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PAHW plans future projects to meet citizens' needs

# PM drives housing progress, eco-reforms

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired a meeting at Bayan Palace on Wednesday, with Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdulatif Al-Mashari.

The meeting discussed the Public Authority for Housing Welfare's (PAHW) work in infrastructure upgrades, improving government services, and expanding housing programs, while pushing forward new housing cites and future projects to meet the citizens' needs.

His Highness the Prime Minister reaffirmed the government's

commitment to providing housing for the citizens as well as completing all pending housing files in future meetings.

Diwan of the Prime Minister's Chairman Abdulaziz Dakhil Al-Dakhil attended the meeting, along with senior officials from (PAHW).

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also chaired a meeting at Bayan Palace to review a plan for handling damaged and used tires, in the presence of Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdulatif Al-Mashari.

The meeting discussed plans by relevant authorities to make

optimal use of the waste through coordination between Kuwait Municipality, the Environment Public Authority (EPA), and the Public Authority for Industry (PAI), focusing on recycling, environmental protection, and creating new revenue streams for the state budget.

The meeting also reviewed the execution of new public cleaning contracts to ensure higher levels of public hygiene and safeguard public interest.

Diwan of the Prime Minister's Chairman Abdulaziz Dakhil Al-Dakhil attended the meeting, along with senior officials from Kuwait Municipality and other relevant authorities.



HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

## The snake and the eagle were more loyal than the man



The old man taught his son wisdom and how to do good deeds for the sake of God



The eagle refused to leave the house after it recovered



It carried a beautiful necklace of pearls, diamonds, and rubies in its beak



The woman was overjoyed by the necklace, after years of poverty and hardship



The man betrayed the hunter and sold him out for 100 gold liras



The minister said "Either die from the bite or save the king's daughter"



The hunter saved the king's daughter, and his freedom was the price

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PM Diwan photos

Left: HH the PM chairs meeting on housing plans, infrastructure development. Right: HH the PM chairs meeting on waste tires, public cleaning contracts.

# Tint limit raised 80%

Clear windshield mandatory in Kuwait

By Munif Naif  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Acting Hawalli Traffic Director Colonel Bader Al-Khalifa confirmed that the new decision allows the tinting of all vehicles, except the windshield, up to 50 percent regardless of the tinting percentage provided by the car dealership — whether 10 percent, 20 percent or 30 percent.

In a televised interview, Al-Khalifa explained that if the dealership's tint is 30 percent, the car owner may add an additional 50 percent, bringing the total tint to 80 percent.

He also revealed there has been a remarkable decrease in the number of traffic violations and accidents resulting in deaths. He said the traffic accidents resulting in deaths decreased by 75 percent in June, compared to the same month in the previous year -- a goal that the Ministry of Interior is striving to achieve.

In a related development, the Traffic Awareness Unit at the General Traffic Department affirmed that in line with the commitment of the ministry to facilitate traffic procedures, update regulations in the interest of road users, and maintain safety and security standards, the ministry permitted window tinting of up to 50 percent, provided the windshield remains completely

transparent. The ministry stressed that any form of protection or tint on the windshield is strictly prohibited, as well as the use of reflective glass or any other type of tinting.

This decision is an amendment to the previously established rate, which required revision in light of current circumstances and public needs, while ensuring that vehicle user safety is not compromised.

The ministry once again urged all drivers to adhere to the new regulations and avoid violations for their safety and to prevent legal accountability.

The newspaper previously published the new regulations governing vehicle tinting percentages, which were issued last Sunday.

Meanwhile, a security source explained to the newspaper that the total permissible tinting percentage for vehicles with factory-installed tinted windows previously reached 70 percent. Under the new resolution, this figure now increases to 80 percent.

The source elaborated that, for example, if a vehicle leaves the dealership with a tinting percentage ranging from 10 percent to 30 percent, an additional 50 percent may now be added according to the new resolution. This brings the total tint percentage to 80 percent, if the dealership's original tint is 30 percent.

He clarified that under the previous regulation, the total permissible percentage was 70 percent, so if tinting at the dealership was 30 percent and an additional 40 percent was allowed, the total was 70 percent.

## 130 rules salons must obey

## Beauty under the microscope

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Ministry of Health announced the release of a special edition of the health requirements guide for health facilities, salons, beauty and personal care centers, and similar establishments, entitled "Health Requirements Guide."

The guide begins with the most important terms and definitions specific to health institutes, and goes on to detail the services provided at the center, such as tattoos, henna tattoos and others.

The guide consists of 130 require-

ments in six main sections:

- General Requirements
- Special Requirements for Health Facilities
- Special Requirements for Salons, Beauty and Personal Care Centers and the Like for Men's Activities
- Special Requirements for Salons, Beauty and Personal Care Centers and the Like for Women's Activities
- Special Requirements for Salons and the Like for Children's Activities
- Special Requirements for Tanning Equipment

Continued on Page 5

## Newswatch

**NEW YORK:** The Gulf Group at the United Nations welcomed the inclusion of the Israeli occupation in the UN Secretary-General's annual report on sexual violence during armed conflicts.

The Group described the decision as a "first and essential step" toward accountability and recognition of violations committed against the Palestinian people.

The remarks were delivered by Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Tareq Al-Bannai, on behalf of the Gulf Group, during a UN Security Council session on Women, Peace and Security.

The Council discussed Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' comprehensive report on sexual violence in armed conflict, covering the period from January to December 2024.

Al-Bannai said the report's findings remind the world it remains far from its goals despite repeated commitments, adding that sexual violence continues as a weapon of war, terror, and political repression.

The Gulf states, he added, cannot ignore that sexual violence is used to forcibly displace populations, tear apart societies, and spread fear among civilians. (KUNA)



Ministry of Justice photo

Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait during an inspection tour of the Hawalli Court.

Al-Sumait tours Hawalli Court

## Judicial reform underway to streamline procedures

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait said Wednesday that the ministry is proceeding with the implementation of its comprehensive plan to keep pace with Kuwait's aspirations to build an advanced and modern judicial environment, enhance performance efficiency, and save time and effort.

According to a statement by the Justice Ministry, during an inspection tour of the Hawalli Court, Al-Sumait emphasized the importance of overcoming all difficulties and facilitating procedures to ensure the quality of services provided.

The statement added that the Minister monitored the progress of work in various departments and met with several people there to learn about their needs and the problems they face.

Al-Sumait was accompanied by Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry, Awatif Al-Sanad, and Acting Assistant Undersecretary, Nouf Al-Qabandi during the tour.

## First Deputy PM stresses unified efforts across Mol sectors, reaffirms leadership's full support

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah stressed on Wednesday the need to enhance coordination between security and administrative sectors to face challenges.

This came in a statement by the Ministry of Interior following a meeting, chaired by Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, with the Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry Major General Ali Al-Adwani and other senior officers.

The meeting discussed important files related to developing work and raising the level of performance in the various sectors of the ministry.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef emphasized the Kuwaiti leadership's interest in the ministry's work and its commitment to providing full support to its personnel in various sectors, in appreciation of their ongoing efforts to maintain security and stability.



Ministry of Interior photo

The First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior chairs a meeting with the Ministry's leaders to follow up on the development programs and the progress of work.

He expressed his appreciation to all employees of the ministry, praising their dedication and devotion to their national duty.

## Rents likely to rise amid expat surge

## Visit visas to boost real estate activity

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: International real estate appraiser Emad Al-Faraj says opening the door to issuing various types of visit visas (family, commercial, and tourist) will stimulate real estate activity and change the structure of demand for real estate in the country.

He affirmed that the increasing number of

expatriates will boost demand for investment apartments, and if supply does not expand, this will lead to a gradual increase in rents in the future.

In an exclusive interview with the daily, Al-Faraj explained that the lack of reliable data and expertise is one of the most significant challenges facing real estate appraisal in the country.

Continued on Page 5

## Kuwait FM receives ambassadors of India and Nepal



Ministry of Foreign Affairs photos

Left: Kuwaiti FM receives Ambassador of India. Right: Kuwaiti FM receives Ambassador of Nepal.

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya on Wednesday received Indian Ambassador Dr. Adarsh Swaika and Ambassador of Nepal Ghana Shyam Lamsal, respectively.

During the receptions, bilateral relations and ways to enhance them on all levels were discussed, noted a ministry statement.



8 **Burgan Bank hosts 'Bring Your Kids to Work Day' to celebrate family & people-centered workplace**

9 **NBK was honored with 3 new Global Finance Magazine Awards**



9 **KFH hosts 'Fun with Weaving' program for Baiti customers**



Prayer Timings			
Fajr .....	03:54	Asr .....	15:26
Sunrise ..	05:19	Maghrib ..	18:24
Zohr .....	11:51	Isha .....	19:45

# Local

**Expected weather for next 24 hrs:**  
**By Day:** Hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.  
**By Night:** Hot to rather hot and relatively humid over coastal ar-

Weather			
eas with light to moderate north-			
westerly wind to light variable			
wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	48	36	
Kuwait Airport	48	34	
Abdaly	48	29	
Bubyan	46	26	
Jahra	49	32	
Ahmadi	46	31	
Nuwaisib	47	32	
Wafra	47	32	
Salmi	47	27	
Managish	48	30	



HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince



HH the Prime Minister

## Kuwait Amir congratulates Hungary on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday a cable of congratulations to the President of Hungary Tamas Sulyok on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness wished the President good health and wellness and hoped for further progress and prosperity to Hungary and its people.

### Crown Prince

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday a cable of con-

gratulations to the President of Hungary Tamas Sulyok on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished the President good health and wellness and hoped for further progress and prosperity to Hungary and its people.

### Prime Minister

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday a cable of congratulations to the President of Hungary Tamas Sulyok on his country's National Day.



KUNA photo

Participants of the 'Arab-Japanese Youth Forum'.

## Kuwait participates as Arab-Japan forum kicks off

CAIRO, Aug 20, (KUNA): The Arab-Japanese Youth Forum labeled "bridges of dialogue and culture" kicked off in the Egyptian capital on Wednesday, setting a platform for exchanging views and boosting cultural rapprochement between the two nations.

Ambassador Mohammad Al-Ojairi (from the State of Kuwait), the Arab League assistant secretary general and head of the administrative and finance affairs at the organization, ad-

ressed the inaugural session, noting that the Arab-Japanese cooperation has significantly increased since the forum founding in 2009 and launch of the Arab-Japanese Dialogue at the ministerial level in 2013.

The Arab League and Japan signed, in 2013, a memo aimed at boosting dialogue among civilizations through communications between the Arab and Japanese literati, he added.

In April 2025, the Arab League Ministerial Council expressed, during its 163rd session, keenness on elevating relations with Japan at the political, economic, social and cultural levels.

Al-Ojairi said the Arab League's Culture and Civilizations Dialogue Department called for organizing this forum to facilitate integration between the Arab and Japanese young generations.

# Graduate women opt for gritty KFF job

196 selected in public draw; 25 in reserves list



KFF Chief Major General Talal Al-Roumi supervises the draw.



KFF personnel dig out the names of successful candidates.



KUNA photos

Names of successful candidates are announced at the end of draw.

## KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) organized a public draw for the first batch of candidates for the female specialist officer course, who hold university degrees.

KFF Chief Major General Talal Al-Roumi supervised the draw, which was held at the Prevention Building Theater with the applicants in attendance.

In a press statement, KFF disclosed that the number of qualified applicants reached 196, with 25 candidates drawn from nine different university specializations. An additional 25 candidates were drawn as a reserve list in the event that a

candidate withdraws or fails to meet the remaining admission requirements. KFF confirmed that the candidates will undergo medical examinations as the final stage of admission, ensuring that all requirements and standards are met.

According to KFF, this is its first course for female specialist officers holding university degrees. It also ensured that the public draw was carried out in accordance with the principles of transparency and fairness in selecting qualified candidates who contribute to supporting human resources.

KFF broadcasted the draw live on its Instagram account to guarantee transparency in the process.

Furthermore, Brigadier Hamad Budoustour, Director of the Training Department at KFF, affirmed the successful integration of women into the non-commis-

sioned officer (sergeant) course, and that they have proven their proficiency in the course as a first step. He emphasized that women, after entering the officers course, are capable of achieving success in intensive training. He pointed out that they underwent training courses similar to those completed by firefighters, including training in firefighting, dealing with high temperature and the use of breathing apparatus, in addition to enhancing their physical fitness.

