chains, pushing up commodity prices. These shocks would likely dampen growth and intensify inflationary pressures, forcing central banks to navigate even more challenging trade-offs at a time when trade-related uncertainty is already high.

On a more optimistic note, the IMF emphasized that a new wave of credible trade arrangements could help generate broader reform momentum, potentially boosting medium-term growth. Reliable trade agreements could catalyze progress in labor market policies aimed at upskilling, reduce mobility barriers, simplify business regulations, and promote enhanced competition and innovation.



Confirming its commitment to a supportive work environment as a certified Great Place to Work®

Burgan Bank champions mental wellness with launch of ‘Emotional Aid’ workshop

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Driven by its commitment to fostering a supportive work environment and leading positive change in Kuwait’s banking sector, Burgan Bank hosted Emotional Aid workshop, in collaboration with Anara, at its head office. The workshop was delivered by Dr. Kim Dillen, PhD, a licensed neuropsychologist with extensive experience in mental health care, brain imaging, and neuropsychological assessment, to select senior staff members across various departments, equipping them with the necessary skills to become Burgan Bank’s trusted Emotional Wellness Champions. This initiative, which was widely met with enthusiasm from across the Bank’s different departments, is part of an expansive program guided by its mission to become an employer of choice and maintain its status as a Great Place to Work®.

“Burgan Bank extends its ongoing commitment to instilling mental health as a fundamental pillar of its corporate work culture. Prioritizing our employees’ health and safety stems from our belief that a balanced environment is a catalyst for growth and creativity..” said Ms. Zahra Boarki, Senior Manager – Internal Communication at Burgan Bank.



Ms. Zahra Boarki, Senior Manager – Internal Communication at Burgan Bank.

She added: “We are committed to maintaining a robust series of internal events and activities that seek to enrich all aspects of our employees’ lives, bolstering their physical and mental wellbeing at all times. This comes as part of the Bank’s strategy to foster flexible and sustainable work envi-



Burgan Bank senior staff during the Emotional Aid workshop, held in collaboration with Anara Mental Health Center.

ronment standards, focused on achieving a work-life balance and becoming the employer of Choice Our mission is to an employer of choice that prioritize employee development: emotionally, mentally and professionally.”

The Emotional Aid workshop marks a significant step forward in promoting employee wellness and setting a new standard for employee care at Burgan Bank. To ensure its sustainability, the initiative follows a top-down design, which prepares managers and equips them with the necessary knowledge and tools to respond adequately to their team’s need for personal as well as professional support and guidance.

As a bank that is “Driven by You”, Burgan Bank recognizes that fulfillment is key to outstanding performance and innovation, thus sparing no effort to meet its employees’ diverse needs for holistic personal and professional growth, beginning with mental, physical, and emotional wellness. It is worth noting that Burgan Bank launched numerous activities and programs to support employees’ health and well-being, aiming to create a safe, comfortable and empowering work environment, this includes an internal clinic, a mother’s room for new moms, reduced working hours throughout the week, as well as paid leave options such as self-care days leave, paternity leave, marriage leave and birthday leave. The bank also launched various programs to support employee talents and encourage them to be part of its strategy.

Trump’s tariffs create winners, but costs ripple across markets

WASHINGTON, Aug 3, (AP): President Donald Trump’s tariff onslaught this week left a lot of losers - from small, poor countries like Laos and Algeria to wealthy U.S. trading partners like Canada and Switzerland. They’re now facing especially hefty taxes - tariffs - on the products they export to the United States starting Aug. 7.

The closest thing to winners may be the countries that caved to Trump’s demands - and avoided even more pain. But it’s unclear whether anyone will be able to claim victory in the long run - even the United States, the intended beneficiary of Trump’s protectionist policies.

“In many respects, everybody’s a loser here,” said Barry Appleton, co-director of the Center for International Law at the New York Law School.

Barely six months after he returned to the White House, Trump has demolished the old global economic order. Gone is one built on agreed-upon rules. In its place is a system in which Trump himself sets the rules, using America’s enormous economic power to punish countries that won’t agree to one-sided trade deals and extracting huge concessions from the ones that do.

“The biggest winner is Trump,” said Alan Wolff, a former U.S. trade official and deputy director-general at the World Trade Organization. “He bet that he could get other countries to the table on the basis of threats, and he succeeded - dramatically.”

Everything goes back to what Trump calls “Liberation Day” - April 2 - when the president announced “reciprocal” taxes of up to 50% on imports from countries with which the United States ran trade deficits and 10% “baseline” taxes on almost everyone else.

He invoked a 1977 law to declare the trade deficit a national emergency that justified his sweeping import taxes. That allowed him to bypass Congress, which traditionally has had authority over taxes, including tariffs - all of which is now being challenged in court.

Trump retreated temporarily after his Liberation Day announcement triggered a rout in financial markets and suspended the reciprocal tariffs for 90 days to give countries a chance to negotiate.

Eventually, some of them did, caving to Trump’s demands to pay what four months ago would have seemed unthinkable high tariffs for the privilege of continuing to sell into the vast American market.

The United Kingdom agreed to 10% tariffs on its exports to the United States - up from 1.3% before Trump amped up his trade war with the world. The U.S. demanded concessions even though it had run a trade surplus, not a deficit, with the UK for 19 straight years.

The European Union and Japan accepted U.S. tariffs of 15%. Those are much higher than the low single-digit rates they paid last year - but lower than the tariffs he was threatening (30% on the EU and 25% on Japan).

Also cutting deals with Trump and agreeing to hefty tariffs were Pakistan, South Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Even countries that saw their tariffs lowered from April without reaching a deal are still paying much higher tariffs than before Trump took office. Angola’s tariff, for instance, dropped to 15% from 32% in April, but in 2022 it was less than 1.5%. And while Trump administration cut Taiwan’s tariff to 20% from 32% in April, the pain will still be felt.

“20% from the beginning has not been our goal, we hope that in further negotiations we will get a more beneficial and more reasonable tax rate,” Taiwan’s president Lai Ching-te told reporters in Taipei Friday.

Trump also agreed to reduce the tariff on the tiny southern African kingdom of Lesotho to 15% from the 50% he’d announced in April, but the damage may already have been done there.

Countries that didn’t knuckle under - and those that found other ways to incur Trump’s wrath - got hit harder.

Even some poorer countries were not spared. Laos’ annual economic output comes to \$2,100 per person and Algeria’s \$5,600 - versus America’s \$75,000. Nonetheless, Laos got rocked with a 40% tariff and Algeria with a 30% levy.

Trump slammed Brazil with a 50% import tax largely because he didn’t like the way it was treating former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, who is facing trial for trying to lose his electoral defeat in 2022. Never mind that the U.S. has exported more to Brazil than it’s imported every year since 2007.

Trump’s decision to plaster a 35% tariff on longstanding U.S. ally Canada was partly designed to threaten Ottawa for saying it would recognize a Palestinian state. Trump is a staunch supporter of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Switzerland was clobbered with a 39% import tax - even higher than the 31% Trump originally announced on April 2.

“The Swiss probably wish that they had camped in Washington” to make a deal, said Wolff, now senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics. “They’re clearly not at all happy.”

Fortunes may change if Trump’s tariffs are upended in court. Five American businesses and 12 states are suing the president, arguing that his Liberation Day tariffs exceeded his authority under the 1977 law.

In May, the U.S. Court of International Trade, a specialized court in New York, agreed and blocked the tariffs, although the government was allowed to continue collecting them while its appeal wend its way through the legal system, and may likely end up at the U.S. Supreme Court. In a hearing Thursday, the judges on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit sounded skeptical about Trump’s justifications for the tariffs.

“If (the tariffs) get struck down, then maybe Brazil’s a winner and not a loser,” Appleton said.

Trump portrays his tariffs as a tax on foreign countries. But they are actually paid by import companies in the U.S. who try to pass along the cost to their customers via higher prices. True, tariffs can hurt other countries by forcing their exporters to cut prices and sacrifice profits - or risk losing market share in the United States.

But economists at Goldman Sachs estimate that overseas exporters have absorbed just one-fifth of the rising costs from tariffs, while Americans and U.S. businesses have picked up the most of the tab.

Walmart, Procter & Gamble, Ford, Best Buy, Adidas, Nike, Mattel and Stanley Black & Decker, have all hiked prices due to U.S. tariffs

“This is a consumption tax, so it disproportionately affects those who have lower incomes,” Appleton said. “Sneakers, knapsacks ... your appliances are going to go up. Your TV and electronics are going to go up. Your video game devices, consoles are going to up because none of those are made in America.”

Trump’s trade war has pushed the average U.S. tariff from 2.5% at the start of 2025 to 18.3% now, the highest since 1934, according to the Budget Lab at Yale University. And that will impose a \$2,400 cost on the average household, the lab estimates.

“The U.S. consumer’s a big loser,” Wolff said.

Fed Sept rate cut odds climb after soft jobs report

By National Bank of Kuwait

U.S. markets ended the week lower as weak July job data and aggressive tariff measures weighed on sentiment. The S&P 500 and Nasdaq posted notable losses, while Treasury yields fell sharply driven by rising expectations of a Fed rate cut in September amid signs of labor market softening. The U.S. dollar weakened significantly on Friday, falling 0.83% on the day after soaring to a two month high earlier due to the dovish shift in rate outlook, with traders now pricing in a greater than 95% chance of easing next meeting. Overall, risk assets pulled back and bond markets rallied as investors reassessed the economic outlook.

United States

President Trump Announces Trade Deal with the European Union

President Trump announced that the U.S. and the European Union have reached a framework trade deal on Sunday, introducing a 15% tariff on most EU imports. According to Trump, the agreement includes commitments for the EU to buy \$750 billion worth of U.S. energy and substantial arms purchases in the coming years. However, the U.S. will maintain its 50% tariffs on steel and aluminum. EU leaders sharply criticized the U.S.-EU trade agreement. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz warned the deal would inflict “considerable damage” on the Eurozone economy, whilst France’s Prime Minister François Bayrou labelled it a “dark day” for the bloc. Although the agreement prevented the imposition of a 30% tariff, the new 15% duty still represents a threefold increase from previous levels prior to April’s “Liberation Day” announcements.

Job Openings Fall

U.S. job openings and hiring both declined in June, signaling a potential cooling in the labor market amid ongoing speculation about future Fed rate cuts. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, job openings fell to 7.44 million from 7.71 million in May, which had marked the highest level since November 2024. Hiring also slowed, dropping to 5.2 million from 5.47 million, with the hiring rate dipping to 3.3%, its lowest since November 2024. The quits rate, often seen as a sign of worker confidence, held steady at 2%, near decade lows.

U.S. Economy Grows More than Expected

U.S. economic growth rebounded more than expected in Q2, with GDP rising at a 3% annualized rate after a 0.5% contraction in Q1, according to Commerce Department data. However, the headline figure masks underlying weakness: most of the rebound came from a sharp drop in imports following a Q1 stockpiling surge ahead of tariffs, which artificially added 5 percentage points to growth. Meanwhile, domestic demand grew at its slowest pace in 2.5 years, and consumer spending rose only modestly by 1.4%, reflecting lingering uncertainty from President Trump’s tariff policies.

Fed Leaves Benchmark Rate Unchanged

The U.S. Federal Reserve held the benchmark interest rate at 4.25%-4.50%, unchanged since December. Fed Chair Jerome Powell avoided committing to future moves, saying, “We haven’t decided on September.” He emphasized that more economic data will be reviewed before the next meeting. Some analysts thought Powell might hint at a September cut unless data worsened, but he gave no such signal.