Head of the Registration and Admissions Division at the Training Department Lieutenant Colonel Ahmed Saleh said the draw was for holders of bachelor's degrees in Law, Civil and Electrical Engineering, Human Resources, Media (Public Relations), Computer Engineering, Management, Mathematics (Statistics) and Finance (Accounting).

## Other Voices

## Sad Sudan, happy Al-Nafisi

By Ahmad alsarraf

Omar al-Bashir's rule over Sudan is widely regarded as one of the darkest and most unjust periods in the country's history.

He caused severe disasters and grave injustices throughout Sudan, sparking armed conflicts and deep humanitarian crises due to political and economic mismanagement of the country. This was especially evident in the long civil wars in the south, Darfur, and eastern Sudan, which led to millions of deaths and displacements.

He left Sudan in its current tragic state, which the world has often chosen to ignore or neglect, except for certain countries with mineral interests in Sudan, which initially fueled these civil wars.

As a result of the crimes of Al-Bashir, who was accused of causing millions of deaths and the loss of countless properties, and whose harm extended to the entire population, he was internationally convicted of war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, rape, and creating some of the worst conditions in history.

Nearly 12 million Sudanese were displaced due to ethnic cleansing, wars, extreme poverty, widespread famine, lack of security and services, and the spread of disease. The country's infrastructure completely collapsed amid ongoing unrest, killings, assassinations, arbitrary arrests, and the use of child soldiers.

Omar al-Bashir and Hassan Turabi of the Muslim Brotherhood came to power on June 30, 1989, through a military coup that overthrew the elected civilian government led by Sadiq Mahdi.

Al-Bashir then consolidated all power and ruled with authoritarian force, backed by the National Islamic Front, which emerged from the Muslim Brotherhood.

He remained in power for nearly 30 years, during which he suppressed political opposition, carried out widespread

arbitrary arrests and torture, and curtailed freedoms.

His rule was also marked by repressive policies and extreme religious extremism, culminating in Sudan losing over 660,000 square kilometers of territory following the secession of the south.

His crimes and accusations of genocide led to the issuance of international arrest warrants against him.

His rule came to an end following widespread protests and a massive popular uprising, which culminated in a coup and his imprisonment on April 11, 2019.

He is currently receiving medical treatment under guard at a hospital in the Merowe region in northern Sudan, after his health deteriorated in detention.

Despite this grim and bloody history, and with partisan loyalty still flowing, political analyst Abdullah Al-Nafisi recently stated in an interview, in response to a question from the presenter, that the Muslim Brotherhood in Sudan had succeeded in their coup led by Bashir and Turabi.

The supposed "proof" offered is that they ruled Sudan for thirty years, built bridges, opened universities, and provided electricity. But Al-Nafisi overlooks a crucial fact - longevity in power, especially under a dictatorship, is not a measure of success.

Saddam ruled Iraq for thirty years. Gaddafi held Libya for forty years. The two Assad's rule of Syria lasted for more than half a century.

And what was the result? I will leave that for you to judge.

Incidentally, our friend has delivered two lectures telling the same story with notable differences. In the first, he claims that, according to a CIA official named Godzman whom he says he met at a 1992 conference, the end of some Gulf states, including Kuwait, would come in 2020.

In the second lecture, he repeats the same story, but this time the official's name is Aaron Katz, and the predicted end of Kuwait is moved to 2025.

Yet, despite these contradictions, there are still many, too many to count, who continue to follow his example.

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## Kuwait to host MILSET '27 EXPO-Sciences Asia

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): The International Movement for Leisure Activities in Science and Technology (MILSET Asia) has announced that Kuwait has been selected to host the 2027 EXPO-Sciences Asia, and it is expected to attract participants from more than 50 countries.

The President of MILSET Asia, Dr. Abdullah Al-Mutawa told KUNA on Wednesday that the decision reflects growing international confidence in Kuwait's capabilities and its active role in supporting global scientific and technological initiatives.

He highlighted Kuwait's strong organizational vision, advanced infrastructure, and governmental and community support as key factors behind its successful bid.

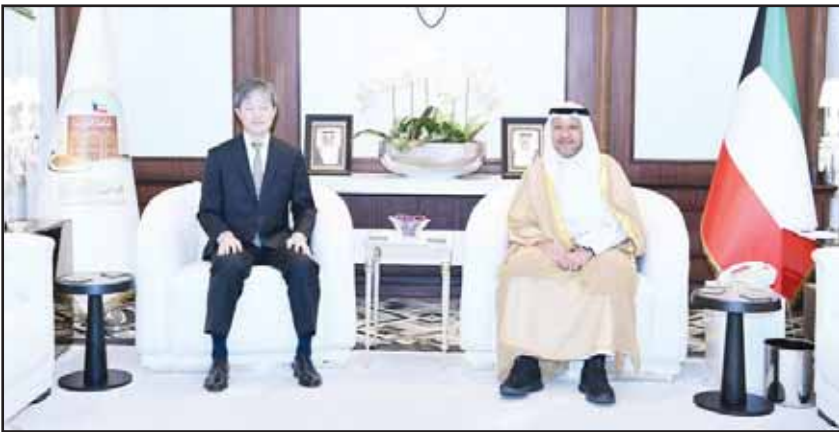
Al-Mutawa noted that the forum will build on Kuwait's record of hosting major regional and international events, strengthening its role as a global hub for knowledge exchange and innovation.

The 2027 science forum will feature scientific, technical, and cultural activities, with participation expected from over 600 students worldwide across all educational levels.

The EXPO-Sciences Asia event brings together young innovators to exchange ideas, showcase projects, and engage in workshops and interactive exhibitions, with a focus on advancing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.



Dr. Al-Mutawa



Farwaniya Governorate photo

Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah receives the Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait Mukai Kenichiro in his office.

## Kuwait, Japan seek upgrade in deep-rooted bilateral ties

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah had a meeting with Ambassador of Japan to the State of Kuwait Mukai Kenichiro in his office at the headquarters of the governorate on Wednesday.

The Governor warmly welcomed Kenichiro, affirming the depth of rela-

tions between the State of Kuwait and the friendly country Japan, and their development and mutual cooperation.

During the meeting, they discussed ways to strengthen cooperation between the two friendly countries, in addition to exchanging views on a number of issues of mutual interest.

## 'Job stability priority after KIPIC and KNPC merger'

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: CEO of Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) Wadha Al-Khatib, who also serves as acting CEO of Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC), has reaffirmed the importance of job stability and the provision of all forms of security for KIPIC employees following the completion of the merger with KNPC.

This is a confirmation of a report that the newspaper published on Feb 13 under the title "Petroleum is committed to the benefits of KIPIC employees after the merger," and in line with the final arrangements for the full merger of KIPIC into KNPC.

On Wednesday, KNPC organized an expanded meeting that brought together senior management and all department managers from KNPC, KIPIC,

the Shuaiba and Umm Al-Aish LPG cylinder filling plants, and Kuwait Aviation Fueling Company (KAFCO) -- a KNPC subsidiary.

During the meeting, Al-Khatib stressed that the purpose of such meetings is to update the leadership team on the latest developments within the framework of the comprehensive oil sector restructuring project led by Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC). This project includes the merger of KIPIC with KNPC, as well as KNPC's acquisition of the LPG cylinder filling plants. She pointed out that keeping leaders abreast of these developments is vital to their success, as managers are directly responsible for implementing them and for preparing

their colleagues to deal with them. She explained this ensures the achievement of the company's objectives, strengthens its effectiveness, and enhances its role and position in the global oil and gas industry.

Al-Khatib also delivered a visual presentation in which she highlighted the comprehensive restructuring project of KPC, launched as part of its 2040 strategy that intends to achieve operational excellence, efficiency and reliability, while creating new opportunities for integration among companies in the sector, improving performance, and advancing technical and commercial capabilities.

She went on to address the measures being taken by the local refining and manufacturing sector under this restructuring project. She stressed that the plan aims to unify the efforts of the sector, making them more effective, while at the same time enhancing flexibility to adapt to global changes and strengthen its ability to meet the challenges in this vital industry.



Al-Khatib



HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



# The snake and the eagle were more loyal than the man

ONCE upon a time, an old man, on his deathbed, wanted to leave his son with one final lesson of wisdom - to do good purely for the sake of God. A few days later, he passed away.

One day, while his son was on a hunting trip, riding his horse with his weapon at his side, he saw an injured eagle unable to fly. Taking pity on the eagle, he took it home for treatment and insisted on releasing it after it recovered.

On the second day, during another hunting trip in the forest, he saw an unconscious man chained to a tree trunk. Taking pity on him, he wiped his face with water and untied him. As soon as the man regained consciousness, he carried him home, prepared a special place for him, and cared for him greatly, providing him with everything he needed, including medicine, clothing, food, drink, and rest.

On the third day, he went hunting again and saw a sick snake. He took pity on it and carried it home for treatment.

The eagle recovered a few days later but refused to leave the house. One day, the eagle entered the house and landed next to the man's wife. In its beak, it held a beautiful necklace of pearls, diamonds, and rubies.

The woman, who had long suffered from the bitterness of poverty and hardship, rejoiced greatly at the necklace.

The sick stranger watched the events unfold with great interest. After he recovered, he left the house. On the way, he heard a voice saying, "The king's wife has lost a necklace, and whoever tells us where it is will receive one hundred gold liras."

- The old man taught his son wisdom and how to do good deeds for the sake of God
- The eagle refused to leave the house after it recovered
- It carried a beautiful necklace of pearls, diamonds, and rubies in its beak
- The woman was overjoyed by the necklace, after years of poverty and hardship
- The man betrayed the hunter and sold him out for 100 gold liras
- The minister said "Either die from the bite or save the king's daughter"
- The hunter saved the king's daughter, and his freedom was the price

He thought to himself, "One hundred gold liras, and I am a poor man who owns nothing of the world's riches."

He went to the king's palace and told them that the necklace the queen was looking for was in the house of a hunter who had cared for him, done him a favor, sheltered him, treated him, and honored him.

The king's guards went to the house of that kind hunter, arrested him, accused him of theft, returned the necklace to the queen,

and sentenced him to beheading.

The sick snake learned the whole story and wanted to offer its owner a service he would never forget in return for his kindness.

The snake went to the palace, reached the king's daughter's room, and coiled around her. The king's wife was frightened and hurried to tell her husband.

Everyone seemed confused and did not know what to do. Then the minister said, "Let's bring the hunter. Either he dies from the snakebite, or he saves the king's daughter."

The hunter was brought in, and he was ordered to get rid of the snake. The hunter then asked the king, "If I do that, how will you reward me?" The king replied, "I will pardon you and grant you the necklace."

The hunter entered the king's daughter's room, and the snake immediately went to him. He carried it and took it back with him to his house. He thought to himself, "The snake and the eagle returned the favor, but man did not."

The moral of the story: Do good for the sake of God, without expecting anything in return from those you help.

Do not expect others to repay your good deeds, for nothing is ever lost with God. He sees, hears, and knows. He is the Creator of mankind.

Good deeds done to others are truly done for the sake of God, not for the sake of people.

Do good to both those who deserve it and those who do not. And if you cannot find those who are worthy of it, then you are worthy of it.

■ They say a person in need is blind until his need is met.

Therefore, we stress that government promises, especially those affecting people's lives, must be fulfilled promptly.

People are wondering about the committee that will review the issue of citizenship revocation?

This is important to prevent any injustice. Of course, in cases of forgery, revocation is final, and that is the state's decision.

■■■■

■ Minister of Social Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah spoke clearly and firmly, "No unlicensed donations, and no profit from charitable work."

These are wise and important words.

Today, those who want to do good must stop taking a percentage for themselves under the title of "those in charge."

This percentage has become an unfair, growing burden that some have grown accustomed to enjoying.

■■■■

■ The performance of the "Visa Kuwait" platform has improved, bringing joy to many.

Visitors to Kuwait are breathing a sigh of relief, thanks to the quick decision by the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior.

This is exactly the kind of prompt ministerial action we need.



KUNA photo  
Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Major General Pilot Sheikh Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah honors one of the graduates.

## Deputy Army Chief honors topmost female graduates

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Major General Pilot Sheikh Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, welcomed and honored the top-ranking female graduates of the Basic Management Course for Non-Commissioned Officers and Personnel — the first cohort from the female segment of the force.

The ceremony celebrated the graduates' outstanding achievements and recognized the dedication and hard work they demonstrated throughout the course. Speaking at the event, the Deputy Chief of Staff expressed his pride in their performance, emphasizing that their success is a testament to their perseverance and commitment. He highlighted that this accomplishment marks just the beginning of a promising journey, encouraging the graduates to continue striving for excellence in their military careers.

Major General Sheikh Sabah also praised the graduates as role models of discipline and dedication, expressing confidence in their future contributions to the military. He concluded by wishing them continued success in their service.

## Nazaha report highlights achievements, statistics

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) has released its "Citizen Report 2024-2025", covering the period from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Nazaha explained that the report highlights the most prominent achievements and statistics accomplished in cooperation with government bodies, the private sector, and civil society organizations locally, regionally, and internationally, as part of its ongoing efforts to promote integrity and combat corruption.

The report also highlights the partnerships Nazaha has established to promote cooperation and the exchange of expertise and best practices with partners at the local, regional, and international levels.

It noted that this edition builds on previous Citizen Reports, which have outlined Nazaha's mandate, anti-corruption initiatives, international performance indicators, and the importance of the "Aadaa" (Performance) project in enforcing the Code of Professional Conduct.

The report aims to raise public awareness and reinforce the principles of transparency and accountability, in line with Kuwait's vision of building a fair and transparent work environment that protects public funds and supports sustainable development.

# 168 nabbed in Mutla'a raids

Trooper could face death

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Inspection Department at the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has launched an intensive inspection campaign in Al-Mutla'a, reports Al-Anba daily.

This campaign was conducted by a joint committee whose members are from the Residency Affairs Investigation Department at the Ministry of Interior, and PAM.

The campaign led to the arrest of 168 workers proven to have violated Labor and Residency laws.

The authority disclosed that among those arrested were 130 domestic workers and 38 private sector employees. It confirmed that the files of the employers under whom these workers are registered will be reviewed to ensure compliance with the Labor Law and its executive regulations. All violators will be referred to the Residency Affairs Investigations Department for the necessary legal procedures.

PAM stressed that inspection teams will continue to intensify campaigns in various areas to uncover violations and safeguard the labor market from illegal practices.

It then reiterated its call on business owners and individuals to strictly adhere to the Labor Law and its implementing regulations.

□ □ □

**Trooper may face death:** The Central Prison Administration referred a Ministry of Interior soldier working at the Central Prison to the Public Prosecution for his involvement in smuggling drugs into the prison, exploiting his security position, reports Al-Anba daily.

The referral file included nine chemical-saturated papers. An inmate will also be investigated after the smuggler admitted that he attempted to bring in the drugs at the inmate's request.

According to a security source, when prison security personnel entered the soldier's workplace, they noticed that he was sweating profusely and appeared extremely nervous. He was searched and, to their surprise, nine small papers saturated with a chemical substance were concealed in a sensitive part of his body.

The source added that "prison security personnel launched an investigation with the soldier, who confessed that he received the nine papers from a man waiting for him near the prison. He claimed he did not know this individual, but was told by the inmate that the papers would be handed over to him and that he would receive a financial reward for smuggling in the items."

It is worth noting that a new law prepared by the Ministry of Interior stipulates severe penalties, including the death penalty, for any employee who exploits his position to traffic drugs or psychotropic substances. The death penalty also applies to anyone who distributes narcotic substances without compensation to two or more people for purposes of use or promotion.

## Change in water stations shifts

By Mohammad Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Water Filling Stations Department in the Customer Service Sector at the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy confirmed the adoption of a new shift system -- 24 hours of work followed by 48 hours of rest, replacing the previous system of 12 hours work followed by 24 hours rest, then 12 hours work followed by 48 hours rest.

Sources from the ministry said the Civil Service Commission (CSC) has approved the assignment of five employees with certain specializations per shift and se-

lected by the direct supervisor, while the other employees continue with the regular morning shift schedule.

They added that the new system took effect on Aug 9, with work starting at 8:00 am. Attendance must be recorded through fingerprints between 10:00 am and 11:00 am, and continues until 8:00 am the following day.

They clarified that attendance is verified through fingerprints, stressing that any employee who misses a shift or is absent without an official excuse will be transferred to the morning shift system and replaced by another employee from among those who were assigned.

## 'Disabled first in line for houses'

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Chairperson of the Women's Housing Affairs Committee at the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) Sheikha Bibi Al-Yousef disclosed that after inspecting government-owned rental housing, the committee confirmed the availability of a number of vacant housing units.

In a press statement Wednesday, Sheikha Bibi Al-Yousef affirmed that after determining the vacant housing units, the committee decided to distribute them to eligible applicants based on historical priority previously announced by the authority.

She added that priority in allocating rental housing is given to Kuwaiti women with disabilities, stressing that distributions will continue as additional housing units become available.

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# Higher Education greenlights additional US study programs

Approval backed by accreditation bureau

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jalal issued Ministerial Resolution No. 227/2025 on adding a number of academic programs and degrees to the list of higher education institutions permitted for Kuwaiti students to enroll in the United States, as per the recommendation of the National Bureau for Academic Accreditation and Education Quality Assurance.**

The resolution consists of four articles as follows:

Article One: Add academic programs and de-



Dr. Al-Jalal

Mechanical Engineering, Computational Fluid and Solid Mechanics, Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering, Dynamics and Control

■ George Mason University (Applied Information Technology and Information Technology)

■ University of Tulsa (Psychology and Clinical Psychology)

■ Iowa State University (Entrepreneurship)

■ University of California-San Diego (Computer Engineering)

grees to the list of higher education institutions for undergraduate and graduate programs in the United States. These universities and programs include the following:

■ Brown University (Education Studies, Teaching and Urban Education Policy)

■ University of Southern California (Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering, Computational Fluid and Solid Mechanics, Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering, Dynamics and Control)

■ University of Central Florida (Political Science)

■ University of California-Berkeley (Electrical Engineering and Computer Science)

■ Southern California Institute of Architecture (Architectural Technology, Imagination and Entertainment, Artificial Landscapes, Design Theory and Education).

Article Two: Study must be based on regular attendance during the school week, and the curriculum must follow the traditional education system.

Article Three: The academic program must have completed the specified period for awarding the degree, with the first class graduating from the college offering the program.

Article Four: Decisions regulating enrollment and the study system in educational institutions outside the State of Kuwait must be observed, and the academic degrees must meet the requirements for obtaining them in accordance with the decisions issued by the Ministry of Higher Education.

## Plan aims to ease traffic into Kuwait City

### New Jahra road entrance sought

**By Inaas Awadh**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20:** Municipal Council member Dr. Hassan Kamal on Tuesday submitted a proposal to establish an entrance from the main Jahra Road (80) on its internal side road for those coming from Jahra City towards Kuwait City, before the intersection of Khalaf Al-Ahmar Road.



Dr. Kamal

This proposal was made after coordinating with the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Public Works, Public Authority for Roads and Transportation, and other concerned government agencies.

Kamal pointed out in his proposal the importance of Jahra Road as one of the main roads linking new areas in northern Kuwait, such as Mutlaa City and other future cities, with existing areas in the State of Kuwait. He explained that certain additions are needed to ease traffic congestion at intersections and side entrances through the establishment of entrances on existing roads to ensure smooth traffic flow.

## Sabah Al-Ahmad leads with 100K residents

### Kuwait's new residential cities see steady population growth

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20:** The new cities continue to attract more residents, contributing to their revitalization and reinforcing their presence on the urban map of the country, while the State moves forward with the completion of services and infrastructure, reports Al-Rai daily.

The daily made a special statistics based on several government reports. It revealed that seven residential cities in the North and South — large parts of which have already been completed by the government under the housing care plan — currently accommodate around 240,000 people, including 146,276 Kuwaiti citizens representing families who actually reside in these cities.

These cities are Al-Mutlaa, Sabah Al-Ahmad, Southwest Abdullah Al-Mubarak, West Abdullah Al-Mubarak, North Sulaibkhat, Khairan Residential and Jaber Al-Ahmad.

Although many projects have yet to be fully completed, statistics indicate that Sabah Al-Ahmad City has the largest population, with 100,203 residents in five suburbs. The most densely populated is the Fourth Suburb, with 22,593 residents.

In Jaber Al-Ahmad City, where infrastructure is nearing completion, the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) is developing investment services. Projects such as a shopping mall, bilingual schools, and gas stations are underway.

The city currently houses about 68,992 people, while the neighboring northwest suburb of Sulaibkhat has 16,654 residents. West Abdullah Al-Mubarak City follows with 31,090 residents, while

South Abdullah Al-Mubarak City has 3,767 residents.

A total of 1,703 people live in Khairan Residential City, which comprises 313 plots. Al-Mutlaa City, still under development, currently has a population of 18,308 residents in nine suburbs, out of a planned total of 12 suburbs that will eventually include 28,288 residential plots awaiting handover to their owners.

The overall completion rate in Al-Mutlaa has surpassed 82 percent, with all residential, service and investment components scheduled for completion by 2034, in line with the national development plan.

Also, the State Ministry of Housing continues to implement nine new housing projects in the country, providing 106,848 plots. These projects are expected to accommodate more than 745,000 citizens, based on the average Kuwaiti family size of seven members.

Among the projects in progress is the Affordable Housing Project, which has achieved more than 37 percent completion and will provide 9,800 housing units. The Sulaibiya and Taima projects have also entered the preparation and design phase, with plans to deliver 4,000 new housing units.

In the South, the South Abdullah Al-Mubarak project has surpassed 90 percent completion, while the South Sabah Al-Ahmad and South Saad Al-Abdullah cities have made significant progress, exceeding the contractual schedule. Together, the two cities are expected to provide about 55,000 housing units.

## Farwaniya Governor honors outgoing security officials

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20:** Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah met with former Farwaniya Security Director Brigadier General Mohammad Mutlaq Al-Mutairi and former Assistant Security Director Brigadier General Nayef Mohammad Al-Hajraf at his office in the headquarters of the governorate on Wednesday.

During the meeting, Sheikh Athbi Nasser praised the efforts of Al-Mutairi and Al-Hajraf throughout their tenure at the governorate, as well as their dedication and sincerity in serving the nation and its citizens. He emphasized that their contributions will always be appreciated and cherished.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Governor honored the outgoing security officials, expressing his gratitude for their dedicated efforts in enhancing security and stability in the governorate.



Former security officials receive recognition for enhancing safety in Farwaniya.



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## Justice Minister ends flexi-hours

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20:** Minister of Justice, Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait issued a decision to suspend the flexible working hours system at the Justice Service Centers, reports Al-Anba daily.

Official working hours are set at seven hours per day, Sunday through Thursday, with attendance from 7:00

am. to 2:00 pm.

The decision also stipulates that its implementation shall be without prejudice to the legally mandated grace periods – 30 minutes at the start of the workday for all employees, and 15 minutes at the end of the workday for female employees.

## Trial review sparks calls for fairer benefits

### CSC allows shift change requests following evening duty probation

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20:** Public sector employees assigned in the evening shift are allowed to submit a request to return to the morning shift upon completion of the first probationary period that began on Jan 5, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources told the daily that employees who previously requested to move to the evening shift and now wish to return to morning shift could reapply more than seven months after the start of the evening shift system.

They explained that the right of employees to return to morning shift is based on Clause Three of Civil Service Commission Circular No. 12/2024 regarding the official evening shift system issued on Oct 20, 2024 and took effect on Jan 5, 2025.

According to the sources, Clause Three stipulates that “the employees’ period of service under the official evening shift system must not be less than seven consecutive months. This period may not be interrupted and the employees cannot return to morning shift before its expiration, except with the approval of the competent authority in each government agency, in accordance with the requirements of public interest.”

Sources added that the ongoing evaluation of the first pilot phase of the evening work system is a valuable opportunity to present to officials the factors and provisions that require adjustment

or development

“This will enable nationals working under the evening shift system to achieve greater efficiency in processing transactions; thereby, fulfilling the system’s primary objectives of easing morning traffic congestion and reducing pressure on morning-shift employees,” sources explained.

Sources revealed that one of the main demands of evening-shift employees is equality with morning-shift workers in certain benefits.

“These include, for example, the number of permissible leave requests — currently limited to only two per month for evening employees, compared to four for morning employees,” sources elaborated.

They also expressed hope for reduced working hours during the holy month of Ramadan, noting that morning work hours are reduced from 7.5 hours to 4.5 hours.

Sources said another demand is an increase in grace periods, which are currently limited to 15 minutes for evening employees; while morning-shift employees are granted 30 minutes.

In response to a question about powers, sources stated “a comprehensive survey of all entities implementing the evening work system is necessary to determine the specific demands of each entity, as they may differ from one institution to another.”