Fed’s Preferred Gauge Shows Inflation Accelerating

Inflation picked up in June, with the Federal Re-

Previous Week Levels					This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
Currencies	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.1746	1.1389	1.1722	1.1584	1.1455	1.1680	1.1651
GBP	1.3430	1.3138	1.3452	1.3278	1.3150	1.3380	1.3287
JPY	147.74	147.28	150.91	147.36	146.00	149.00	145.88
CHF	0.7952	0.7942	0.8171	0.8038	0.7940	0.8140	0.7947

serve’s preferred measure, the core Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) index, rising 0.3% month-over-month, matching expectations and up from May’s 0.2% increase. Annually, core PCE remained at 2.8%, slightly above the 2.7% forecast and higher than the Fed’s 2% target. May’s annual reading was also revised up from 2.7% to 2.8%. Despite pressure from President Trump, the Federal Reserve held interest rates steady at Wednesday’s meeting. The Fed continues to monitor core PCE closely as it gauges whether inflation is easing toward its target.

Tariff Announcements at Deadline

President Donald Trump signed an executive order imposing new reciprocal tariffs ranging from 10% to 41% on imports from dozens of countries. The move came shortly after he extended tariff negotiations with Mexico by 90 days. Countries with which the U.S. runs a trade surplus will continue to face a 10% tariff, unchanged from April 2. However, nations with a trade deficit with the U.S. will now be subject to a 15% tariff, affecting around 40 countries. Over a dozen others will face even higher rates due to recent announcements or trade deals. The announcement triggered a sharp selloff in U.S. equity markets, with all major indices closing significantly lower.

NFP Report Shows Significant Slowdown in Labor Market

U.S. job growth slowed significantly in July, with nonfarm payrolls rising by just 73,000, well below the 110,000 expected, and prior months’ figures revised down by a combined 258,000 jobs. The unemployment rate rose to 4.2%, and labor force participation continued to decline, albeit at a slower pace. June’s job gains were revised down to 14,000, the weakest in nearly five years, and May’s were cut to just 19,000. The Bureau of Labor Statistics noted the revisions were unusually large. The weak data has reignited expectations for a Federal Reserve rate cut in September, after markets had previously anticipated action in October. The Greenback was last seen trading at 98.69.

Eurozone

Eurozone Inflation

Eurozone inflation held steady at 2% in July, matching the European Central Bank’s target for the second straight month and defying expectations of a slight decline. The stability was supported by lower energy prices and a stronger euro. Core inflation, which excludes food and energy, remained unchanged at 2.3%, while services inflation fell to 3.1%, its lowest level in over three years. The ECB has halved interest rates to 2% since last summer but kept them unchanged in July, with President Christine Lagarde noting a cautious “wait-and-watch” stance amid ongoing uncertainty from global trade tensions.

The EUR/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.1584.

Canada

Bank of Canada Holds Rates Steady

The Bank of Canada kept its interest rate unchanged at 2.75% on Wednesday, citing continued economic resilience despite global trade tensions driven by U.S. tariffs. Governor Tiff Macklem said the decision reflected a strong consensus among policymakers. While trade uncertainty remains, Canada’s economy has held up better than expected, and core inflation remains persistent. This marks the third consecutive hold following similar decisions in April and June. Macklem noted that recent international agreements have eased fears of a worsening trade war but emphasized that rate cuts remain an option if conditions weaken.

The USD/CAD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.3785.

Asia-Pacific

Australia’s Inflation Declines

Australia’s inflation fell to 2.1% year-over-year in Q2, the lowest since March 2021 and just above the lower end of the Reserve Bank of Australia’s 2–3% target range. This was below the 2.2% forecast by economists and down from 2.4% in Q1. Quarterly inflation also eased to 0.7%, under both the expected 0.8% and the previous quarter’s 0.9%. Despite earlier signs supporting rate cuts, the RBA held its policy rate steady at 3.85% in its last meeting, defying market expectations, and aiming to ensure inflation stays within target according to the minutes. Following the inflation reading, markets are now largely expecting a 25-basis point cut at the RBA’s upcoming August meeting.

The AUD/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 0.6475.

Bank of Japan Maintains Policy Rate

The Bank of Japan (BOJ) raised its inflation forecasts on Thursday and expressed a slightly more optimistic view of the economy, keeping the door open for possible interest rate hikes this year. While leaving short-term rates unchanged at 0.5%, the BOJ noted that rising wages and prices could push inflation toward its 2% target. It also upgraded its inflation outlook for the next few years and signaled fewer risks to price growth. The yen strengthened slightly after the announcement, with some analysts predicting a rate hike as early as October. The decision comes as Japan benefits from a new trade deal with the U.S., which eases tariffs on key exports like cars, helping the economy withstand global trade tensions.

The USD/JPY currency pair was last seen trading at 147.36.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar
USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30590.

Russian oil made up 40% of India’s imports at peak

India to keep buying Russian oil despite US threats

NEW DELHI, Aug 3, (AP): India has indicated that it would continue buying oil from Russia despite threats by U.S. President Donald Trump.

The Indian foreign ministry said its relationship with Russia was “steady and time-tested,” and should not be seen through the prism of a third country.

Addressing a weekly presser on Friday, spokesman Randhir Jaiswal said India’s broader stance on securing its energy needs was guided by the availability of oil in the markets and prevailing global circumstances.

The comments follow an announcement by President Donald Trump that he intends to impose a 25% tariff on goods from India plus an additional import tax because of New Delhi’s purchases of Russian oil.

The threat came as the U.S. president has increasingly soured on Russia for failing to agree to a ceasefire in Ukraine and has threatened new economic sanctions if progress is not made.

India bought 68,000 barrels per day of crude oil from Russia in January 2022, but by June of same year oil imports rose to 1.12 million barrels per day. The daily imports peaked at 2.15 million in May 2023 and have varied since.

Supplies rose as high as nearly 40% of India’s imports at one point, making Moscow the largest supplier of crude to New Delhi, the Press Trust of India reported, citing data from Kpler, a data analytics company.

India’s daily oil consumption is pegged around 5.5 million barrels, of which nearly 88% is met through imports.

The country has historically bought most of its crude from the Middle East, but this has changed since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

India, the world’s third-largest crude importer after China and the U.S., began buying Russian oil available at discounted rates after the West shunned it to punish Moscow.

Berkshire Q2 profit halves on Kraft Heinz writedown

OMAHA, Aug 3, (AP): Warren Buffett’s company reported less than half as much profit in the second quarter as it took a \$3.76 billion writedown on the value of its stake in Kraft Heinz, as that iconic food producer considers largely undoing the merger that Berkshire Hathaway helped bankroll.

Berkshire said it earned \$12.37 billion, or \$8,601 per Class A share, during the quarter. That’s down from \$30.248 billion, or \$21,122 per Class A share, a year ago, because it recorded a much smaller paper

investment gain this year.

Berkshire’s earnings can swing wildly from quarter to quarter because it has to record the current value of its massive investment portfolio even though it doesn’t sell most of the stocks. That’s why Buffett has long recommended that investors pay more attention to Berkshire’s operating earnings, which exclude those investment gains. Although last year Berkshire did surprise shareholders by selling off a huge chunk of its Apple stake which inflated the investment gains then.

By that measure, Berkshire’s operating earnings were only down slightly at \$11.16 billion, or \$7,759.58 per Class A share. That compares with \$11.598 billion, or \$8,072.16 per Class A share, a year ago. Most of Berkshire’s myriad assortment of companies - major insurers like Geico, BNSF railroad, a group of utilities and a collection of manufacturing and retail businesses - generally performed well despite the uncertainty about the economy and President Donald Trump’s tariffs.

Delta and others use AI to tailor prices – sometimes unfairly

What is personalized pricing, and how do I avoid it?



A man waits for a Delta Airlines flight at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport in Atlanta on Jan. 7, 2022. (AP)

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



By Jay L. Zagorsky
Boston University

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The price paid depended
on the buyer’s and
seller’s bargaining skills
— and desperation.
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Recently, Delta Air Lines announced it would expand its use of artificial intelligence to provide individualized prices to customers. This move sparked concern among flyers and politicians. But Delta isn’t the only business interested in using AI this way. Personalized pricing has already spread across a range of industries, from finance to online gaming.

Customized pricing - where each customer receives a different price for the same product - is a holy grail for businesses because it boosts profits. With customized pricing, free-spending people pay more while the price-sensitive pay

less. Just as clothes can be tailored to each person, custom pricing fits each person’s ability and desire to pay.

I am a professor who teaches business school students how to set prices. My latest book, “The Power of Cash: Why Using Paper Money is Good for You and Society,” highlights problems with custom pricing. Specifically, I’m worried that AI pricing models lack transparency and could unfairly take advantage of financially unsophisticated people.

For much of history, customized pricing was the normal way things happened. In the past, business owners sized up each customer and then bargained face-to-face. The price paid depended on the buyer’s and seller’s bargaining skills - and desperation.

An old joke illustrates this process. Once, a very rich man was riding in his carriage at breakfast time. Hungry, he told his driver to stop at

the next restaurant. He went inside, ordered some eggs and asked for the bill. When the owner handed him the check, the rich man was shocked at the price. “Are eggs rare in this neighborhood?” he asked. “No,” the owner said. “Eggs are plentiful, but very rich men are quite rare.”

Custom pricing through bargaining still exists in some industries. For example, car dealerships often negotiate a different price for each vehicle they sell. Economists refer to this as “first-degree” or “perfect” price discrimination, which is “perfect” from the seller’s perspective because it allows them to charge each customer the maximum amount they’re willing to pay.

Currently, most American shoppers don’t bargain but instead see set prices. Many scholars trace the rise of set prices to John Wanamaker’s Philadelphia department store, which opened in 1876. In his store, each item had a nonnegotiable price

tag. These set prices made it simpler for customers to shop and became very popular.

Set prices have several advantages for businesses. For one thing, they allow stores to hire low-paid retail workers instead of employees who are experts in negotiation.

Historically, they also made it easier for stores to decide how much to charge. Before the advent of AI pricing, many companies determined prices using a “cost-plus” rule. Cost-plus means a business adds a fixed percentage or markup to an item’s cost. The markup is the percentage added to a product’s cost that covers a company’s profits and overhead.

The big-box retailer Costco still uses this rule. It determines prices by adding a roughly 15% maximum markup to each item on the warehouse floor. If something costs Costco \$100, they sell it for about \$115.

The problem with cost-plus is that

it treats all items the same. For example, Costco sells wine in many stores. People buying expensive Champagne typically are willing to pay a much higher markup than customers purchasing inexpensive boxed wine. Using AI gets around this problem by letting a computer determine the optimal markup item by item.

AI needs a lot of data to operate effectively. The shift from cash to electronic payments has enabled businesses to collect what’s been called a “gold mine” of information. For example, Mastercard says its data lets companies “determine optimal pricing strategies.”

So much information is collected when you pay electronically that in 2024 the Federal Trade Commission issued civil subpoenas to Mastercard, JPMorgan Chase and other financial companies demanding to know “how artificial intelligence and other technological tools may allow companies to vary prices using data they collect about individual consumers’ finances and shopping habits.” Experiments at the FTC show that AI programs can even collude among themselves to raise prices without human intervention.

To prevent customized pricing, some states have laws requiring retailers to display a single price for each product for sale. Even with these laws, it’s simple to do custom pricing by using targeted digital coupons, which vary each shopper’s discount.

There are ways to get around customized pricing. All depend on denying AI programs data on past purchases and knowledge of who you are. First, when shopping in brick-and-mortar stores, use paper money. Yes, good old-fashioned cash is private and leaves no data trail that follows you online.

Second, once online, clear your cache. Your search history and cookies provide algorithms with extensive amounts of information. Many articles say the protective power of clearing your cache is an urban myth. However, this information was based on how airlines used to price tickets. Recent analysis by the FTC shows the newest AI algorithms are changing prices based on this cached information.