## Damaged pedestrian bridge dismantled

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20:** Teams from the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) have started removing the damaged part of the pedestrian bridge on Fahaheel Expressway toward Kuwait City, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources said this is in line with ongoing efforts to upgrade the road network and ensure the safety of motorists and pedestrians.

Sources revealed that the removal process was carried out under the supervision of acting Director General of

PART Eng. Khaled Al-Osaimi, and in the presence of a team of specialized engineers from PART. Sources confirmed that the engineers closely monitored the implementation procedures on-site to ensure smooth traffic flow and reduce the impact on road users.

Sources stressed that PART gives the highest priority to bridges and vital facilities linked to highways, affirming that any structure showing signs of damage is immediately inspected and followed up by technical teams to protect lives and properties.





Students from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar explore medicine, engineering, and petroleum programs through workshops and field experiences.



High school talents explore careers and skills through KU's interactive activities

# Sabah Al-Ahmad Center wraps up hands-on university prep program

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Scientific Program for University Preparatory Studies, conducted by the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, has concluded.

The Engineering, Petroleum and Medicine colleges at Kuwait University hosted the program, which was initiated by the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center.

The program targeted high school students for the 2025/2026 academic year. It included a series of activities in the colleges of Medicine, Engineering and Petroleum, based on the courses chosen by the students. The goal was to provide students with practical experience to help them choose the course that best suits their interests and ambitions, while developing their personal and professional skills through a variety of activities like lectures, interactive workshops and field visits.

The first edition of the program featured the participation of students from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, providing them with the opportunity to interact and exchange experiences and cultures within a rich and diverse educational environment.

The medical program included a range of basic medical subjects, such as health sciences, Anatomy, Pharmacology, General Surgery and other important medical fields. These subjects were presented through scientific lectures and interactive workshops aimed at introducing students to medical careers and their future opportunities.



Kuwait University photos

Students and KU staff pose together at the conclusion of the preparatory program, reflecting on their learning experience.

The engineering program included diverse engineering disciplines such as Electrical Engineering, Civil Engineering and Mechanical Engineering. It provided students with a comprehensive understanding of engineering con-

cepts and their practical applications, focusing on the development of analytical thinking and problem-solving skills. It contributed to building a strong knowledge base that will prepare them to meet the challenges of uni-

versity study in this field.

The program witnessed remarkable interaction among the participating students, who showed enthusiasm and actively participated in various activities. They described the ex-

perience as unique and inspiring, as it provided them with the opportunity to discover their hidden talents and meet new peers from diverse cultural backgrounds, helping them build new academic and professional relationships that enriched their educational experience.

The students expressed their happiness over the real-life university experience, which broadened their academic horizons and helped them shape their academic and professional prospects with more confidence.

Furthermore, the program enabled the students to engage in specialized academic activity and interact directly with a select group of academics and specialists, helping them make informed decisions regarding their academic and professional prospects. It also provided a valuable opportunity to build a network of academic and professional relationships through interaction with colleagues and faculty members.

The two parties expressed their deep pride in implementing this distinguished academic initiative, which aimed to empower students and broaden their academic and professional horizons at an early stage of their educational journey.

They extended their sincere thanks to the participating students and to the academic and administrative staff at the colleges of Engineering, Petroleum and Medicine for their cooperation and dedicated efforts, which significantly contributed to the success of this program and the achievement of its objectives.

Continued from Page 1

## Beauty under

The site and building requirements of the ministry prohibit the opening of shops in private residential areas, except the shops that were licensed prior to the effective date of the decision issued by the Municipal Council in 2004, such as men's barbershops. Licenses for these shops cannot be transferred to other locations or from one person to another. They are revoked in the event of the sale or demolition of the property, or the death of the license holder or property owner, or upon the issuance of a decision by the Municipal Council to revoke the license as a result of a complaint or repeated violations.

The commercial license or a copy of the smart license must be kept permanently in the shop and placed in a visible location or as determined by the Kuwait Municipality, and presented to municipal employees in charge of implementing the provisions of Ministerial Resolution No. 435/2022 whenever requested.

The price list and licensed services must be placed in a conspicuous location in the reception area, with the use of monitors or smart devices permitted to display the price list and services provided.

The guide also prohibits businesses from conducting business or storing materials outside the boundaries of the facility. It stresses the need to comply with the security and safety regulations of KFF, including that the walls be made of fire-resistant, cleanable and washable materials. Air conditioning must be installed at a rate of one ton per 12 square meters, according to the requirements and type of activity of the facility, and that the external environment of the store should be clean at all times.

The guide includes several prohibitions, the most important of which are as follows:

- Engaging in an activity other than the licensed activity
- Photographing or recording customers by any means
- Using the premises for housing and other living needs, such as cooking, etc.
- Smoking inside the institute or salon, and placing ashtrays
- Raising or bringing animals, with a signboard indicating this prohibition
- Using newspapers and magazines for any purpose other than browsing and reading
- Using devices containing non-ionizing radiation, as detailed in the decisions issued by the ministry, except with the approval of the Radiation Protection Department, and except devices exempt from a license
- Using chemical and acid peeling procedures
- Using a multi-use shaving brush for the face
- Using hair dye to dye eyebrows
- Using cigarette ash to remove dye from the skin
- Using permanent tattoo or permanent makeup devices for their own services
- Using alum to disinfect wounds, unless they are of the type used only once in the form of matchsticks

## Visit visas

The disparity in real estate appraisal in Kuwait is more acute due to the absence of regulatory bodies that issue mandatory appraisal forms and link the issuance of any report to a traceable ac-

creditation number. This reduces the chances of manipulation or error, enhances investor confidence, and creates transparency in the market.

He said, "Kuwait is witnessing extensive real estate legislative activity. The success of the Real Estate Developer Law depends on the clarity of its executive regulations, the presence of field supervision over construction phases, and the provision of real financial and technical guarantees to developers."

Al-Faraj emphasized the importance of the Anti-Vacancy Law in preventing land from being left unused and turning into a tool for speculation, while also warning against fraudulent construction practices aimed at avoiding fines.

He noted the relative stability of real estate transactions by the end of 2025 and anticipated a balanced and sustainable real estate market in 2026, supported by ongoing legislative reforms, infrastructure development, and the launch of new housing projects.

Al-Faraj initially spoke about the role of the Real Estate Appraisers Association in supporting and promoting real estate valuation in Kuwait, stating, "Real estate valuation is the compass that guides the decisions of investors, financiers, and legislators.

The market value of a property is not merely a number on paper, but a reflection of a precise equation that factors in location, usage, technical condition, supply and demand, economic conditions, and the legislation impacting the market.

Given the pivotal role real estate plays in the national economy, accurate and transparent valuation has become a strategic necessity to protect capital, stimulate investment, and ensure sustainable growth."

Below are details of the interview with International Real Estate Appraiser Emad Al-Faraj:

**Question:** What explains the disparity in real estate valuations in Kuwait?

**Answer:** Although valuation discrepancies are not unique to Kuwait, the issue is more pronounced here due to the absence of a standardized, mandatory framework to unify practices in the sector. In more advanced real estate markets, regulatory authorities issue mandatory valuation models and link every appraisal report to a traceable certification number. This significantly reduces the chances of manipulation or error. Implementing a similar system in Kuwait would enhance investor confidence, bring greater transparency to the market, and ensure that any differences in valuation are justified and supported by clear, consistent data.

Real estate valuation in Kuwait has evolved beyond being a purely technical matter, as it is now a strategic tool that directly affects economic stability. The transition from scattered individual practices to a unified and transparent system requires true collaboration between legislators, appraisers, and investors. This is precisely where the Kuwait Real Estate Appraisers Association plays a vital role. Since its establishment, the association has been laying the foundation for a new generation of qualified appraisers capable of reading the market accurately and delivering fair valuations that protect all stakeholders.

**Q:** What is the impact of the expansion in the issuance of visit visas on the real estate market? Do you expect rents to rise in the future?

**A:** The decision to open visit visas for business, tourism, and family purposes

will stimulate commercial, economic, and tourism-related real estate activity. This marks a shift in the demand structure of the property market.

As the number of expatriates grows, so will the demand for investment apartments, particularly in areas like Salmiya, Hawalli, Farwaniya, and Khaitan that have developed infrastructure and services. If this demand is not matched by a corresponding increase in apartment supply, we are likely to see gradual rent increases in the coming years.

**Q:** Kuwait is witnessing an unprecedented real estate legislative boom. What do you think will be the impact of this on the real estate market?

**A:** Kuwait has indeed entered a significant phase of legislative reform in the real estate sector. This can be described as a restructuring of the legal foundation of the market.

One example is the Real Estate Developer Law, which was introduced to deal with long-standing issues such as project delays and poor construction quality, problems that left many citizens vulnerable in the past. This law is designed to protect all parties involved, expedite development processes, and encourage more investment into the sector. However, the success of this law hinges on the clarity of its executive regulations, consistent on-site oversight during construction phases, and the availability of real financial and technical guarantees from developers.

**Q:** What about the Vacant Land Monopoly Law?

**A:** This law is a vital step toward preventing land from being frozen and used merely as a speculative tool, rather than serving its intended purpose for development. However, attempts to circumvent the law through unplanned or superficial construction to avoid fines undermine its effectiveness. This highlights the need for comprehensive oversight and strict enforcement of penalties, which the relevant authorities are currently working on.

**Q:** What is your reading of real estate transactions in 2025 and your expectations for 2026?

**A:** While real estate transactions in 2025 appear relatively stable on the surface, a closer look reveals that investment and commercial properties are benefiting from residential and commercial activity, while residential properties remain relatively stagnant due to rising prices and land scarcity. If legislative reforms continue, along with infrastructure improvements and the rollout of new housing projects, 2026 may mark the beginning of a more balanced and sustainable real estate market.

**Q:** What role has the Kuwaiti Real Estate Appraisers Association played since its establishment?

**A:** The establishment of the Kuwaiti Real Estate Appraisers Association in 2023 came at a crucial time, as the market was in urgent need of regulating the profession and raising its standards.

Previously, valuation practices relied heavily on individual discretion, with no unified framework to ensure consistency and reliability across reports.

The association aims to promote the adoption of International Valuation Standards (IVS) locally, qualify and train national professionals in the latest analytical methods and models, and embed integrity and transparency as fundamental principles in the valuation profession.

**Q:** Is the association working with any regulatory or legislative bodies?

**A:** Yes, there is active coordination with legislative and regulatory bodies to develop legal frameworks that govern valuation practices.

**Q:** What impact have these efforts had on the real estate sector?

**A:** These initiatives have helped build a more disciplined professional environment, which has been reflected in the improved quality of valuation outputs and greater market confidence in those valuations.

**Q:** What are the challenges facing real estate valuation in Kuwait?

**A:** Several challenges continue to hinder the accuracy and reliability of real estate valuation in Kuwait. They include:

■ Lack of a reliable central database, as without access to up-to-date and accurate data on transaction prices and market activity, valuations are often based on personal judgment. This opens the door to significant discrepancies in property values between appraisers.

■ Variations in experience and methodology, as some appraisers use modern methods such as advanced comparative analysis or discounted cash flow models, while others still rely on basic estimates or inaccurate comparisons, resulting in inconsistent outcomes.

■ Influence of personal interests, as in some cases, appraisers may face pressure to raise or lower property values to serve specific agendas. This undermines the credibility of the profession and can lead to inaccurate valuations, flawed financing decisions, price inflation, and substantial investment losses.

For these reasons, accurate and transparent valuation has become a strategic necessity, not only to protect capital, but also to stimulate investment and support sustainable economic growth.

Meanwhile, real estate trading liquidity rose by 54 percent (KD 76 million) in the second week of August, with 130 transactions valued at KD 139.8 million, compared to 133 transactions worth KD 63.8 million in the first week of the same month.

The weekly statistical report issued by the Real Estate Registration and Documentation Departments for the period from August 1 to 14 recorded a total of 263 transactions for private, investment, commercial, and coastal properties, with a combined value of KD 203.6 million.

Private real estate topped the list in terms of transaction volume over the two-week period, accounting for 70.7 percent of the total, with 186 transactions valued at KD 66 million, representing 25 percent of the total value.

Investment real estate ranked second, making up 47.5 percent of the total with 66 transactions valued at KD 65 million, representing 24.7 percent of the overall market value.

While commercial real estate recorded no transactions in the first week of August, it saw a significant surge during the second week, specifically from August 10 to 14, with 12 transactions totaling KD 70.4 million. This accounted for 27 percent of total real estate liquidity during the two-week period.