Third, many computer pricing algorithms look at your location, since location is a good proxy for income. I was once in Botswana and needed to buy a plane ticket. The price on my computer was about \$200. Unfortunately, before booking I was called away to dinner. After dinner my computer showed the cost was \$1,000 – five times higher. It turned out after dinner I used my university’s VPN, which told the airline I was located in a rich American neighborhood. Before dinner I was located in a poor African town. Shutting off the VPN reduced the price. (AP)

Unions may hold the key to fighting inequality

Stronger labor rights can shrink America’s wealth gap

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



By Skip Mark, University of Rhode Island and
Stephen Bagwell, University of Missouri-St. Louis

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Collective labor rights
include the rights to
form and join a union,
bargain collectively for
higher pay and better
working conditions, go
on strike, and get justice if employers punish
workers who exercise
these rights.
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Despite the strength of the U.S. economy, the gap between rich and poor Americans is increasing.

The wealthiest 1% of Americans have more than five times as much wealth as the bottom 50%, according to the U.S. Federal Reserve. That’s up from four times as much in the year 2000. In 2024 alone, the wealthiest 19 families got a total of US\$1 trillion richer - the largest one-year increase on record.

And yet 59% of Americans don’t have enough money saved up to cover an unexpected \$1,000 expense.

We are political scientists who study human rights and political economy.

In a 2023 study, our team looked at 145 countries, including the U.S., to understand the link between labor rights and inequality. We found evidence that strengthening collective labor rights may reduce economic inequality.

Collective labor rights include

the rights to form and join a union, bargain collectively for higher pay and better working conditions, go on strike, and get justice if employers punish workers who exercise these rights.

In the U.S., where less than 10% of workers belong to unions, union members typically earn higher wages than their nonunion counterparts.

Through negotiations on behalf of their members, unions can pressure employers to provide fair wages and benefits. If negotiations break down, the union can call for a strike - sometimes winning better benefits and higher wages as a result.

Some U.S. unions don’t have the right to strike, including air traffic controllers, teachers and those working on national security issues. But most unions have some ability to implement work stoppages and impose costs on employers to negotiate for raises and better benefits and conditions.

For our study, we analyzed the human rights in the CIRIGHTS dataset, which uses human rights reports from the U.S. State Department, Amnesty International and other sources to measure government respect for 24 human rights, including the rights to unionize and bargain collectively. The dataset is produced by the University of Rhode Island, Binghamton Univer-

sity and the University of Connecticut. One of us, Skip Mark, serves as a co-director of the project.

Using a scoring guide, a team of researchers reads human rights reports and gives each country a score of zero if they have widespread violations, one point if they have some violations, or two if they have no evidence of violations. The team has assigned scores for all 24 rights from 1994 through 2022.

Using this data, we created a measure of collective labor rights by adding scores for the right to workplace association and the right to collective bargaining. The resulting collective labor rights score ranges from zero to four.

Countries where workers’ rights are routinely violated, such as Afghanistan, China and Saudi Arabia, scored a zero. The United States, Macedonia and Zambia, three countries with little in common, were among those that tended to get two points, placing them in the middle. Countries with no reported violations of the rights to workplace association and collective bargaining, including Canada, Sweden and France, got four points.

According to the CIRIGHTS dataset, the strength of respect for collective labor rights around the world declined by 50%, from 2.06 in 1994 to 1.03 in 2022.

At the same time, according

to the World Inequality Dataset, the share of income earned by the 1% with the biggest paychecks increased by 11%.

We used advanced statistical methods to figure out whether better worker protections actually reduce inequality or are just associated with it.

We also measured what’s been happening to economic inequality, using two common ways to track it.

One of them is vertical inequality, the gap between what people earn within a country - the rich versus the poor. The more unequal a society becomes, the higher its vertical inequality score gets. We measured it using the disposable income measure from the Gini index, a commonly used indicator of economic inequality that captures how much money individuals have to spend after taxes and government transfers.

We found that a one-point increase in collective labor rights on our four-point scale reduces vertical inequality by 10 times the average change in inequality. For the U.S., a one-point increase in collective labor rights would be about enough to undo the increase in inequality that occurred between 2008 and 2010 due to the Great Recession and its aftermath. It would also likely help stem the growing wealth gap between Black and white

Americans. That’s because income disparities compound over time to create wealth gaps.

We also assessed the connection between horizontal inequality, which measures income inequality between ethnic or other groups, and collective labor rights.

Negative horizontal inequality measures the amount of a country’s income held by the poorest ethnic group. Higher scores for this metric indicate that the lowest-earning ethnic group has less income relative to the rest of society. Black Americans have the lowest median income of any racial or ethnic group, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Positive horizontal inequality measures the income earned by the richest ethnic group. When positive horizontal inequality rises, that means the richest ethnic group has more income relative to the rest of society. According to the same Census Bureau report, Asian Americans had the highest median earnings.

We found that stronger collective labor rights, both in law and in practice around the world, also reduce both types of horizontal inequality. This means they raise the floor by helping to improve the income of the poorest ethnic groups in society. They also close the gap by limiting the incomes of the richest ethnic group, which can reduce the likelihood of conflicts. (AP)

editor’s choice



Television



Matt Rogers arrives at Las Culturistas Culture Awards on Thursday, July 17, 2025, at The Orpheum Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP)

Redefine awards season

Rogers talks bringing Las Culturistas to TV

LOS ANGELES, Aug 3, (AP): The last Teen Choice Awards aired in 2019. MTV canceled its MTV Movie & TV Awards show after 2023. It's been a rough period for those deserving of recognition as choice hottie or best villain.

Enter the Las Culturistas Culture Awards, now in its fourth year - and coming to television for the first time Tuesday. Conceived by comedians and longtime friends Bowen Yang ("Saturday Night Live") and Matt Rogers ("I Love That For You") and an outgrowth of their "Las Culturistas" podcast, this year's edition was taped in July and will air on Bravo.

"The thing that's cohesive about Bravo and our brand is the fact that we center fun and that kind of made it a really natural home for us," Rogers said recently over Zoom.

These awards give flowers to a variety of genres. Categories this year include most iconic building or structure (Lumon headquarters from "Severance" is nominated), best title for the next "Bridget Jones" ("Bridget Jones to Terabithia" is a contender) and the Lindsay Lohan in "Parent Trap" award for twins excellence (Michael B. Jordan gets a nod for "Sinners").

Rogers' favorite? "They're all my babies," he said, but is most proud of best "Batman" woman. One of the nominees: Robyn - yes, not Robin. "It's the Riddler's assistant," joked Rogers. "Robyn scenes were cut from the movie." The awards aren't even limited to work from the past year - the non-existent Robyn's competitors include both Michelle Pfeiffer and Anne Hathaway's portrayal of Catwoman.

The awards are "one of the most fun things we do every year," Rogers said. The whole point is to remind people that Hollywood - and especially awards shows - are not that serious.

Rogers spoke with The Associated Press about the Las Culturistas Culture Awards, the podcast and keeping up with pop culture. This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: Why did you and Bowen start the Las Culturistas Culture Awards?

Rogers: I don't think there's anything funnier than people who take themselves too seriously. And being hosts of a pop culture podcast in which we talk about the entertainment industry quite frequently, we see it as an opportunity to empower everyone to drop their shoulders a little bit. Bowen was just nominated for his fifth (chance at an) Emmy. It still means something, even though we're in the process of satirizing it, which says everything you need to know about the place that this holds in our culture.

AP: Do you ever find it hard to keep up with everything that's popping in the zeitgeist?

Rogers: Absolutely. We talk about this a lot on the show. The death of monoculture is a very real thing, so we are not all watching the same stuff. It would be impossible to cover everything that everyone wants us to cover. For example, I can't really do "Love Island." The episodes are just a little too long and, also, it's not my flavor of reality show. That doesn't mean that I don't think it's incredible for people that want to watch it. I am an Ariana Madix superfan and supporter. Having said that, if we're talking about something on "Las Culturistas," it is honest. I would never want to just cram for the podcast. If you hear us talking about it, it's something we're actually encountering.

AP: As you and Bowen each become busier with your individual careers, is there a scenario where you would end the podcast? (Yang did take a break in 2023 to focus on his mental health.)

Rogers: The podcast is not hard to do. Maybe if it were, or if we felt like at a certain point it was too exposing, we would maybe take a break. But the fact is, we don't feel that way. If it was ever a thing of like, "Hey, we need to wind it back," that probably means we would book less guests and just talk to each other. The energy expense is when we're getting ready to host someone that we love or that we wanna make sure has a good time. It's an hour or whatever of me talking to my friend.

AP: Why do you think there are so many podcasts out there?

Rogers: It's a celebration of someone's interests. I always say if you have an interest, you can find 15 podcasts about that thing no matter what it is. I think what makes people excited about this world is it's a place to talk and deep dive or be too granular and too niche about what you love.

AP: What was the original goal for "Las Culturistas" when you started back in 2016? You've gone on to have Michelle Obama, Lady Gaga, Sarah Jessica Parker and Chappell Roan as guests.

Rogers: The podcast started with me and Bowen sitting behind mics, very lo-fi at our friend's apartment. A mattress was in the window to keep the sound out. It was just a playdate for me and Bowen. It wasn't even weekly in the very beginning. It was very haphazard. The sentence, "Oh, we owe them an episode," was uttered a lot. Then suddenly it became this thing. And we realized it was really not only helping us, but it was something we enjoyed.

Ancient art meets modern stage

Chinese dance turns Hollywood stage into living art

LOS ANGELES, Aug 3, (Xinhua): Bathed in green-blue hues, the stage of Hollywood's iconic Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles transformed into a living scroll Friday night, as performers moved like brushstrokes across a vast canvas in a poetic Chinese dance.

Titled "The Journey of a Legendary Landscape Painting," the dance was inspired by Wang Ximeng's 12th-century masterpiece "A Panorama of Rivers and Mountains." The painting, now housed at the Palace Museum in Beijing, is a vivid record of daily life and natural scenery in the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127) and is widely considered one of the most significant works in the history of Chinese fine art.

The performance follows a modern Palace Museum researcher who imagines traveling back more than 900 years to explore the creative journey of young artist Wang. By blending ancient aesthetics with modern choreography, the performance celebrated how culture evolves while honoring its roots.

The dance is no stranger to American audiences. After a widely praised U.S. debut in 2024, it returned this

year for a second round of performances. Friday's event marked the third stop of the show's 2025 North American tour, following earlier performances in Vancouver and Seattle.

Presented by the China Oriental Performing Arts Group, the tour aims to deepen cultural ties and share traditional Chinese aesthetics with global audiences through the universal language of art.

Significance

"It is of special significance to bring this classic Chinese poetic dance to North America for the second time," said Zhang Lei, deputy general manager of the China Oriental Performing Arts Group. "I'm truly glad to see that many international audience members can understand and emotionally connect with it."

"We hope to continue sharing the beauty of Chinese culture through performances like this," Zhang told Xinhua, expressing hope that the tour will further expand the global reach of China's rich cultural heritage and promote mutual understanding and exchange between civilizations.

Stage



Aaron Costa Ganis, (left), and Elizabeth McGovern appear during a performance of the play 'Ava: The Secret Conversations' in New York. (AP)

'Downton' star embodies screen legend's fire and flaws

McGovern brings Gardner's life to the stage

NEW YORK, Aug 3, (AP): For all of Elizabeth McGovern's acting career, someone else wrote her lines. Now it's her turn.

The "Downton Abbey" star pivots this summer to portray screen legend Ava Gardner in a play she wrote.

"It's an incredible feeling to see other people embrace these things that were in your head," she says. "My feet haven't touched the ground since we started working on this in New York. I am just loving it so much."

"Ava: The Secret Conversations" examines the sometimes-prickly, sometimes seductive relationship between Gardner and Peter Evans, a journalist assigned to ghostwrite her memoir in the years before her death in 1990.

Though Gardner pulled the plug on the project before its completion, Evans eventually published their conversations in 2013. That book is the basis of McGovern's play.

She says she was intrigued by the idea of "a star on the wane of her career, sitting with a guy trying to glean from her the story of her life, and the two of them battling it out to control the narrative."

Directed by Tony Award-nominee Moritz von Stuelpnagel, the production co-stars Aaron Costa Ganis as Evans, who also channels Gardner's three famous husbands: actor Mickey Rooney, bandleader Artie Shaw and performer Frank Sinatra. It begins performances off-Broadway at New York City Center starting this week.

McGovern says she wasn't initially a huge fan of Gardner - famed for her green eyes, photogenic features and understated acting style - before she embarked on the project. It was more the idea of how a memoir can become a battleground for legacy and a way to explore Hollywood fame.

McGovern made her screen debut at 20 in Robert Redford's "Ordinary People" in 1980 and went on to co-star with Hollywood's leading men, including Robert De Niro, Brad Pitt and Sean Penn. She landed an Oscar nomination for Milos Forman's "Ragtime." It's a career with many similarities to Gardner.

"I feel like I do have a natural affinity for who she is. I feel like we would really like each other. I don't know, I'm flattering myself, but it's possibly because I had a kind of similar trajectory in my early life," says McGovern. "I mean, it was not on any level close to hers, but I understood the whole kind of mechanics of it."

Gardner's reputation as a screen siren was fully launched in 1946 film "The Killers," in which she co-starred with Burt Lancaster. She also starred opposite Humphrey Bogart in "The Barefoot Contessa" and Richard Burton in Tennessee Williams' "Night of the Iguana."

McGovern says Gardner was caught in the impossibility of women's expectations at the time - be alluring, but not romantically involved with multiple partners. She had many lovers but also felt the shame society imposed.

Inspired

"I think she was a kind of a feminist, in spite of herself, really," says McGovern "I hope people are inspired by that - by the fact that she just did whatever she wanted to do and lived with the consequences."

By the end of her life and when the play is set, Gardner has been partially paralyzed after a stroke, had emphysema and lived in seclusion. She decided on a quickie memoir to keep the bills paid.

"All my life I was the Woman Men Dream About. That was the only job I ever had," she wails in the play. "Where does that leave me now?"

The 90-minute play, which has had previous runs in Los Angeles and London, goes to Chicago and Toronto this fall after New York.

McGovern initially took the idea to two different writers who failed to produce anything. So she turned to herself, watching movies and footage of Gardner to nail her speech patterns and reading whatever she could about the actor's inner life.

"I literally would act it out in my room to myself and then

Since its premiere in Beijing in August 2021, The Journey of a Legendary Landscape Painting has become a cultural sensation in China, with more than 740 performances in over 70 cities across China and beyond. In October 2024, a film adaptation and a symphony concert based on the show were released.

At the Dolby Theatre, the performance captivated the audience of over 2,000.

"I think it's something truly unique -- something that's never been seen before," said Caryn Sterling, CEO at Sterling Worldwide Entertainment. "My eyes are wide open, my heart is wide open, and we're all ready to fully embrace the experience. I'm excited to see how this performance brings Chinese culture to life in such a poetic and powerful way."

The performance also impressed many with its visual richness and emotional depth. Among them was Thomas Markoff, a TCL Chinese Theaters partner.

"I love the outfits and the dancing. Without any words, it says a lot," Markoff said. "It tells a story, expresses emotion and creates a connection. That really strikes me and stays with me."

Variety

NEW YORK: Get those banjos ready, because this isn't a joke: Actor and comedy legend **Steve Martin** will co-host the IBMA Bluegrass Music Awards for the first time, alongside Grammy-award winning roots musician Alison Brown.

This year's show will take place Sept. 18 at 7:30 p.m. Eastern, in Chattanooga, Tennessee, at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Auditorium. Fans are able to purchase tickets via Ticketmaster.

"I'm thrilled to be hosting with Alison Brown, and connecting with all my bluegrass friends as opposed to my kinda dumb comedy friends," Martin said in a statement.

"The IBMA Awards show is always one of my very favorite nights of the year," Brown added. "I'm so honored to co-host this year with my banjo pal Steve Martin."

Martin is a longtime lover of bluegrass, first picking up

the banjo as a teenager. He's released a number of albums and even created the bluegrass musical "Bright Star" for Broadway - a complex love story set against the American South written by Martin and Grammy-winning singer-songwriter Edie Brickell. (AP)

□ □ □

BEIJING: "Dead To Rights," a film on the Nanjing Massacre, has stormed China's summer box office, surpassing 1 billion yuan (about 140 million US dollars) in just eight days.

Directed by Shen Ao, the film became the first post-Spring Festival release to achieve this box office milestone and has maintained its daily box office dominance in China since its July 25 debut, according to industry trackers Maoyan and Beacout.

The film has topped daily box office charts in all provincial-level regions across the Chinese mainland for five consecutive days through Friday. To date, it has drawn over 30 million admissions, demonstrating strong audience resonance.

"Dead To Rights" centers on a group of Chinese civilians who take refuge in a photography studio during the Japanese aggressors' brutal occupation of Nanjing.

In a desperate attempt to stay alive, they are forced to assist a Japanese military photographer in developing film

-- only to discover that the negatives contain damning evidence of atrocities committed by Japanese forces across the city. They secretly keep the negatives and risk their lives to deliver them to the outside world, hoping that the truth would be revealed.

"Dead To Rights" currently holds an 8.6 out of 10 rating on Douban, a key film review site. (Xinhua)

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NEW YORK: Hall of Fame tight end-turned-broadcaster Shannon Sharpe will not return to ESPN, a person with knowledge of the decision told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

The decision comes less than two weeks after Sharpe resolved a lawsuit that accused him of sexually assaulting a woman during their relationship. The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the decision has not been announced.

Sharpe's last appearance on ESPN was in late April, when the lawsuit was filed in Nevada. No details of the settlement were released. The lawsuit had sought \$50 million.

The 57-year-old Sharpe called the accusations "false and disruptive" at the time they were levied and hoped to return in time for the NFL season. (AP)

‘Velvet Sundown’ sparks debate over real vs. synthetic music

Can you spot an AI-generated song? Here’s how to tell

By Kelvin Chan

Is it The Velvet Underground or Velvet Sundown?

The fictitious rock group, Velvet Sundown, which comes complete with AI-generated music, lyrics and album art, is stoking debate about how the new technology is blurring the line between the real and synthetic in the music industry, and whether creators should be transparent with their audience.

Computer software is widely used in music production, and artificial intelligence is just the latest tool that disc jockeys, music producers and others have added to their production pipeline. But the rise of AI song generators such as Suno and Udio is set to transform the industry because they allow anyone to create songs with just a few prompts.

While some people do not care whether they’re listening to AI-generated music, others might be curious to know.

If you encounter a new song that leaves you wondering whether it’s 100% made with AI, there are some methods that could reveal how it was created.

Do a background check

If you’re wondering who’s behind a song, try some old-fashioned detective work.

The “most obvious cues” come from “external factors,” said Manuel Mousallam, head of research and development at streaming service Deezer.

Does the band or artist have social media accounts? Lack of a social presence might indicate there’s no one there. If they do exist online, examine the kind of content they post, and how long it goes back.

Is there any sign that the artist or band exists in real life? Are there any upcoming concerts and can you buy a ticket for a gig? Is there footage of past concerts on YouTube? Has an established record label released their singles or albums?

Try going to the source. Song creators often - but not always - publish their generated tunes on the Suno or Udio platforms, where they can be found by other users.

The catch is that you’ll have to sign up for an account to get access. Users can look up songs by track name or the creator’s handle, and browse genres and playlists. But it can still be difficult to spot a song, especially if you don’t know the name of the song or creator.

Song tags

Deezer has been flagging albums containing AI-generated songs, as part of its efforts to be more transparent as it battles streaming fraudsters looking to make



A woman walks using her headphones on Jan. 17, 2023, in New York. (AP)

quick money through royalty payments.

The Deezer app and website will notify listeners with an on-screen label - “AI-generated content” - to point out that some tracks on an album were created with song generators.

The company’s CEO says the system relies on in-house technology to detect subtle but recognizable patterns found in all audio created by AI song generators. The company hasn’t specified how many songs it has tagged since it rolled out the feature in June, but says up to 18% of songs uploaded to its platform each day are AI-generated.

Song scanners

There are a few third-party services available online that promise to determine whether a song is human-made or generated by AI.

I uploaded a few songs I generated to the online detector from IRCAM Ampli-

fy, a subsidiary of French music and sound research institute IRCAM. It said the probability that they were AI-generated ranged from 81.8% to 98% and accurately deduced that they were made with Suno.

As a cross-check, I also uploaded some old MP3s from my song library, which got a very low AI probability score.

But a handful of results shouldn’t be taken as a sign of overall accuracy. “The AI detector can make mistakes. It is recommended to verify the results,” the detector warns.

The drawback with IRCAM’s tool is that you can’t paste links to songs, so you can’t check tunes that you can only hear on a streaming service.

There are a few other websites that let you both upload song files and paste Spotify links for analysis, but they have their own limitations. When I tried them out for this story, the results were either inconclusive or flagged some AI songs as human-made and vice versa.

Check the lyrics

AI song tools can churn out both music and lyrics. Many serious users like to write their own words and plug them in because they’ve discovered that AI-generated lyrics tend to be bad.

Casual users, though, might prefer to just let the machine write them. So bad rhyming schemes or repetitive lyrical structures might be a clue that a song is not man-made. But it’s subjective.

Some users report that Suno tends to use certain words in its lyrics like “neon,” “shadows” or “whispers.”

If a song includes these words, it’s “a dead giveaway” that it’s AI, said Lukas Rams, a Philadelphia-area resident. He has used Suno to create three albums for his AI band Sleeping with Wolves but writes his own lyrics. “I don’t know why, it loves to put neon in everything.”

No easy answers

AI technology is improving so quickly that there’s no foolproof way to determine if content is real or not and experts say you can’t just rely on your ear.

“In general, it can be difficult to tell if a track is AI-generated just from listening, and it’s only becoming more challenging as the technology gets increasingly advanced,” said Mousallam of Deezer. “Generative models such as Suno and Udio are constantly changing, meaning that old identifiers - such as vocals having a distinctive reverb - are not necessarily valid anymore.” (AP)

Culture



Entrance of the historic Fayd Castle for visitors.



The remnants of the fortress dwellings.



The outer wall of the fortress.



Fayd Castle pool



Fayd Castle mosque



What remains of the fortress castle.

KUNA photos

Fayd Castle ... Saudi landmark testament to historic ‘Darb Zubaidah’

Located in Saudi Arabia’s northern Hail City, Fayd Castle stands on a rocky hill along the historic Darb Zubaidah Road, which marked a key route for pilgrimage (hajj) from Iraq through Fayd to Makkah since early Islamic era.

The historic fortress, also known as Kharash Palace, is one of the most ancient Islamic defensive facilities as it is home to towers, rocky walls and service utilities that showcased its security and logistical role in catering for pilgrims, merchants and travelers.

Surrounded by several antiquities involving mosques, warehouses, water facilities and early-Islamic era inscriptions, the palace is a popular tourist attraction, showcasing Saudi Arabia’s rich history and heritage. (KUNA)

Legendary conductor reignites emotional connections

Legendary maestro Mehta rolls back years in China

CHONGQING, Aug 3, (Xinhua): At 89, the legendary conductor Zubin Mehta has embarked on a new musical journey across China with the Florence May Musical Orchestra, reigniting emotional connections through timeless symphonies and reaffirming his enduring bond with the country.