Coastal real estate recorded a single transaction in the second week, valued at KD 1.4 million.

In addition, there were no transactions involving craft properties, banks, warehouses, showrooms, or shops over the past two weeks.

# KPC eyes private sector expansion

Petrochemical growth opens doors

By Najeh Bilal  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) is targeting greater private sector participation in the petrochemical industry, building on its successful experiences in and outside Kuwait.

According to reliable sources, the approach of KPC for the coming period is based on several axes aimed at diversifying its income from the petrochemical sector.

Sources revealed that KPC intends to provide more local and international petrochemical opportunities for the private sector, in line with its broader sectoral strategy. Sources said this move responds to the growing domestic demand for petrochemical materials driven by Kuwait's rising population, while supporting the export of petrochemical products abroad—an additional source of profit for the corporation.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the latest report of KPC, stating that the Petrochemical Industries Company (PIC) is pursuing expansion consistent with its vision of becoming a leading global petrochemical company. This vision is being advanced through the commitment of PIC to add value to national resources and its efforts to seize promising investment opportunities that enhance its global presence. The company is planning new expansions to create more opportunities for partnerships with the private sector, thereby, boosting its share in international markets.

Fund's 2024/25 accounts approved

## KFAED addresses housing solutions with transfers exceeding KWD578m

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) announced that the total amount transferred to the Public Authority for Housing Welfare has exceeded KWD578 million, following the approval of the Fund's final accounts for the fiscal year 2024/2025.

This support, which began in 2003, involves the annual transfer of up to 25% of the Fund's net profits to the Authority. These contributions have enabled the Authority to enhance its financial resources and advance the implementation of major housing projects. The impact has been directly reflected in the acceleration of housing unit allocations, increased capacity to process applications, and the launch of new residential cities that help reduce waiting periods for eligible citizens.

In parallel, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development has also worked to strengthen the resources of the Kuwait Credit Bank. This includes the purchase



of KWD500 million in bonds in 2002, extended until 2042, and a KWD300 million capital support grant in 2022 to address resource shortages. These efforts have brought the Fund's total contribution to the Bank to approximately KWD800 million, representing nearly 40% of the Fund's capital.

This ongoing support — totaling more than KWD1.37 billion — reflects the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development's strategic commitment to advancing housing solutions in Kuwait and contributing to the social and economic stability of Kuwaiti families.



# Immigrants seeking lawful work, citizenship now subject to ‘anti-Americanism’ screening

WASHINGTON, Aug 20, (AP): Immigrants seeking a legal pathway to live and work in the United States will now be subject to screening for “anti-Americanism,” authorities said Tuesday, raising concerns among critics that it gives officers too much leeway in rejecting foreigners based on a subjective judgment.

US Citizenship and Immigration Services said officers will now consider whether an applicant for benefits, such as a green card, “endorsed, promoted, supported, or otherwise espoused” anti-American, terrorist or antisemitic views.

“America’s benefits should not be given to those who despise the country and promote anti-American ideologies,” Matthew Tragesser, USCIS spokesman, said in a statement. “Immigration benefits-including to live and work in the United States-remain a privilege, not a right.”

It isn’t specified what constitutes anti-Americanism and it isn’t clear how and when the directive would be applied.

“The message is that the US and immigration agencies are going to be less tolerant of anti-Americanism or antisemitism when making immigration decisions,” Elizabeth Jacobs, director of regulatory affairs and policy at the Center for Immigration Studies, a group that advocates for immigration restrictions, said on Tuesday.

Jacobs said the government is being

A woman clutches a US flag as she and applicants from other countries prepare to take the oath of citizenship in commemoration of Independence Day during a Naturalization Ceremony in San Antonio on July 3. (AP)

more explicit in the kind of behaviors and practices officers should consider, but emphasized that discretion is still in place. “The agency cannot tell officers that they have to deny - just to consider it as a negative discretion,” she said.

Critics worry the policy update will allow for more subjective views of what is considered anti-American and allow an officer’s personal bias to cloud his or her judgment.

“For me, the really big story is they are opening the door for stereotypes and prejudice and implicit bias to take



A woman clutches a US flag as she and applicants from other countries prepare to take the oath of citizenship in commemoration of Independence Day during a Naturalization Ceremony in San Antonio on July 3. (AP)

the wheel in these decisions. That’s really worrisome,” said Jane Lilly Lopez, associate professor of sociology at Brigham Young University.

The policy changes follow others recently implemented since the start of the Trump administration including social media vetting and the most recent addition of assessing applicants seeking naturalization for ‘good moral character’. That will not only consider “not simply the absence of misconduct” but also factor the applicant’s positive attributes and contributions.

# WH revokes security clearances of 37 current and former government officials

WASHINGTON, Aug 20, (AP): The Trump administration said Tuesday that it was revoking the security clearances of 37 current and former national security officials in the latest act of retribution targeting public servants from the federal government’s intelligence community.

A memo from Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard accuses the singled-out individuals of having engaged in the “politicization or weaponization of intelligence” to advance personal or partisan goals, failing to safeguard classified information, failing to “adhere to professional analytic tradecraft standards” and other unspecified “detrimental” conduct.

The memo did not offer evidence to back up the accusations.

Many of the officials who were targeted left the government years ago after serving in both senior national security positions and lower-profile roles far from the public eye. Some worked on matters that have long infuriated Trump, like the intelligence community assessment that Russia interfered in the 2016 presidential election on his behalf. And several signaled their concerns about Trump by signing a critical letter in 2019 that was highlighted on social media last month by right-wing provocateur and close Trump ally Laura Loomer.

The action is part of a broader

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt speaks with reporters in the James Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House on Aug 19, in Washington. (AP)

Trump administration campaign to wield the levers of government against perceived adversaries, and reflects the president’s continued distrust of career intelligence officials he has long seen as working against his interests. The revocation of clearances has emerged as a go-to tactic for the administration, a strategy critics say risks chilling dissenting voices from an intelligence community accustomed to drawing on a range of viewpoints before formulating an assessment.

“These are unlawful and uncon-



White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt speaks with reporters in the James Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House on Aug 19, in Washington. (AP)

stitutional decisions that deviate from well-settled, decades-old laws and policies that sought to protect against just this type of action,” Mark Zaid, a national security lawyer whose own clearance was revoked by the Trump administration, said in a statement.

He called it hypocritical for the administration to “claim these individuals politicized or weaponized intelligence.”

Gabbard on Tuesday sought to defend the move, which she said had been directed by Trump.

‘We are entitled to five more seats’

# Trump moves to use levers of presidential power to help party in ’26 midterm elections

WASHINGTON, Aug 20, (AP): US President Donald Trump has made clear in recent weeks that he’s willing to use the vast powers of his office to prevent his party from losing control of Congress in next year’s midterm elections.

Some of the steps Trump has taken to intervene in the election are typical, but controversial, political maneuvers taken to his trademark extremes. That includes pushing Republican lawmakers in Texas and other conservative-controlled states to redraw their legislative maps to expand the number of US House seats favorable to the GOP.

Others involve the direct use of official presidential power in ways that have no modern precedent, such as ordering his Department of Justice to investigate the main liberal fundraising entity, ActBlue. The department also is demanding the detailed voter files from each state in an apparent attempt to look for ineligible voters on a vast scale.

And on Monday, Trump posted a falsehood-filled rant on social media pledging to lead a “movement” to outlaw voting machines and mail balloting, the latter of which has become a mainstay of Democratic voting since Trump pushed Republicans to avoid it in 2020 - before flipping on the issue ahead of last year’s presidential election.

The individual actions add up to an unprecedented attempt by a sitting president to interfere in a critical election before it’s even held, moves that have raised alarms among those concerned about the future of US democracy.

“Those are actions that you don’t see in healthy democracies,” said Ian Bassin, executive director of Protect Democracy, a nonpartisan organization that has sued the Trump administration. “Those are actions you see in authoritarian states.”

Bassin noted that presidents routinely stump for their party in midterm elections and try to bolster incumbents by steering projects and support to their districts. But he said Trump’s history is part of what’s driving alarm about the midterms.

He referenced Trump’s attempts to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election, which ended with a violent assault on the Capitol by his supporters.

“The one thing we know for certain from experience in 2020 is that this is a person who will use every measure and try every tactic to stay in power, regardless of the outcome of an election,” Bassin said.

He noted that in 2020, Trump was checked by elected Republicans in Congress and statehouses who refused to bend the rules, along with members of his own administration and even military leaders who distanced themselves from the



US President Donald Trump waits to greet Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at the White House on Aug 18 in Washington. (AP)

defeated incumbent. In his second term, the president has locked down near-total loyalty from the GOP and stacked the administration with loyalists.

The incumbent president’s party normally loses seats in Congress during midterm elections. That’s what happened to Trump in 2018, when Democrats won enough seats to take back the House of Representatives, stymieing the president’s agenda and eventually leading to his two impeachments.

Trump has said he doesn’t want a repeat.

He also has argued that his actions are actually attempts to preserve democracy. Repeating baseless allegations of fraud, he said Monday during a meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that “you can never have a real democracy with mail-in ballots.” Earlier this month, Trump said that, because he handily

won Texas in the 2024 presidential election, “we are entitled to five more seats.”

Republicans currently have a three-seat margin in the House of Representatives. Trump pushed Texas Republicans to redraw their congressional map to create up to five new winnable GOP seats and is lobbying other red states, including Indiana and Missouri, to take similar steps to pad the margin even more.

The Texas Legislature is likely to vote on its map on Wednesday. There’s no guarantee that Trump’s gambit will work, but also no legal prohibition against fiddling with maps in those states for partisan advantage. In response, California Democrats are moving forward with their own redistricting effort as a way to counter Republicans in Texas.

Mid-decade map adjustments have happened before, though usually in response to court orders rather than presidents openly hoping to manufacture more seats for their party. Larry Diamond, a political scientist at Stanford University, said there’s a chance the redrawing of House districts won’t succeed as Trump anticipates - but could end up motivating Democratic voters.

Still, Diamond said he’s concerned. “It’s the overall pattern that’s alarming and that the reason to do this is for pure partisan advantage,” he said of Trump’s tactic.

Diamond noted that in 2019 he wrote a book about a “12-step” process to turn a democracy into an autocracy, and “the last step in the process is to rig the electoral process.”

Trump has required loyalty from all levels of his administration and demanded that the Department of Justice follow his directives. One of those was to probe ActBlue, an online portal that raised hundreds of millions of dollars in small-dollar donations for Democratic candidates over two decades.

The site was so successful that Republicans launched a similar venture, called WinRed. Trump, notably, did not order a federal probe into WinRed.

Trump’s appointees at the Department of Justice also have demanded voting data from at least 19 states, as Trump continues to insist he actually won the 2020 election and proposed a special prosecutor to investigate that year’s vote tally. Much as he did before winning the 2024 election, Trump has baselessly implied that Democrats may rig upcoming vote counts against him.

In at least two of those states, California and Minnesota, the DOJ followed up with election officials last week, threatening legal action if they didn’t hand over their voter registration lists by this Thursday, according to letters shared with The Associated Press. Neither state - both controlled by Democrats - has responded publicly.

# NATO defense chiefs hold virtual meet on security guarantees for Ukraine

BRUSSELS, Aug 20, (AP): NATO defense chiefs were due to hold a virtual meeting Wednesday, a senior alliance official said, as countries pushing for an end to Russia’s war on Ukraine devise possible future security guarantees for Kyiv that could help forge a peace agreement.

Italian Admiral Giuseppe Cavo Dragone, chair of NATO’s Military Committee, said that 32 defense chiefs from across the alliance would hold a video conference as a U.S.-led diplomatic push seeks to end the fighting.

US Gen Alexis Grynkewich, NATO’s supreme allied commander Europe, will take part in the talks, Dragone said on social platform X.

US President Donald Trump met last Friday with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Alaska and on Monday hosted Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and prominent European leaders at the White House. Neither meeting delivered concrete progress.

Trump is trying to steer Putin and Zelenskyy toward a settlement more than three years after Russia invaded its neighbor, but there are major obstacles. They include Ukraine’s demands for Western-backed military assurances to ensure Russia won’t mount another invasion in coming years.

“We need strong security guarantees to ensure a truly secure and lasting peace,” Zelenskyy said in a Telegram post Wednesday after Russian missile and drone strikes hit six regions of Ukraine overnight.