On July 25, Mehta conducted a symphonic concert titled “Echoes of Destiny” at the Chongqing Grand Theater in southwest China’s Chongqing Municipality. Despite appearing on stage in a wheelchair, he delivered the entire performance from memory with remarkable energy and passion, drawing thunderous applause.

Born in Mumbai of India in 1936, Zubin Mehta began his musical education under the guidance of his father and later studied in Vienna, Austria. He rose to prominence as one of the

world’s most influential conductors, serving as music director for prestigious orchestras.

Chongqing is a truly impressive city, said Mehta in his pre-concert interview. Though this was his first performance in Chongqing, Mehta had visited the mountainous metropolis years ago, and his return felt instantly familiar. Among the listeners were many old friends who had followed his music for decades.

“I attended his concert in Berlin 10 years ago. I never expected to see him here in Chongqing. It’s such a surprise,” said local attendee Cao Xin.

“I used to watch his videos on TV,” said 7-year-old Wang Zimu. “Now I finally get to see the maestro in person.”

Mehta’s China tour began in Beijing and progressed through cities of



Zubin Mehta being interviewed at the Chongqing Grand Theater in southwest China’s Chongqing Municipality, July 25, 2025. (Xinhua)

Wuhan, Changsha and Shanghai, with each performance met with enthusiastic responses. “The Chinese are a great audience,” Mehta said. “I’ve loved performing for Chinese audiences for many years. Their passion and atten-

tiveness always move me.”

In Changsha, central China’s Hunan Province, Mehta concluded his concert with the Chinese folk song “Liuyang River,” prompting a round of applause when he announced the piece. After the performance, he rhythmically clapped his hands with his baton, reciprocating the audience’s fervor.

Mehta’s relationship with China began in 1994 when he led the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra on a tour across the country. Throughout the tour, he performed at packed houses from Beijing to Shanghai. In his address during that time, Mehta expressed that performing for Chinese audiences had always been his deepest wish. He hoped this visit would mark the beginning of many more, because he knows just how much the Chinese people love music.

Variety

LOS ANGELES: The best of the Internet’s cat videos hit the big screen this weekend. Cat Video Fest is a 73-minute, G-rated selection of all things feline -silly, cuddly, sentimental and comedic-that’s playing in more than 500 independent theaters in the US and Canada.

A portion of ticket proceeds benefit cat-focused charities, shelters and animal welfare organization. Since 2019, it’s raised over \$1 million.

The videos are curated by **Will Braden**, the Seattle-based creator of the comedically existential shorts, Henri, le Chat Noir. His business cards read: “I watch cat videos.” And it’s not a joke or an exaggeration. Braden watches thousands of hours of internet videos to make the annual compilation.

“I want to show how broad the idea of a cat video can be so there’s animated things, music videos, little mini documentaries,” Braden said. “It isn’t all just, what I call, ‘America’s Funniest Home Cat Videos.’ It’s not all cats falling into a bathtub. That would get exhausting.”

Now in its eighth year, Cat Video Fest is bigger than ever, with a global presence that’s already extended to the UK and Denmark, and, for the first time, to France, Spain, Japan and Brazil.

Last year, the screenings made over \$1 million at the box office.

In the early days, it was a bit of a process trying to convince independent movie theaters to program Cat Video Fest. But Braden, and indie distributor Oscilloscope Laboratories, have found that one year is all it takes to get past that hurdle. (AP)

From colonoscopies to catch-up savings: Your midlife to-do list

Turning 50? Try these 4 tips to boost health, well-being

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

By Jay Maddock
Texas A&M University

When the ball dropped on New Year’s Eve to mark the beginning of 2023, I came to grips with the fact that I would turn 50 years old this year.

Entering a new decade is often a time to pause and reflect on our lives, particularly when reaching middle age. For 50-year-old American men, the average remaining life expectancy is 28 more years; for women, it’s 32.

As a public health professor who is an expert in health promotion, I started to think about things one could do around this milestone birthday to improve the chances of living a healthy life for decades to come.

After reviewing the literature on healthy aging, I identified four things in particular that take on greater importance when you turn 50 - and that go beyond general health advice that’s beneficial at any age, like staying active, eating well and getting enough sleep.

Get a colonoscopy

Urging everyone to get a colonoscopy is certainly not the most fun piece of advice, but it’s one of the most important. The American Cancer Society estimates that there will be more than 105,000 new cases of colon cancer, more than 45,000 new cases of rectal cancer and over 50,000 deaths from colorectal cancer in 2023 alone.

This makes colorectal cancer the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths for men and women.

The good news is that the survival rate is high if the cancer is detected early, before it spreads to other parts of the body. The survival rate drops precipitously if cancer is found in the later stages.

A colonoscopy is a routine inpatient procedure that uses a scope to examine the rectum and colon and that requires sedation or anesthesia.

In addition to detecting cancerous or potentially malignant polyps, your doctor can also detect swollen tissue and ulcers. These may indicate potential problems and increase the need for more frequent monitoring.

For people at low risk of colorectal cancer, there are less invasive tests that can be done at home, such as Cologuard. This involves collecting and mailing a sample of poop to a lab. These options should be discussed with your doctor to figure out which screening is best for you.

In 2021 the US Preventive Services Task Force, a national panel of experts, changed its recommendation for beginning colorectal cancer screening from age 50 to 45 for people at low risk. As a result, insurance companies are required to cover the cost of screening for anyone age 45 or older.

People at high risk should get screened even earlier. High risk is defined as a family history of colorectal cancer or a diagnosis of inflammatory bowel disease. Colorectal cancer can occur in younger people too; for example, the “Black Panther” star, actor Chadwick Boseman, died of colon cancer at the age of 43 in 2020.

Get the shingles vaccine

For many people who grew up in the 1970s and 1980s, getting chickenpox was a rite of passage. I had a particularly severe case around my 10th birthday.

Once you have chickenpox, the virus lies dormant in your body for the rest of your life. And it can reemerge as shingles.

While shingles are not usually life-threatening, they cause a rash and can be extremely painful. Getting shingles also greatly increases one’s risk of having a stroke over the following year.

The good news is that the shingles vaccine is highly effective. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that adults 50 and older get the two-shot regimen, two to six months apart, which is 97% effective at preventing shingles.

Bump up retirement savings, look for discounts

Retirement might seem like a long way off, but the average retirement age in the United States in 2022 was 61. The same study found that on average people thought they were going to retire at age 66.

For anyone born after 1960, full retirement benefits don’t kick in until age 67, leaving a six-year gap between that and the average retirement age.

Retiring earlier than you had planned can occur for many reasons, but involuntary ones, like job loss, injury or illness, can be a financial strain. The general rule is that you need about 80% of your pre-retirement income to be financially comfortable in retirement. This consists of all sources of income, including Social Security benefits, pensions and investments.

If you are behind where you should be in savings, the Internal Revenue Service allows you to make catch-up contributions starting the year you turn 50. Employees who are 50 or older with a 401(k), 403(b) or 457(b) can contribute an extra US\$7,500 a year. This money grows tax-free and helps provide an extra cushion when you retire. At age 50, an extra \$1,000 per year can also be contributed for individual retirement accounts and Roth IRA accounts.

Another way to save: Many hotels, restaurants and retail outlets offer senior discounts starting at age 50.

You can find reliable and up-to-date discounts by joining the AARP. This nonprofit organization advocates for people ages 50 and older. Membership is under \$20 per year and provides hundreds of discounts.

Get your paperwork in order

While people in their 50s and beyond often still have their best decades ahead of them, it is vital to prepare for the unexpected - at any age. The mortality rate for people ages 55 to 64 is double that of those age 45 to 54.

This is an excellent time to decide how you want your affairs to be handled. According to the National Institute on Aging, this includes your will, living will and a durable power of attorney.

A will describes how you would like your financial assets distributed after your death. However, most Americans don’t have a will. There are several online tools for wills and bequests that can make this process easier.

Living wills indicate the type of care you want or don’t want if you are unable to communicate your preferences. The durable power of attorney is a document that allows someone you appoint to make health care decisions for you if you cannot. This is different from a general power of attorney, which ends if you can no longer make decisions on your own.

These may seem like a time-consuming list of things to do, but breaking them down into separate tasks makes it more manageable. So far, I have bumped up my retirement savings and scheduled my colonoscopy - even though I’m five years late on that one, based on the new recommendations. (AP)

Smoke impacts lungs

How to shield yourself from ‘poor air quality’

NEW YORK, Aug 3, (AP): When wildfires burn, the smoke can travel long distances and degrade air quality far away, which presents risks for those breathing it.

Fires burning in one state can make air worse several states away, and wildfires in Canada can send smoke into US cities.

Here’s what to know about taking precautions against poor air quality due to wildfires.

The EPA’s Air Quality Index converts all pollutant levels into a single number. The lower the number, the better.

Anything below 50 is classified as “healthy.” Fifty to 100 is “moderate” while 100-150 is unhealthy for “sensitive groups,” and anything above 150 is bad for everyone.

Sensitive groups include people with asthma, lung disease or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, said Dr. Sanjay Sethi, chief of the division of pulmonary, critical care and sleep medicine at the University of Buffalo’s medical school.

“If you have heart or lung problems, then you’ve got to be definitely more careful,” Sethi said. “I would either avoid going outside or wear an N95 (mask) or at least a dust mask.”

Sometimes the air is bad enough to see or smell the smoke. Even if you don’t see the pollution, it can be unhealthy to breathe.

The EPA maintains a website with up-to-date, regional air quality information. PurpleAir, a company that sells air quality sensors

and publishes real-time air quality data, has a citizen scientist, air quality monitoring network with a more granular map of street-by-street air quality readings.

The best way to get indoor air quality readings is to buy a monitor, said Joseph Allen, director of Harvard University’s Healthy Buildings Program.

“You can find these low-cost, indoor air quality monitors just about everywhere online now. They don’t cost all that much anymore,” he said.

For most people, going outside for just a short time won’t have a negative long-term impact, said Sethi.

Wearing an N95 mask, which became common during the coronavirus pandemic, will help filter out the pollution.

“N95 is going to get rid of 90-95% of the particles,” said Jennifer Stowell, a research scientist at Boston University’s Center for Climate and Health. “If you have access to a mask that has a respirator-type attachment to it, then that’s the very best.”

If you must be outside and you experience symptoms, experts say you should head indoors or somewhere else with better air quality. Even if you are healthy, it’s good to take precautions.

“If you start wheezing, which is like this whistling sound of the chest, or if you’re feeling short of breath, that’s definitely more concerning,” Sethi said.

Why you’re still getting sick in the summer months

Got the sniffles? What to know about summer colds, COVID-19 and more

NEW YORK, Aug 3, (AP): Summer heat, outdoor fun ... and cold and flu symptoms?

The three may not go together in many people’s minds: partly owing to common myths about germs and partly because many viruses really do have lower activity levels in the summer.

But it is possible to get the sniffles – or worse – in the summer. Federal data released Friday, for example, shows COVID-19 is trending up in many parts of the country, with emergency department visits up among people of all ages.

Here’s what to know about summer viruses.

The number of people seeking medical care for three key illnesses – COVID-19, flu and respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV – is currently low, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Flu is trending down and RSV was steady this week. But COVID-19 is trending up in many mid-Atlantic, southeast, Southern and West Coast states.

The expectation is that COVID-19 will eventually settle into a winter seasonal pattern like other coronaviruses, but the past few years have brought a late summer surge, said Dr. Dean Blumberg, chief of pediatric infectious diseases at University of California Davis Children’s Hospital.