Kyiv’s European allies are looking to set up a force that could backstop any peace agreement, and a coalition



In this photo provided by Ukraine’s 65th Mechanized Brigade press service, recruits practice military skills on a training ground on a sunflower field in the Zaporizhzhia region, Ukraine on Aug 11. (AP)

of 30 countries, including European nations, Japan and Australia, have signed up to support the initiative.

Military chiefs are figuring out how that security force might work. The role that the US might play in is unclear. Trump on Tuesday ruled out sending U.S. troops to help defend Ukraine against Russia.

## America

**Brand new veterinary hospital explodes:** A brand new veterinary hospital exploded Tuesday morning in North Carolina after a car crashed into a nearby gas meter, authorities said.

About 20 minutes before the explosion in Wilmington, a car had run off the road and hit the gas lines that feed into the Eastern Carolina Veterinary Medical Center, which was still under construction, Wilmington Police Department spokesperson **Greg Willett** said at a news conference. The crash was a hit and run, as the driver had fled the scene in their vehicle before police arrived, he said.

The building had been quickly evacuated, and while firefighters were searching the building to make sure everyone got out, it exploded, said Wilmington Fire Department spokesperson Rebekah Thurston at the news conference. Three firefighters were injured and subsequently hospitalized - two with non-life-threatening injuries and another with severe burns to their hands and arms, Thurston said.

No veterinary staff, construction crew members or pets were harmed in the explosion, Eastern Carolina Veterinary Referral said in a Facebook post.

Police found the vehicle and the driver, who was taken into custody, authorities said. The driver was under evaluation by the North Carolina Highway Patrol after showing signs of impairment, Willett said.

The area and surrounding roads would remain closed until the fire department concludes its investigation of the explosion, officials said.



Willett

Eastern Carolina Veterinary Referral had expected to open its new building in September, according to its website. The medical center planned to offer 24/7 emergency care for pets. (AP)

**Erin churns up dangerous waves:** Hurricane Erin churned slowly toward the eastern US on Tuesday, stirring up treacherous waves that already have led to dozens of water rescues and shut down beaches along the coast in the midst of summer’s last hurrah.

While forecasters remain confident the center of the monster storm will remain far offshore, the outer edges are likely to bring damaging tropical-force winds, large swells and life-threatening rip currents into Friday.

Warnings about rip currents have been posted from Florida to the New England coast, and the biggest swells along the East Coast are expected over the coming two days. Rough ocean conditions already have been seen along the coast - at least 60 swimmers were rescued from rip currents Monday at Wrightsville Beach, near Wilmington, North Carolina.

New York City closed its beaches to swimming on Wednesday and Thursday, and New York Gov. Kathy Hochul ordered three state beaches on Long Island to prohibit swimming through Thursday. Several New Jersey beaches also will be off-limits.

“Enjoy the shore, enjoy this beautiful weather but stay out of the water,” New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy said Tuesday.

Off Massachusetts, Nantucket Island could see waves of more than 10 feet (3 meters) later this week. But the biggest threat is along the barrier islands of North Carolina’s Outer Banks where evacuations have been ordered.

Erin has become an unusually large and deceptively worrisome storm, with its tropical storm winds stretching 230 miles (370 kilometers) from its core. Forecasters expect it will grow larger in size as it moves through the Atlantic and curls north. (AP)

# UN salutes aid workers on World Humanitarian Day

UNITED NATIONS, Aug 20, (Xinhua): UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Tuesday that relief workers, themselves increasingly suffering attacks, are the last lifeline for more than 300 million people caught in conflict or disaster worldwide.

“Last year, at least 390 aid workers - a record high - were killed across the world. From Gaza to Sudan to Myanmar and beyond,” he said. “International law is clear: humanitarians must be respected and protected. They can never be targeted.”

In a video message marking World Humanitarian Day, Guterres said that while the rule is non-negotiable and is binding on all parties to conflict, always and everywhere, red lines are crossed with impunity.

“The rules and tools exist,” the UN chief said. “What is missing is political will and moral courage.”

“An attack on humanitarians is an attack on humanity,” he said.

Guterres’ spokesman Stephane Dujarric said that Aug. 19 has been marked as World Humanitarian Day since 2009 because it is also the day back on Aug 19, 2003 when 22 UN aid



Secretary-General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres delivers a speech during the opening ceremony for The Ninth Tokyo International Conference on Africa Development (TICAD) in Yokohama, Japan on Aug 20. (AP)

workers were murdered by terrorists who attacked the UN headquarters at the Canal Hotel in Baghdad.

Earlier on Tuesday, UN Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support Atul Khare, accompanied by survivors

of the bombing, led a remembrance ceremony at the UN headquarters in New York on behalf of the secretary-general, who is visiting Japan.

UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Tom Fletcher, echoing Guterres, said “even one attack against a humanitarian colleague is an attack on all of us and on the people we serve. Attacks on this scale, with zero accountability, are a shameful indictment of international inaction and apathy.”

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that most of the aid workers killed were national staff serving their communities, attacked in the line of duty or in their homes. In Gaza, 181 humanitarian workers were killed in 2024, the most in the world, while in Sudan, over 60 others lost their lives.

OCHA said that in Gaza, 520 aid workers, mostly staff from the UN Relief Agency for Palestine Refugees, known as UNRWA, have been killed since the start of the conflict in October 2023, making it the deadliest place for humanitarians.

## Europe

**Unidentified flying object crashed in Poland:** An unidentified flying object crashed into a cornfield and exploded in eastern Poland early Wednesday, the country’s news agency PAP reported.

Local police said they received reports of the crash around 2 a.m. and found burned metal and plastic debris at the scene, near the village of Osiny. As a result of the explosion, windows were broken in some houses but nobody was injured, PAP reported.

Poland’s Armed Forces Operational Command said Wednesday on social media that no violations of Polish airspace from neighboring Ukraine or Belarus were recorded overnight.

Officials initially said the explosion may have been caused by a part of an old engine with a propeller.

Defense Minister **Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz** later said the object was most likely a drone, adding that an analysis was underway to determine whether it was a military or smuggling one, PAP reported.

Lublin District Prosecutor Grzegorz Trusiewicz told re-



Kosiniak-Kamysz

porters several investigators - both civilian and military - were examining the crash site.

“We have a lot of manpower, we have the army to help us. I hope that we will be able to finish the operation by the evening,” Trusiewicz said.

Since Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine more than three years ago, there have been a number of intrusions into Polish airspace, raising alarm in the European Union and NATO member state and reminding people how close the war is. (AP)

**Suspect in car-ramming attack charged:** The suspect in a deadly car-ramming attack on a Christmas market in the German city of Magdeburg has been charged with murder, attempted murder and bodily harm, prosecutors said Tuesday, claiming he was trying to kill as many people as possible.

Five women and a boy died, and many more people were wounded, in the Dec. 20 attack that lasted just over a minute.

Authorities have identified the suspect as a 50-year-old Saudi doctor who arrived in Germany in 2006 and had received permanent residency. They haven’t officially released his name, in keeping with German privacy rules.

In an indictment filed to the state court in Magdeburg, prosecutors say he is charged with six counts of murder, 338 counts of attempted murder and 309 counts of bodily harm. He is also accused of dangerous interference with road traffic. (AP)



‘A shift in Pyongyang’s approach to its rival’

## Kim Jong Un’s sister says North Korea will never see South Korea as diplomatic partner

SEOUL, South Korea, Aug 20, (AP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un’s powerful sister yet again taunted South Korean efforts to improve ties, state media reported Wednesday, saying that her country will never accept Seoul as a diplomatic partner.

Kim Yo Jong’s remarks fit a longstanding pattern of aggressive language during ongoing South Korea-US military drills, which the North has long denounced as invasion rehearsals, but also reflect a shift in Pyongyang’s approach to its rival.

Her brother has shifted his focus to Moscow, and last year declared that North Korea was abandoning long-standing goals of a peaceful unification with South Korea. He ordered the constitution rewritten to declare the South a permanent enemy.

Since the collapse of a 2019 summit with US President Donald Trump during his first term, Kim Jong Un doubled down on his nuclear ambitions while embracing the idea of a “new Cold War.”

In Seoul, former president Yoon Suk Yeol, after taking office in 2022, responded by expanding military drills with Washington and Tokyo and seeking stronger assurances of US nuclear deterrence.

But South Korea’s new liberal President Lee Jae Myung, who replaced Yoon after he was removed from office in disgrace, has pushed to revive dialogue between the Koreans since taking office in June. He’s extended olive branches like ending cross-border propaganda broadcasts that irritate Pyongyang.

Lee said in a speech Friday that said his government respects North Korea’s current system and “will not pursue any form of unification by absorption and has no intention of engaging in hostile acts.”

But Kim Yo Jong claimed Seoul’s peace gestures conceal a “sinister intention” to blame Pyongyang for strained relations. She said the “reckless” South Korea-US military drills as a proof of Seoul’s hostility, state media said Wednesday.

Kim told Foreign Ministry officials during a Tuesday meeting that reconciliation with the South would never happen, and urged them to pursue “proper countermeasures” against Seoul, which she labeled the “most hostile state” and a “faithful dog” of the US.

Once regarded by the North as a useful go-between for extracting conces-



In this photo provided by the North Korean government, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, (center right), inspects the warship Choe Hyon in Nampo, North Korea on Aug 18. (AP)

sions from Washington, South Korea is now viewed in Pyongyang as a regional obstacle to its attempts to carve out a larger role in world affairs.

In response to Kim Yo Jong’s latest comments, South Korea’s Unification Ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs, said Lee’s government will continue to take “proactive steps for peace” and called for mutual respect between the countries.

Kim Dong-yub, a professor at South Korea’s University of North Korean Studies, said Kim Yo Jong’s latest remarks were a response to Lee’s speech, “essentially bolting the door shut.”

On Monday, Kim Jong Un also criticized the South Korean-US military drills and vowed a rapid expansion of his nuclear forces as he inspected his most advanced warship being fitted with nuclear-capable systems.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine created an opportunity to draw closer to Moscow, which he has supplied with thousands of troops and large supplies of military equipment.

With its alignment with Russia deepening, North Korea has also become more vocal in international affairs beyond the Korean Peninsula, issuing statements on conflicts in the Middle East and issues related to the Taiwan Strait.

During Tuesday’s foreign policy meeting, Kim Yo Jong implied that Pyongyang seeks to compete with Seoul diplomatically, claiming the South “will not even have a subordinate role in the regional diplomatic arena,” which she insisted will be centered on the North.

### Also:

**TAIPEI, Taiwan:** The son of a former Taiwanese legislator has been sentenced to more than two years in prison for a scheme that illegally supplied thousands of tons of fuel oil to North Korea.

Huang Chung-wei was sentenced to 28 months in prison by the district court in the southern port city of Kaohsiung on Tuesday. Five others also received prison terms.

They were convicted of taking part in loading the fuel onto ships in Taiwan and making the transfers in collaboration with Kwek Kee Seng, a Singaporean businessman wanted by the U.S. whose whereabouts were unknown.

Such activity is a violation of Taiwan’s Counter-Terrorism Financing Act and other statutes, the court said.

Illegal transfers at sea are one of the few ways North Korea, an authoritarian dictatorship considered one of the world’s biggest violators of human rights, can obtain fuel because of strict United Nations sanctions against its nuclear weapons and missile programs.

The case against Huang dates back to 2019, when he and Kwek allegedly purchased a fleet of tankers, loaded them with fuel and sent them to make the transfers.

North Korea is known to operate a “shadow fleet” of ships operating without active electronic identification equipment. However, US intelligence agencies were able to track the transfers by satellite and provided the information to Kaohsiung investigators, the court said.

### Asia

**Heavy rainfall prompts flood warning in NSW:** Millions of residents of the Australian state of New South Wales (NSW) were on Wednesday told to prepare for possible flooding as a severe wet weather system hits the country’s east coast.

Authorities in NSW on Wednesday issued heavy rainfall warnings for communities along almost 1,000 km of the state’s coastline, including Sydney.

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) said that the significant rain event driven by three separate weather systems was expected to bring isolated rainfall totals of up to 75 millimeters on Wednesday night, followed by up to 120 millimeters on Thursday and another 60 millimeters on Friday.

Speaking at a press conference on Wednesday afternoon, NSW State Emergency Service Deputy Commissioner **Debbie Platz** said that some communities that have been hit by heavy rainfall in recent months could experience flooding overnight.

She said that water from previous severe rainfall events made flooding more likely and warned residents that complacency is a risk.