Other viruses circulating this time of year include the one that causes “hand, foot and mouth” disease – which has symptoms similar to a cold, plus sores and rashes – and norovirus, sometimes called the stomach flu.



A pharmacist holds a Pfizer and BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine shot on Thursday, April 24, 2025, in Portland, Ore. (AP)

Many viruses circulate seasonally, picking up as the weather cools in the fall and winter. So it’s true that fewer people get stuffy noses and coughs in the summer – but cold weather itself does not cause colds.

It’s not just about seasonality. The other factor is our behavior, experts say. Nice weather means people are opening windows and gathering outside where it’s harder for germs to spread.

But respiratory viruses are still around. When the weather gets too hot and everyone heads inside for the air conditioning, doctors say they start seeing more sickness. In places where it gets really hot for a long time, summer can be cold season in its own right.

“I grew up on the East Coast and everybody gets sick in the winter,” said Dr. Frank LoVecchio, an emergency room doctor and Arizona State University researcher. “A lot of people get sick in the summer here. Why is that? Because you spend more time indoors.”

For people who are otherwise healthy, timing is a key consideration to getting any vaccine. You want to get it a few weeks before that big trip or wedding, if that’s the reason for getting boosted, doctors say. But, for most people, it may be worth waiting until the fall in anticipation of winter cases of COVID-19 really tick up.

Cholera threat

HK confirms chikungunya

HONG KONG, Aug 3, (Xinhua): China’s Hong Kong has recorded its first imported case of chikungunya fever this year, involving a 12-year-old boy who recently traveled to Foshan in south China’s Guangdong Province, according to local health authorities on Saturday.

The Center for Health Protection of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government’s Department of Health held a press briefing on Saturday.

Speaking at the press briefing, Albert Au, head of the center’s communicable disease branch, said that the boy, who traveled to Shunde District in Foshan with his mother from July 17 to 30, developed symptoms such as fever and joint pain on July 31 after returning to Hong Kong. He then sought medical attention and is currently in stable condition.

Legionnaires’ disease: One person died and six more were treated in hospital amid an outbreak of Legionnaires’ disease in an inner-Sydney suburb, the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) said in a statement on Thursday.

Seven people from Potts Point, an affluent inner-city suburb less than two km from the Sydney Harbor Bridge and Sydney Opera House, have contracted Legionnaires’ disease since May.

The cases include a man aged in his 80s who became ill in late June and has since died.

The remaining six people were hospitalized for treatment. Five have been discharged and the sixth is recovering.

Cholera: An estimated 80,000 children are at high risk of cholera as the rainy season begins across West and Central Africa, a UN spokesperson said Wednesday.

Active outbreaks in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nigeria raise the threat of cross-border transmission to neighboring countries, said Farhan Haq, deputy spokesperson for the UN secretary-general, at a daily briefing.

Chad, the Republic of Congo, Ghana, Cote d’Ivoire and Togo are also grappling with ongoing epidemics, Haq cited UNICEF. Niger, Liberia, Benin, the Central African Republic and Cameroon remain under surveillance due to vulnerability, he added.



Rhinos are photographed at a rhino orphanage in Mokopane, South Africa, July 31, 2025. (AP)

Experts make rhino horns radioactive to curb poaching

MOKOPANE, South Africa, Aug 3, (AP): A South African university launched an anti-poaching campaign Thursday to inject the horns of rhinos with radioactive isotopes that it says are harmless for the animals but can be detected by customs agents.

Under the collaborative project involving the University of the Witwatersrand, nuclear energy officials and conservationists, five rhinos were injected in what the university hopes will be the start of a mass injection of the declining rhino population.

They’re calling it the Rhisotope Project.

Last year, about 20 rhinos at a sanctuary were injected with isotopes in trials that paved the way for Thursday’s launch. The radioactive isotopes even at low levels can be recognized by radiation detectors at airports and borders, leading to the arrest of poachers and traffickers.

Researchers at Witwatersrand’s Radiation and Health Physics Unit say that tests conducted in the pilot study confirmed that the radioactive material was not harmful to the

rhinos.

“We have demonstrated, beyond scientific doubt, that the process is completely safe for the animal and effective in making the horn detectable through international customs nuclear security systems,” said James Larkin, chief scientific officer at the Rhisotope Project.

“Even a single horn with significantly lower levels of radioactivity than what will be used in practice successfully triggered alarms in radiation detectors,” said Larkin.

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Celtics minority owner reaches deal to buy Sun

McBride hits 8 threes as Minnesota sets WNBA record in 53-pt rout of Las Vegas

LAS VEGAS, Aug 3, (AP): Kayla McBride led a 3-point barrage, making 8 of 10 from beyond the arc, and the Minnesota Lynx set the WNBA record for the biggest road win, beating the Las Vegas Aces 111-58.

McBride made all eight of her 3-point attempts in the first half, and the Lynx was 13 for 14 as a team, leading to a 67-33 halftime lead.

Minnesota's 53-point win broke the league record for largest margin of victory on the road, a record set in 1998 by the Houston Comets. Minnesota also set a team record with 17 3-pointers in 27 attempts.

McBride missed both of her 3-point attempts in the second half, coming up short of the league record of nine 3-pointers in a game. She finished with 24 points.

Jessica Shepard had 18 points and 14 rebounds for her fourth double-double of the season and second in nine days for the league-best Lynx (24-5). MVP candidate Napheesa Collier scored 18 points but left the game late in the third quarter with an ankle injury. Natisha Hiedeman added 17 points.

Jewell Loyd had 12 points and reigning league MVP A'ja Wilson scored 10 for the Aces (14-14).

The Lynx hit 4 of 5 3-pointers in the first five minutes of the game to build an 18-8 lead. They went on to hit 6 of 7 from deep and led 35-17 heading to the second quarter. During one stretch, Minnesota made nine consecutive 3s and led 67-33 at halftime. They pushed the lead to 92-49 entering the fourth quarter.

□ □ □



Las Vegas Aces center A'ja Wilson (22) shoots over Minnesota Lynx forward Jessica Shepard (15) during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Las Vegas. (AP)

A group led by Celtics minority owner Steve Pagliuca has reached a deal to buy the Connecticut Sun for a record \$325 million and move the team to Boston, according to a person familiar with the sale.

The franchise wouldn't play in Boston until the 2027 season. Pagliuca also would contribute \$100 million for a new practice facility in Boston for the team, the person said.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity on Saturday because the deal hasn't been publicly announced. The sale is pending approval of the league and its Board of Governors.

"Relocation decisions are made by the WNBA Board of Governors and not by individual teams," the league

said in a statement.

The Sun have played regular season games at TD Garden the last two years, including one against Caitlin Clark and the Indiana Fever in July.

The league has announced five expansion teams that will begin play over the next five seasons with Portland (2026), Toronto (2026), Cleveland (2028), Detroit (2029) and Philadelphia (2030) joining the WNBA. Each paid a then-record \$250 million expansion fee.

Nine other cities bid for expansion teams, including Houston, which the league singled out as getting a team in the future when it announced Cleveland, Detroit and Philadelphia in June. Boston did not.

"No groups from Boston applied for a team at that time and those other cities remain under consideration based on the extensive work they did as part of the expansion process and currently have priority over Boston. Celtics' prospective ownership team has also reached out to the league office and asked that Boston receive strong consideration for a WNBA franchise at the appropriate time."

The Boston Globe first reported the sale.

The Sun are owned by the Mohegan Tribe, which runs the casino where the team has played since 2003. The Tribe bought the franchise for \$10 million and relocated it from Orlando that year. The Connecticut franchise was the first in the league to be run by a non-NBA owner and also became the first to turn a profit.

Zverev advances to National Bank Open last eight

Mboko stuns top-seeded Coco

MONTREAL, Aug 3, (AP): Canadian teenager Victoria Mboko upset top-seeded Coco Gauff 6-1, 6-4 to reach the National Bank Open quarterfinals.

Gauff dropped to 2-3 since winning the French Open. She followed the major victory with opening losses in Berlin and Wimbledon, then overcame double-fault problems to win two three-set matches in Montreal. Gauff had five double-faults after having 23 in her opener against Danielle Collins and 14 against Veronika Kudemetova.

"She's playing high-level tennis," Gauff said. "I think that's what showed today. I think she was the better player."

The 18-year-old Mboko, ranked 85th in the world, finished off the 21-year-old Gauff - who had 24 unforced errors - in 1 hour, 2 minutes.



Victoria Mboko, of Canada, waves to the crowd following her win over Coco Gauff, of the United States, during round of 16 match action at the National Bank Open women's tennis tournament in Montreal. (AP)



Alexei Popyrin, of Australia, chases down a shot from Holger Rune, of Denmark, during their men's match at the National Bank Open tennis tournament in Toronto. (AP)

Mboko will face Jessica Bouzas Maneiro of Spain, a 7-5, 6-1, 6-2 winner over Lin Zhu of China in a rain-interrupted match that ended just before midnight.

In Rome in May, Gauff rallied to beat Mboko 3-6, 6-2, 6-1.

Earlier, 24th-seeded Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine and ninth-seeded Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan set up a quarterfinal match. Kostyuk beat McCartney Kessler of the United States 5-7, 6-3, 6-3, and Rybakina topped Dayana Yastremska of Ukraine 5-7, 6-2, 7-5.

Top-seeded Alexander Zverev of Germany led Francisco Cerundolo 6-4, 1-0 when the 14th-seeded Argentine retired because of an abdominal injury in the National Bank Open.

Zverev advanced to face defending champion Alexei Popyrin of

Australia in the quarterfinals. The 18th-seeded Popyrin beat fifth-seeded Holger Rune of Denmark 4-6, 6-2, 6-3 in the first night match.

Zverev, the 2017 champion ranked third in the world, ended up the top seed with top-ranked Jannik Sinner - the 2023 winner - and No. 2 Carlos Alcaraz skipping the hard-court event that ends Thursday. No. 5 Jack Draper and No. 6 Novak Djokovic also sat out.

Zverev won on clay in Munich in April for his 24th tour title.

Alex Michelsen reached the quarterfinals in the afternoon, topping fellow American Learner Tien 6-3, 6-3. Michelsen will face 11th-seeded Karen Khachanov of Russia, a 6-4, 7-5 winner over eighth-seeded Casper Ruud of Norway.

Holder takes four wickets

Windies beat Pakistan in thriller

LAUDERHILL, Fla., Aug 3, (AP): Jason Holder took four wickets and then smashed a boundary off the final ball of the game to lift West Indies to a thrilling two-wicket victory over Pakistan and level the three-match Twenty20 cricket international series.

The veteran allrounder bowled an inspired spell to take 4-19 off four overs, as Pakistan struggled to 133 for nine after it won the toss and batted in Florida.

The West Indies reply also stumbled as Pakistan's spinners kept scoring difficult but late cameos by Gudakesh Motie and Romario Shepherd kept West Indies just about in the contest before Holder's heroics off Pakistan talisman Shaheen Shah Afridi's final delivery clinched it.

It is the first T20 victory for West Indies in seven matches, a span that includes a heavy 5-0 series defeat to Australia, on top of a test series sweep last month.

"Been a tough couple of weeks for us," captain Shai Hope said. "We always try to get better, the guys have put in a lot of hard work. "Hopefully today is the turnaround we are looking for."

Earlier, Hasan Nawaz's 40 from 23 balls and captain Salman Agha's 38 from 33 deliveries led Pakistan from a precarious 53-4 in the 10th over, but 133 looked a vulnerable target at the innings break.

Fresh from taking three wickets in Pakistan's 14-run win in the opening game at the same venue on Thursday, Mohammad Nawaz took another three Saturday, returning 3-14 from his four overs.

Like Thursday's game, West Indies found scoring more than five-an-over difficult on the spin-friendly pitch and lost regular wickets.

When Roston Chase was teased into a big shot by Saim Ayub (2-20), West Indies had sunk to 70-5



West Indies' Jason Holder bowls during the second Twenty20 cricket match against Pakistan in Lauderhill, Fla. (AP)

in the 14th over and looking at a steep mountain to climb.

Motie got the innings moving with his quickfire 28 from 20 balls before Shepherd chipped in with 15 from 11 balls, including taking 10 runs off Hasan Ali in the second-to-last over to give West Indies a glimpse.

Needing eight runs from the final over, Afridi (1-31) removed Shepherd off the second ball, with Holder and new batter Shamar Joseph only able to score singles off the next three balls.

Afridi then bowled a wide to leave West Indies needing three runs from the final ball. Holder (16 from 10 balls) then found the gap at backward square to score the boundary they needed and end their six T20 match losing streak.

"We've had a fair bit of criticism which is warranted," player-of-the-match Holder said. "We haven't done justice to our potential. "We can be a lot better, consistency has definitely plagued us."

The third T20 will be held in Lauderhill on Sunday before an ODI series in the Caribbean.

PCB issues 'blanket ban' on playing in World Championship of Legends

ISLAMABAD, Aug 3, (AP): The Pakistan Cricket Board announced a "blanket ban" on future participation in the T20 World Championship of Legends on Sunday, accusing the organizers of being biased in favor of India.

India twice forfeited its games against Pakistan during the WCL, including a semifinal, due to strained political relations between the two countries.

The organizers awarded both teams one point each after India forfeited a league game against Pakistan, a decision that didn't sit well with the PCB, which described it as "tainted with hypocrisy and bias."

Pakistan lost to South Africa by nine wickets in the final at Birmingham on Saturday. The WCL is a league of retired cricketers in which teams from West Indies, Australia and England also participated.

"We cannot allow our players to be part of events where the spirit of the game is overshadowed by skewed politics that undermines the very essence of sportsmanship and the gentleman's game," the PCB said in a statement.

WCL organizers acknowledged Pakistan's willingness to compete against India, but also said in one of its statements that it "respected India's decision to withdraw" from games against Pakistan.

But the PCB took issue with the WCL narrative.

"The contents of the said (WCL) press releases highlight a duality where the narrative of 'peace through sport' is selectively applied and sporting events are held hostage to political expediency and narrow commercial interests," the PCB said.

Messi injury mars Inter Miami Leagues Cup win over Necaxa



Inter Miami forward Luis Suarez, left, comes under pressure from Necaxa forward Kevin Rosero, bottom, during the second half of a Leagues Cup soccer match in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (AP)

Suárez scores winning penalty kick

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., Aug 3, (AP): Luis Suárez had the winning penalty kick, and Inter Miami rallied to beat Necaxa in the Leagues Cup after losing Lionel Messi to a hamstring injury in the opening minutes.

Jordi Alba scored the tying goal on a header that made it 2-2 in the second minute of stoppage time, forcing the shootout, which Inter Miami won 5-4.

Inter Miami converted all five of its penalty kicks, and goalkeeper Rocco Riós Novo denied Tomás Badaloni in the third round of the shootout. Suárez hit the winning shot into the top left corner.

Messi was injured around the eighth minute when he fell while being challenged by a pair of defenders near the penalty area. He strolled toward the Inter Miami bench before sitting down on the pitch. Trainers came out and worked on his right upper thigh area before he subbed out in the 11th.

Inter Miami coach Javier Mascherano said after the match

that Messi was not necessarily in pain but felt a pull. He indicated that Messi will be examined on Sunday to determine the severity of the injury.

"There's probably something there," Mascherano said through an interpreter.

Inter Miami played down a man for much of regulation after Maxi Falcón was ejected with a red card in the opening minutes. Necaxa defender Cristian Calderón was sent off in the 60th after being shown a second yellow card, so both clubs played with

10 men the rest of the way.

Telasco Segovia put his side ahead 1-0 minute after Messi exited on a feed from Inter Miami newcomer Rodrigo De Paul, who had two assists in just his second match with the club. It was Segovia's second goal of the tournament.

Badaloni tied it at 1 on a shot that he tapped past Riós Novo to the bottom left corner in the 33rd.

Ricardo Monreal put the Mexican club ahead in the 81st before veteran left back Alba snapped a header into the back of the net on De Paul's free kick.

Inter Miami won its first two Leagues Cup matches but can only advance if it has enough points in the tournament's Major League Soccer standings. Saturday's victory gave Inter Miami five points, and the Herons sit atop the MLS table, though several more matches will be played the rest of the weekend.

The tournament is divided between teams from MLS and Liga MX. Only the top four teams in each league's table after three matches will qualify for the knockout round.



Puma UNAM's Jorge Ruvalcaba, left, and Jose Caicedo, center, compete for a header with Atlanta United's Emmanuel Latte Lath, top right, during the first half of a Leagues Cup soccer match in Orlando, Fla. Puma UNAM won 3-2. (AP)

Alonso has just two weeks before Madrid kicks off La Liga campaign

Real back to challenge Barca, but will short summer be a problem?

MADRID, Aug 3, (Xinhua): Real Madrid returns to pre-season training on Monday after a summer that has been far from typical, and which could give the team problems throughout the upcoming season.

It is just three and a half weeks since Real Madrid's hopes of winning the Club World Cup were ended on July 9 by a painful 4-0 thrashing by Paris Saint-Germain in New York, with the squad enjoying the minimum regulation summer holidays.

The problem is that coach Xabi Alonso now has just two weeks before the club kicks off its La Liga campaign at home to Osasuna on August 19. Real Madrid has asked for the game to be postponed, but La Liga insisted it will go ahead as planned despite Madrid's short preparation, which will only allow for one pre-season match in Austria.

Alonso arrived before the Club World Cup to replace Carlo Ancelotti and had little time to start implementing his style of football, which should see more tactical discipline in midfield and defence and a higher press replace the Italian's more 'laissez-faire' attitude to the game.

There were signs of what he was looking for in the U.S., although he will need to work on that high press and the club is still looking for a long-term replacement for Toni Kroos in central midfield.

Real Madrid has been relatively busy in the transfer market, as Luka Modric and Lucas Vazquez both left after the Club World Cup, while right back Trent Alexander Arnold and central defender Dean Huijsen both arrived and both showed themselves to be good additions to the team.

Left back Alvaro Carreras and young Argentinean winger Franco Mastantuono have also been signed and will report for training on Monday, meaning the club will look to off-load either Fran Garcia or Ferland Mendy by the end of the month, with the injury-prone Mendy more likely to move.

The club is also looking to move Brazilian forward Rodrygo after he played only a minor role in the Club World Cup, while young striker Gonzalo Garcia has a good chance of keeping his place in the first team squad.

If Gonzalo stays, that could mean 19-year-old Endrick will be sent out on loan to gain experience. The young Brazilian arrived with a big reputation for his years, but only scored once in 22 league appearances, although he did score five times in the Copa del Rey, and there would be no shortage of sides willing to have him play for them for a season.

Alonso also has to work out the best way to combine Kylian Mbappe and Vinicius Jr., with both preferring to play on the left of the attack and move inside. It will also be interesting how he works with two players who prefer to reserve their energies to attack, rather than as the first line of defence.

The good news is that both central defender Eder Militao and right back Dani Carvajal are fit after last season's knee injuries, with Carvajal's competition with Alexander Arnold for the right back position very much one to watch.

Alonso switched tactics in his opening matches, starting out with the three-man defence and wing-backs he used to successfully at Bayer Leverkusen, but then changing to a more traditional back four. Huijsen's ability on the ball means the youngster can adapt to either system, but his full-backs on both sides look better adapted to more attacking roles.

The Club World Cup was only a trial run, and there is a lot to discover about Alonso this season as Real Madrid look to challenge FC Barcelona and again triumph in Europe, but the summer tournament could also have a sting in its tail with little preparation time and short holidays before a very intense season.

Blues finish last at Arab Basketball Championship

Kuwait faces urgent review after poor performance

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

MANAMA, Aug 3: Kuwait suffered its sixth loss, falling 74-89 to Bahrain in the final round of the 26th Arab Basketball Championship held in Manama. This result placed Kuwait seventh and last in the tournament. This outcome calls for a serious assessment by the Kuwait Basketball Association's officials, a complete overhaul of the training programs, and addressing key weaknesses. Creating the right environment and properly preparing the team is essential for achieving better results



Players pause after a whistle by referee (unseen).

in future competitions.

Kuwait's squad featured many young players competing at this level for the first time. Injuries to key players Adel Al-Saeed and Hussein Ashkanani also affected the team's performance. However, these factors do not fully explain the disappointing results and overall low standard of play.

Most other teams participated with reserve or Olympic squads but still managed to deliver competitive performances and win at least one game. In contrast, Kuwait lost all its matches and failed to show convincing efforts on the court.

The impact of Serbian coach Oliver Kostic and his assistant Khaled Al-Qallaf was noticeably missing, despite hopes for improvement following promising performances in previous international events.

Algeria was crowned champion after beating Egypt 78-70. Tunisia secured second place by defeating Qatar 79-72.

Algeria finished undefeated with six wins, Tunisia came in second, and the UAE earned a notable third place. Bahrain placed fourth, Egypt fifth, Qatar sixth, while Kuwait ended at the bottom of the standings.



Highlights from Kuwait futsal team's practice.

Kuwait begins intense training ahead of futsal Cup qualifiers

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Kuwait futsal team kicked off training recently at the Jleeb Youth Center as it prepares to host the Asian Cup Futsal qualifiers from September 20 to 24. Under the guidance of Spanish coach Bruno Garcia, 22 players are currently participating in the sessions.

Training will continue until August 21, when the team will leave for an overseas training camp in Spain. This camp will feature several friendly matches to help the squad sharpen its skills. The team is scheduled to return from Madrid on September 4, after which they will hold an internal training camp from September 9

to 14. During this period, the Blue Team will play two friendly matches against Vietnam on September 11 and 13.

Following these friendlies, the team will enter its final preparatory camp starting September 18 to finalize its readiness for the qualifiers.

The team is placed in Group A alongside Australia, Mongolia, and India. The Blues begin their campaign against India on September 20, followed by matches against Mongolia on September 22, and Australia on September 24. The tournament features eight groups, with the top two teams from each group plus the seven best second-place teams advancing to join host Indonesia for the 18th edition of the Asian Cup, scheduled to start next January.

Marta's late heroics lead Brazil to ninth Copa America Femenina title



Brazil's Marta (10) holds up the trophy as she celebrates with teammates after winning the Women's Copa America final soccer match against Colombia in a penalty shootout at Rodrigo Paz Delgado stadium in Quito, Ecuador. (AP)

Da Silva saves two penalty kicks against Colombia

QUITO, Ecuador, Aug 3, (AP): Six-time world player of the year Marta came off the bench to score twice, including an equalizer in stoppage time, as Brazil came from behind three times before winning the penalty shootout 5-4 against Colombia on Saturday to secure their ninth Copa America Femenina title.

The 39-year-old Marta entered the match in the 82nd minute and scored in the sixth minute of stoppage time to level for Brazil at 3-3, before scoring again in extra time to put the Brazilians in front for the first time in the match.

Leicy Santos scored in the 115th minute to bring Colombia



Colombia's Mayra Ramirez, left, and Brazil's Mariza battle for the ball during the Women's Copa America final soccer match at Rodrigo Paz Delgado stadium in Quito, Ecuador. (AP)

back level at 4-4 as the match went to a penalty shootout.