“This year we have seen significant weather events, significant flooding and a lot of damage. We know the community is tired and volunteers are tired,” Platz said.

Regions north of Sydney experienced record-breaking flooding in May that caused five deaths.

Steve Bernasconi, a hazard preparedness manager at the BoM, said on Wednesday that the current event was not expected to bring enough rain to prompt a severe weather warning, but that it could cause isolated major flooding due to some water catchments already being at capacity. (Xinhua)



Platz

**3 dead, 1 missing in SW China landslide:** Three people were found dead and one remains missing after a rain-triggered landslide struck a village in Pu’er City of southwest China’s Yunnan Province in the early morning on Wednesday, according to local authorities.

The landslide hit the village in Mohei Township, Ning’er County of Pu’er at around 5:40 a.m. Wednesday. It left a total of four people unaccounted for, of whom three were found dead and one remains missing as of 10 a.m. One trapped individual has been rescued and taken to the hospital.

A total of 58 villagers from 23 households in the village have been relocated to safer sites. All-out search and rescue efforts are underway. (Xinhua)

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**Man shot dead on western Sydney street:** A man has died after being shot in the chest in western Sydney on Tuesday night.

Emergency services were called to reports of a shooting on a street in Winston Hills, 23 km northwest of central Sydney, at around 7 p.m. on Tuesday.

A police statement on Wednesday said that officers arrived and were told that a 22-year-old man had been shot in the chest while in a car.

He was treated at the scene by ambulance paramedics before being taken to hospital where he later died.

Police were told that the victim attempted to seek aid from nearby homes after being shot, but became unresponsive before emergency services arrived.

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported that police are treating the shooting as a targeted attack. (Xinhua)

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**1 dead in Vietnam auto repair garage fire:** A fire broke out at an auto repair garage in northern Vietnam’s Ninh Binh province early Wednesday, killing one person and destroying several cars, Vietnam News Agency reported.

The blaze occurred at around 1:40 a.m. local time and was brought under control about an hour later, according to the report.

The cause of the incident is under investigation. (Xinhua)

### ‘Countries entered steady development track’

## Modi meets China’s Foreign Minister Wang

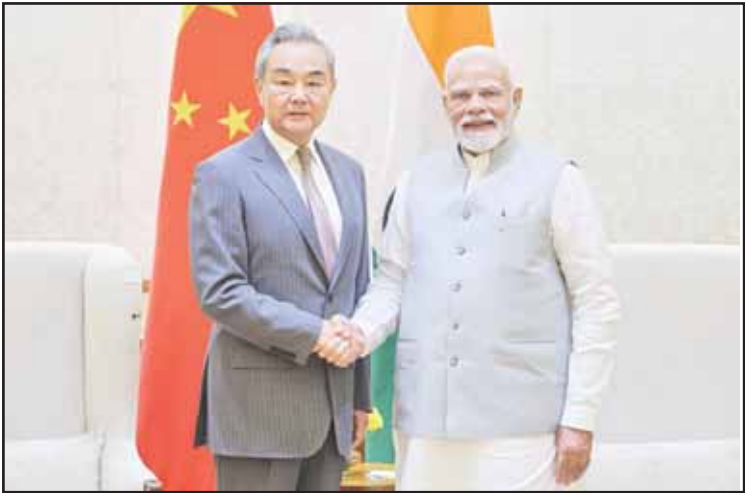
NEW DELHI, Aug 20, (AP): Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi met China’s top diplomat on Tuesday and hailed the “steady progress” made in improving the bilateral relationship after a yearslong standoff between the nuclear-armed Asian powers.

Modi also noted “respect for each other’s interests and sensitiveness” in a statement on social media after meeting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. China’s foreign ministry said the countries have entered a “steady development track” and the countries should “trust and support” each other.

Wang arrived in India on Monday and has met with Foreign Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar as well as National Security Adviser Ajit Doval about the countries’ disputed border in the Himalayan mountains. India’s foreign ministry said Wang’s meeting with Doval discussed “deescalation, delimitation and boundary affairs.”

Relations plummeted in 2020 after security forces clashed along the border. The violence, the worst in decades, left 20 Indian soldiers and four Chinese soldiers dead, freezing high-level political engagements.

“The setbacks we experienced in the past few years were not in the interest of the people of our two countries. We are heartened to see the stability that is now restored in the borders,” Wang



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, right, shakes hand with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, left, in New Delhi, India on Aug 19. (AP)

said Monday.

Modi emphasized the importance of maintaining peace and tranquility on the border and reiterated India’s commitment to a “fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable resolution of the boundary question,” his office said in a statement.

The rebuilding of India-China ties coincides with friction between New Delhi and Washington after US President Donald Trump imposed steep tar-

iffs on India, a longtime ally seen as a counterbalance against China’s influence in Asia. India is part of the Quad security alliance with the U.S., along with Australia and Japan.

The chill in relations after the deadly clash in 2020 between troops in the Ladakh region affected trade, diplomacy and air travel, as both sides deployed tens of thousands of security forces in border areas.

## Colombia court frees Uribe from house arrest until it rules on bribery case

BOGOTA, Colombia, Aug 20, (AP): A Colombian appeals court ruled on Tuesday that the country’s former president, Alvaro Uribe, must be released from house arrest while he challenges his conviction for bribery and witness tampering.

The conservative leader was sentenced on Aug. 1 to 12 years of house arrest for threatening and trying to flip witnesses who had spoken to investigators about his alleged role in the formation of a right-wing paramilitary group in the 1990s.

Uribe denies the charges and has appealed the conviction to the Superior Tribunal in Bogota, the country’s capital. The court has until mid-October to issue a definitive ruling on the case, which has gripped Colombia and also provoked reactions from Uribe’s allies in the United States.

The Superior Tribunal said Tuesday it approved an injunction filed by Uribe’s defense team seeking his release from house arrest. Uribe’s lawyers argued his right to due process was violated by the arrest order against



Colombia’s former president Alvaro Uribe leaves court after a hearing in his trial over witness tampering and bribery charges in Bogota, Colombia on Feb 10. (AP)

him, as well as his right to a presumption of innocence.

The former president, who governed from 2002 to 2010 with strong support

from the US, is a polarizing figure in Colombia, where many credit him for saving the country from becoming a failed state, while others associate him with human rights violations and the rise of paramilitary groups in the 1990s.

During Uribe’s term, Colombia’s military obtained crucial victories against the FARC rebels, which later forced the group into peace negotiations and turned Uribe into an icon of Latin America’s conservative movement.

But thousands of young people were also killed by the military and passed off as rebels by soldiers seeking promotions, as officers were pushed to augment their kill rates.

The case against Uribe dates back to 2012, when he filed a libel suit against Ivan Cepeda, a left-wing legislator who had gathered statements from former members of paramilitary groups accusing Uribe of being one of the founders of Bloque Metro, a paramilitary group that defended cattle ranchers from attacks by rebel groups.



Drivers push their vehicles through a flooded road after heavy rainfall in Karachi, Pakistan on Aug 19. (AP)

### Pakistan issues flood alert for southern districts

Pakistan issued a flood alert Wednesday for some southern districts, warning of torrential rains, as rescue teams continued searching for missing people in the country’s northwest, where severe floods killed hundreds over the past week.

The new warning is for the same southern regions struck by climate-induced catastrophic deluges in 2022 that killed thousands of people.

The National Emergencies Operation Centre said expected rainfall of up to 100 millimeters (about 4 inches) over the next 24 hours could submerge highways, disrupt transport, and damage power and telecommunications networks in Karachi, Hyderabad, Thatta, Badin, Mirpurkhas, and Sukkur in the southern province of Sindh.

At least 41 people have been killed

in rain-related incidents nationwide over the past 24 hours, the disaster management agency said, mostly in the northern Gilgit-Baltistan region and in the city of Karachi, where torrential rains on Tuesday flooded streets and disrupted daily life. Schools in Karachi remain closed.

Pakistan has suffered above-normal monsoon rains, killing at least 746 people since June 26. (AP)

## No agreement with DEA for new border enforcement collaboration, says Mexico

MEXICO CITY, Aug 20, (AP): Mexico’s president denied on Tuesday that her administration had an agreement with the US Drug Enforcement Administration, a day after the US Agency announced “a major new initiative” to collaborate in the fight against drug cartels.

President Claudia Sheinbaum was referring to “Project Portero,” an effort announced Monday by the DEA, which called it a “flagship operation” against smuggling routes that move drugs, guns and money across the border.

“The DEA put out a statement yesterday saying that there is an agreement with the Mexican government for an operation called Portero,” Sheinbaum said during her morning news briefing.

### Also:

**IZAMAL, Mexico:** A tourist-focused Maya Train running along Mexico’s Yucatan Peninsula derailed Tuesday as it was slowly pulling into a station, the train line said in a statement. There were no injuries.

The train was running from the Caribbean resort of Cancun to the Yucatan



A Maya Train car, (center), sits derailed at a station in Izamal, Yucatan state, Mexico on Aug 19. (AP)

capital Merida when it left the tracks at the station in Izamal.

Passengers were transported the rest of the way by bus. The accident was under investigation but the train was

operating normally between other stations, the statement said.

Photos and videos circulated online showed one car off the tracks, leaning but not overturned.

## RSF fighters ambush Sudanese village, killing at least 7 people

CAIRO, Aug 20, (AP): A notorious paramilitary group ambushed a village in south-central Sudan, looting and burning several houses, a medical group said Wednesday. At least seven people, including two children, were killed, it said.

Tuesday’s attack by the Rapid Support Forces on the village of al-Ghabshan al-Maramrah, an agricultural community in North Kordofan province, also wounded 13 others, said the Sudan Doctors Network, a group of medical professionals tracking the Sudanese civil war.

The group said RSF fighters looted properties, burned several houses as well as the village’s sole health care center, and “stole the medical supplies stored there.”

The RSF did not respond to an Associated Press inquiry about the attack.

The attack on the Kordofan village came as the RSF attempted to seize control of the crucial, oil-rich region following a series of battlefield set-



Workers fix electricity cables, previously destroyed during fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), in Khartoum, Sudan on Aug 18. (AP)

backs earlier this year in its war with the Sudanese government. The military kicked the RSF out of major cities in the first half 2025, including Khartoum and its sister city of Omdurman.

### Bus crash kills 79 in Afghanistan

KABUL, Aug 20, (AP): A bus crash in northwestern Afghanistan killed at least 79 people returning from Iran, including 19 children, an official said.

Two people were also injured in the crash, Ministry of Interior spokesperson Abdul Mateen Qani told The Associated Press.

Tolo News, citing the official, said the accident happened Tuesday around 8:30 p.m. local time in Herat province. The bus collided with a truck and a motorbike, causing a massive fire that killed many on the spot, the outlet reported.

Traffic accidents are common in Afghanistan, mainly due to poor road conditions and driver carelessness.



## US dollar steady against dinar

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): The US dollar exchange rate held steady against the Kuwaiti dinar at KD 0.305 on Wednesday, according to the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK). The euro eased 0.19 percent to KD 0.355, while the British pound slipped 0.17 percent to KD 0.411. The Swiss franc edged down 0.11 percent to KD 0.377. Meanwhile, the Japanese yen remained unchanged at KD 0.002, the CBK's daily bulletin showed.

# Business

Next generation learns banking the Burgan way

## Burgan Bank hosts ‘Bring Your Kids to Work Day’ to celebrate family & people-centered workplace



Group photo of the Burgan Bank team with the children.



The Junior Banker of the day experience.



The Junior Banker of the day experience.



The Junior Banker of the day experience.



Group photo of the kids at the end of the day.

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: As part of its ongoing efforts to foster a positive, people-centered workplace, Burgan Bank hosted a special “Bring Your Kids to Work Day” – a first of its kind initiative for the Bank. The initiative welcomed employees’ children between the ages of 5 and 15 for a day filled with learning, creativity, and hands-on experiences that brought the world of banking to life.

More than just a fun-filled day, the event was a reflection of Burgan Bank’s dedication to employee wellbeing, family engagement, and sustainability – key pillars of its workplace culture and ESG strategy. Through immersive activities such as a simulated bank branch experience, interactive workshops on recycling, and business-minded challenges like product selling and presentation practice, young participants explored essential life skills in a playful, inspiring environment.