Goalkeeper Lorena Da Silva then saved two penalty kicks in the shootout to clinch Brazil's fifth title in a row at the continental

championships, and beat Colombia for the fourth time in the past five finals.

Marta, who has played in six World Cups and six Olympics, has 122 goals in 206 games with

Brazil.

Angelina Alonso in the 45th and Amanda Gutierrez in the 80th also scored for the Brazil team that won the silver medal at the Paris Olympics, losing to the United States in the final.

Gutierrez scored her sixth goal of the tournament to finish as the top scorer alongside Paraguay's Claudia Martinez.

Linda Caicedo on the 25th, Mayra Ramirez on the 88th, and Santos scored for Colombia. The Colombians also had an own goal by Brazil defender Tarciane in the 69th as it took the lead three times before being pegged back in an extraordinary final.

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.

Newcastle boss Howe in the dark over Isak future

SEOUL, Aug 3, (Agencies): Newcastle United coach Eddie Howe admits that he still doesn't know what the future holds for striker Alexander Isak.

Howe admitted he only learned Isak was in San Sebastian after seeing the story published online.

"I know where he is through the media, so I think from that perspective it's difficult for me to go into any detail," he commented.

Friday also saw the media report that Newcastle had rejected a bid of 110 million pounds (146 million U.S. dollars) for Isak from Liverpool, with Liverpool then reportedly ending interest in the striker, but Howe again insisted he is in the dark over events.

"I am very much removed from everything that is happening back home. I was made aware there was a bid yesterday. That bid was turned down before I heard about it. There are people back in England dealing with the situation," said the coach in a news conference.

Earlier in the week Howe had said that Isak's situation "wasn't fully" in the club's hands, although he wished to see the striker remain at St James' Park.

"I really don't know what is going to happen next but, from our perspective, we still support Alex in every way and my wish is still

that we see him in a Newcastle shirt again." "The situation is far from ideal. It is quite complex. I think that is all I have got to say," concluded the coach.

Newcastle signed goalkeeper Aaron Ramsdale on a season-long loan deal from relegated Southampton.

Newcastle announced the signing on its website with Howe calling the 27-year-old Ramsdale "an exceptional goalkeeper who adds further quality and international experience to our squad."

The England international was previously No. 1 at Arsenal but then lost his place and joined Southampton on a four-year contract. He could not prevent the club going down last season, when he made 30 appearances in the top division.

Ramsdale, who has five caps for England, is looking forward to hearing the support of the home fans as one of their players, rather than as a visiting goalie.

"It's great to be here. I've always loved coming here and I've seen how passionate and loud the fans can be," he said. "I've always loved playing at St. James' Park. I've not always had the greatest of results, but when the fans get behind you, it's some place."

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Ahmed Jaouadi of Tunisia celebrates after winning gold medal competes in the men's 1500-meter freestyle final at the World Aquatics Championships in Singapore. (AP)

Sports



The Kuwaiti squash delegation.



Players hold their final training session in Croatia.

Kuwait wraps up camp in Croatia and Slovenia before youth championship

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Kuwait national youth handball team has concluded its training camp in Croatia and Slovenia as part of preparations for the upcoming IHF Men's Youth World Championship, set to take place in Egypt from August 6 to 16.

During the camp, the team played seven friendly matches against national sides from Croatia, Kosovo, and Slovenia. Head coach Heine Jensen of Denmark used the games to fine-tune tactical plans and assess players for the final squad that will compete in the tournament. Kuwait is drawn into Group A alongside Sweden, Portugal, and Austria. The team is scheduled to travel to Egypt tomorrow.

Faisal Siwan, Technical Director of the national handball teams, acknowl-

edged the challenges ahead. "The World Championship requires thorough preparation and time, especially since we're in what many consider the toughest group of the tournament," he said.

He added, "We have a committed coaching staff, dedicated players, and a supportive board—all working with maximum effort to ensure the team reaches peak performance mentally, physically, and tactically."

Siwan highlighted the value of the European friendlies, noting, "Facing strong, historically successful teams gave our players critical international experience and tactical insight that will serve them well in Egypt."

He concluded, "We're determined to raise Kuwait's flag high at this global event. It's a tough challenge, but one that this new generation of hungry, motivated players is ready to embrace."

Kuwait youth squash team departs for Cairo

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Kuwait youth squash team has left for Cairo to compete in the Egypt International Open for juniors singles, scheduled from August 6 to 10.

Leading the delegation is the federation's secretary-general, Hamed Al Omran, accom-

panied by coaches Majid Khan, Falah Faiz, and Ahmed Al-Sayed. The squad includes players Saleh Al-Kandari, Abdullah Mayouf, Hammoud Al-Sawwagh, Salman Al-Saleh, Khaled Al-Muzhen, Abdulaziz Al-Musbahi, and Yazan Al-Ahmad.

Joining the team today are Khaled Al-Fawzan, Abdulrahman Al-Sanea, and Abdullah Hani, who have just concluded their participation in the World Championship. Prior to the tournament, the team will take part in friendly matches against ranked players to prepare.

Americans finish strong with relay world record as Jaouadi wins gold

Marchand adds another gold to his collection

SINGAPORE, Aug 3, (AP): The United States, which had a frustrating swim world championships, ended on a high note Sunday with a world record in the women's 4x100 medley relay in the last event of the eight-day championships.

The Americans swam a time of 3 minutes, 49.34 seconds, breaking their own old mark of 3:49.63 set a year ago in the Paris Olympics.

The United States finished with nine gold medals and 29 overall, ahead of Australia with eight gold and 20 overall. France and Canada were next in the gold-medal count with four gold medals. The 18-year-old Canadian star Summer McIntosh won all four golds.

The Americans battled a case of "acute gastroenteritis" picked up at a training camp in Thailand. The malady clearly affected the team's up-and-down performances in Singapore.

"This is the best way to end the meet," Gretchen Walsh said. "And I feel like we have such a good opportunity when you have this stacked group of women closing it out on a relay like this."

Regan Smith, Kate Douglass, and Walsh swam the first three legs with Torri Huske taking the anchor.

The Americans had only five gold medals through six days, but won four in the last two as team health clearly improved.

American Bobby Finke, the Paris Olympic champion at 1,500 meters, took a bronze in that event on Sunday. But he also had a message for critics back home.

They included former American swimmers Michael Phelps and Ryan Lochte in a critical social media post. Three-time Olympic gold-medalist Rowdy Gaines called for changes at USA Swimming in an interview with The Associated Press. The governing body has been without a CEO for a year.

"Do whatever you want," he added. "But you know, I'm proud of the team and what we've been able to do here. It's a big stepping stone for the

2028 LA Olympics."

Sunday's closing day featured eight finals and victories for seven different teams.

But there were two clear stars throughout the week.

Leon Marchand of France left the world on Sunday with what he came for - two individual gold medals.

McIntosh came away with four individual golds - one shy of her quest to win five. Still, she is only the second woman at a world championships to win four individual golds.

Her only blip was finishing third to American Katie Ledecky in the 800 freestyle on Saturday.

And 12-year-old Chinese Yu Zidi, in an astounding performance, finished fourth in all three of her individual races. She, however, did pick up a bronze medal in a relay, where she swam in the prelims but not in the final. She swam the 200 fly and both IM races.

Kliment Kolesnikov of the Neutral Athletes won the men's 50 backstroke in 23.68. Kolesnikov holds

the world record (23.55). Pieter Coetzee of South Africa and Pavel Samusenko of the Neutral Athletes tied for silver (24.17).

Ruta Meilutyte of Lithuania, the world record holder, claimed the 50 breaststroke (29.55) with silver for Tang Qianting of China (30.03) and bronze to Benedetta Pilato of Italy (30.14).

McIntosh picked up her fourth gold medal, winning the 400 IM in 4:25.78. It was just off her world record of 4:23.65 set in June. Jenna Forrester of Australia and Mio Narita of Japan tied for silver (4:33.26).

Although she won gold, McIntosh came up just short earlier in the meet in an attempt to break the 200-meter butterfly mark, perhaps the record she had been most intent on claiming.

McIntosh also won gold in the 200 IM and the 400 freestyle. And she took bronze Saturday in the 800 freestyle, which went to Ledecky.

The Neutral Athletes won the men's 4x100 medley relay (3:26.93), followed by France (3:27.96) and the United States (3:28.62). It was the second gold of the night for the Neutral Athletes.

silver (4:08.32) with bronze for Ilia Borodin of the Neutral Athletes (4:09.16).

Marchand, earlier in the championships, shattered the 200 IM mark in 1:52.69. The old mark was 1:54.00, set 14 years ago by Lochte.

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Gold medalists team United States pose on the podium after the women's 4x100-meter medley relay final at the World Aquatics Championships in Singapore. (AP)



A snapshot from Kuwait's clash with Partizan.

Tough loss for Kuwait in Serbia

BELGRADE, Aug 3: Kuwait was defeated 5-1 by Serbian side Partizan in a friendly match played recently during its training camp in Serbia.

Al-Rashidi scored the lone goal for Kuwait. The youth team continues daily

evening training sessions as part of its preparations for upcoming competitions.

The coaching staff is focused on developing all players, boosting fitness levels, and strengthening team chemistry in the coming weeks.

Russell takes third for Mercedes

Norris holds off Piastri to win Hungarian Grand Prix

BUDAPEST, Hungary, Aug 3, (AP): Lando Norris held off his McLaren teammate Oscar Piastri in a tense finish to win the Hungarian Grand Prix on Sunday and boost his Formula 1 title chances heading into the mid-season break.

Norris clung on with worn tires as Piastri loomed behind him in the final laps. He celebrated with a double fist pump on top of his car after claiming McLaren's 200th F1 win by less than a second to cut Piastri's standings lead to nine points from 16.

"I'm dead. It was tough, it was tough," Norris said. "The final stint, with Oscar catching, I was pushing flat out."

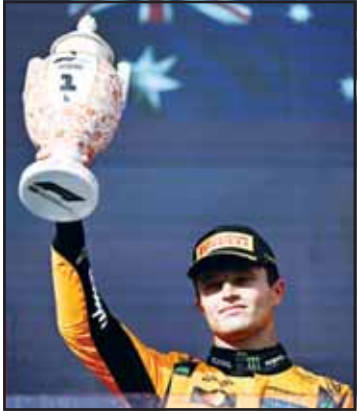
It was a race shaped as much by smart strategy as gritty driving. Norris briefly dropped to fifth on the first lap but made his tires last to stop only once, while Piastri changed tires twice.

Piastri steadily cut into Norris' lead in the latter stages of the race but the British driver held on with old tires to take the win. Piastri nearly collided with his teammate when he locked up a wheel while trying to pass on the second-to-last lap. Still, it was Norris who held on to have the last word in their title fight as F1 heads into a four-week break.

"Good racing. Good strategy. Good call," was how Norris summed it up on the radio.

George Russell took third for Mercedes after fighting his way past Ferrari's Charles Leclerc in a contest that earned Leclerc a time penalty for nearly colliding with Russell while defending.

Defending champion Max Verstap-



McLaren driver Lando Norris of Britain celebrates on the podium after winning the Hungarian Formula One Grand Prix race at the Hungaroring racetrack in Mogyorod, Hungary. (AP)

pen was only ninth after being off the pace all week. He stays third in the standings, but drops to 97 points off leader Piastri in another heavy blow to an already unlikely title defense.

Leclerc started on pole position with hopes of landing Ferrari's first Grand Prix win of the year, but ended up fourth after blaming the team for decisions he said left his car "undriveable." "This is so incredibly frustrating. We've lost all competitiveness," he told the team over the radio.

It wasn't immediately clear what, if anything, Ferrari changed on his car, but Leclerc dropped so far off the pace in his final stint that the two McLaren drivers and Russell questioned what happened to him as they chatted after the race.