“At Burgan Bank, our workplace is not just about running the business, it’s about belonging,” said Nageeb Amin, General Manager – Human Resources and Development for the Group at Burgan Bank. “Welcoming our employees’ children into our corporate world is a powerful way to connect values across generations, spark curiosity, and show what purpose-driven banking looks like. This event falls within Burgan Bank’s ‘Teach Them Young’ campaign, which aims to broaden the professional and practical horizons of adolescents and youth, while fostering a conscious and responsible generation. It also aligns with the ‘Let’s Be Aware’ (Diraya) financial literacy and banking awareness initiative – launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), with the support of Kuwaiti banks – demonstrating our commitment to instilling a banking culture in young people from an early age and empowering the future generation.”

Highlights of the day included a “Junior Banker of the Day” experience, art and craft sessions, a cake design workshop, a treasure hunt across the Bank’s premises, and a mini-Olympics challenge to encourage teamwork. Children also learned the basics of entrepreneurship by selling the products they made and presenting their work, all under the guidance of the Bank’s dedicated team of employee volunteers aided by older children of Burgan employees.

This initiative reflects Burgan Bank’s deep-rooted commitment to enriching lives and fostering a people-centric culture. It aligns with the Bank’s long-term objective to be a trusted, innovative, and progressive institution – driven by its people and inspiring future generations through engaging, high value-driven and purposeful experiences. Grounded in Burgan Bank’s core values of trust, commitment, excellence, progression, and people-first thinking, the event also supports the Bank’s ESG objectives and reinforces its position as a certified Great Place to Work®. Additionally, it endorses the Bank’s dedication to fostering an inclusive, engaging, and sustainable workplace – one that places people and purpose at the heart of its ecosystem.

### About Burgan Bank

Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is a Kuwait-based conventional bank with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institution sectors. From its earliest days, the Bank has significantly sought to diversify its offering to cater to its growing retail and private banking customer base.

Burgan Bank has majority-owned subsidiaries, collectively known as the “Burgan Bank Group”, in the MENAT region. This Group is supported by one of the largest branch networks across the region and includes: Gulf Bank Algeria – AGB (Algeria), Tunis International Bank – TIB (Tunisia), Burgan Bank Turkey (Turkey) and United Gulf Bank

(Bahrain). Furthermore, Burgan Bank has a presence in the UAE through its corporate office, Burgan Financial Services Limited.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years, through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Moreover, Burgan Bank’s brand has been built on a foundation of real values – trust, commitment, excellence, and progression – which serve as a reminder of the high standards to which the Bank always aspires. In fact, the Bank’s core philosophy of ‘Driven by You’ is the foundation on which its products and services are continuously developed.

Burgan Bank has achieved the LEED v4.1 O+M: EB Gold Certification for its Head Office in Kuwait City. The Bank has also obtained the ISO/IEC 27001: 2022 Information Security Management Systems certificate (ISMS), ISO /IEC 27701:2019 Privacy Information Management Systems (PIMS), ISO/IEC 20000-1: 2018 Information Technology Service Management System (ITSMS) and was re-certified with the prestigious ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System (QMS), making it one of the few banks in the GCC and Kuwait to receive such certification for five consecutive times. At the same time, the Bank has the distinction of being the only Bank in Kuwait to have won the JP Morgan Chase Quality Recognition Award for twenty consecutive years. Moreover, in a testament to its dedication to the development of its human capital, Burgan Bank is the first bank in Kuwait to be certified as a Great Place to Work®, earning the distinct honor in 2023.

Burgan Bank is a majority-owned subsidiary of KIPCO (Kuwait Projects Company), one of the largest holding companies in the MENA region.

### Global benchmarks slip

## Kuwait crude rises to \$69.37 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): Kuwait crude oil gained 42 cents during Tuesday’s trading to reach USD 69.37 per barrel compared with USD 68.95 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Wednesday. Benchmark Brent futures dropped 81 cents to USD 65.79 pb and West Texas Intermediate lost USD 1.07 to USD 62.35 pb.

## Low-carbon methanol key to energy transition, says AEO

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): The Secretary General of the Arab Energy Organization (AEO) -- formerly OAPEEC -- Jamal Al-Loughani, stressed the importance of low-carbon methanol as a sustainable and effective solution to reduce carbon emissions and achieve climate neutrality, particularly in hard-to-abate sectors such as transport and heavy industry.

Speaking to KUNA on Tuesday, following the release of a new study about low-carbon methanol and its role in the energy transition, Al-Loughani said the study comes at a critical time as global energy systems undergo rapid shifts toward cleaner sources.

He noted that low-carbon methanol provides a strategic opportunity for Arab countries to diversify their energy mix, meet climate targets, and strengthen regional cooperation.

The study highlights production methods using green hydrogen from renewable-powered electrolysis and captured CO2 from industrial or biological sources.

According to the study, global investment in low-carbon methanol projects has exceeded USD 10 billion as of mid-2025, with the market expected to surpass 20 million tons annually by 2035, driven by growing demand in transport, fuel, and petrochemical sectors.

Al-Loughani pointed out that the shipping industry has already begun adopting methanol as an alternative fuel, with more than 200 methanol-powered vessels on order worldwide, and although production costs remain higher than conventional methanol, he said the gap is narrowing due to government support, technological advancements, and improved carbon pricing.

He emphasized that member states of the organization are well-positioned to develop this industry, given their abundant natural resources, renewable energy potential, and strategic geographic location within global supply chains.

The study concluded that low-carbon methanol is a promising strategic option, combining environmental efficiency, technical flexibility, and economic viability, making it a cornerstone in the transition toward a sustainable, low-emission energy economy.

### All Share Index slips 0.19%

## Boursa Kuwait ends Wednesday mixed

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Wednesday’s session on a mixed note, with the All Share Index edging down by 16.72 points, or 0.19 percent, to settle at 8,666.66 points. A total of 583.7 million shares were exchanged in 28,953 transactions, generating a turnover of KD 89.19 million (USD 272 million).

The Main Market Index advanced 11.37 points, or 0.15 percent, to end at 7,840.71 points, supported by strong activity, as 458 million shares changed hands through 18,763 deals worth KD 42.8 million (USD 130.5 million).

In contrast, the Premier Market Index slipped 24.56 points, or 0.26 percent, to close at 9,300.95 points. Trading volume reached 125.7 million shares across 10,190 transactions, with a value of KD 46.3 million (USD 141.2 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index inched up 7.44 points, or 0.09 percent, to finish at 7,956.92 points, as 258.5 million shares were traded in 10,987 cash transactions, amounting to KD 30.5 million (USD 93 million).

### Japan imports from Kuwait down

## Kuwait’s trade surplus with Japan shrinks 15.2%

TOKYO, Aug 20, (KUNA): Kuwait’s trade surplus with Japan narrowed 15.2 percent from a year earlier to JPY 49 billion (USD 311 million) in July, down for the sixth month in a row due to sluggish exports, government data showed on Wednesday.

However, Kuwait stayed in black ink with Japan for 17 years and six months, as exports still offset imports in value, the Finance Ministry said in a preliminary report.

Overall exports from Kuwait to Japan shrank 5.9 percent year-on-year to JPY 77.5 billion (USD 504 million) down for the sixth straight month.

Imports from Japan jumped 15.8 percent to JPY

28.5 billion (USD 180 million), marking the eighth consecutive monthly gain.

Middle East’s trade surplus with Japan also narrowed 25.1 percent to JPY 550.4 billion (USD 3.7 billion) last month, with Japan-bound exports from the region falling 18.1 percent from a year earlier in value.

Crude oil, refined products, liquefied natural gas (LNG) and other natural resources, which accounted for 93.3 percent of the region’s total exports to Japan, plummeted 19.0 percent.

The region’s whole imports from Japan also declined 3.2 percent on weak demand for manufactured goods and steel.

Japan’s global trade balance returned to deficit in July for the first time in two months at JPY 117.5 billion (USD 776 million), although the value declined 81.3 percent on the year.

Exports from the world’s third-largest economy dropped 2.6 percent the year before chiefly due to weak shipments of automobiles to the US amid higher tariffs.

Imports also slid 7.5 percent, as bills for pharmaceutical products, aircraft and engines went down. China remained Japan’s biggest trade partner, followed by the US. The trade data are measured on a customs-cleared basis before adjustment for seasonal factors.

### Al-Sudani hails Chevron’s role in Iraq’s oil sector

## Iraq, Chevron sign principles deal on Al-Nasiriah Project

BAGHDAD, Aug 20, (KUNA): The Iraqi Ministry of Oil hammered out on Tuesday a principles agreement with the US energy giant Chevron for the development of Al-Nasiriah Project which comprises four oil exploration blocks and the producing Balad oilfield.

In a press statement, the Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Al-Sudani’s office pointed out that the Prime Minister oversaw the signing ceremony of the agreement in Baghdad.

During a meeting with Chevron Vice President Frank Mount and the accompanying delegation on the sidelines of the ceremony, the Prime Minister Al-Sudani welcomed the Chevron’s renewed engagement in Iraq.

He affirmed that the government has adopted a new approach in dealing with

major international oil companies and their investments in Iraq, especially American ones.

Al-Sudani also praised the American company’s role in transferring oil technology to Iraq, its community contributions, and the sound environmental policies it pursues in its oil projects.

The Prime Minister reiterated that Iraq’s relationship with the United States is a strategic one, noting that the government has been working to attract companies to operate in Iraq while prioritizing the advancement of the oil sector whether in production, refining, associated gas and natural gas production, or the use of the latest technologies to develop this vital sector.



In recognition of its innovative solutions that anticipate customer needs & keep pace with rapid tech advances

NBK was honored with 3 new Global Finance Magazine Awards

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: In recognition of its leadership in the banking sector and its achievements in developing innovative digital solutions that meet customer needs and keep pace with rapid technological advancements, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) was honored with three prestigious awards at the 2025 Global Finance Magazine Awards for the World’s Best Consumer Digital Banks in Africa and the Middle East.

Global Finance awarded NBK the titles of Best Digital Payment Solutions and Best Online Product Offerings in Kuwait. Meanwhile, Weyay Bank, NBK’s innovative digital arm and Kuwait’s first fully digital bank, was also named Best Digital-Only Bank in Kuwait.

Innovative Payment Solutions

NBK’s recognition as the Best Online Payment Solutions in Kuwait for 2025 is a renewed testament to its leadership in delivering innovative, secure, and seamless digital payment experiences. This milestone underscores the Bank’s comprehensive digital transformation strategy, powered by a resilient and advanced technological infrastructure that drives the continuous evolution of next-generation payment solutions.

The Bank continues to expand its suite of payment services through the latest technologies, while enhancing its card offerings and products to cater to diverse customer segments, ultimately enriching their overall banking experience.

Raising the Bar in Digital Banking Offerings

NBK’s recognition as the winner of the Best Online Product Offerings Award in Kuwait for 2025 from



Global Finance underscores its leadership in creating innovative digital services and products that go beyond meeting customer needs. By delivering tailored solutions that seamlessly align with diverse lifestyles, NBK continues to elevate the banking experience and set new benchmarks in digital excellence.

The award also underscores the Bank’s commitment to leveraging technology in launching innovative products and services that deliver an exceptional banking experience for its customers.



NBK headquarters

Only Bank for 2025 by Global Finance recognizing its excellence in delivering an integrated and innovative digital banking experience.

Since its inception, Weyay Bank has strengthened its position as a pioneer in digital banking by delivering a comprehensive suite of services through its smart app, empowering customers to manage their finances with ease, efficiency, and flexibility. With simple and secure steps, and without the need to visit a branch, customers can enjoy a seamless digital experience that includes opening accounts, managing savings, making local and international transfers, accessing loans, and much more.

Award Selection Process

The winners of the Global Finance Awards for Best Consumer Digital Banks were selected through a rigorous evaluation process that assessed multiple dimensions of digital excellence. Key criteria included strength of strategy for attracting and servicing digital customers, success in getting clients to use digital offerings, growth of digital customers, breadth of product offerings, evidence of tangible benefits gained from digital initiatives, and web/mobile site design and functionality.

Winners were chosen from entries evaluated by a world-class panel of judges at Infosys, a global leader in consulting, technology, and outsourcing. The editors of Global Finance were responsible for the final selection of all winners.

Global Finance, headquartered in New York, was founded in 1987 and is one of the leading publications specializing in economic research and analysis. The magazine has a circulation of over 50,000, primarily reaching senior executives, corporate leaders, and financial decision-makers across 188 countries.

The magazine conducts several annual surveys evaluating the innovation and profitability of banks and financial institutions worldwide, through which it identifies and recognizes the leading performers at both regional and global levels.

For more information on the World’s Best Consumer Digital Banks Awards, please visit:  
Best Consumer Digital Banks Middle East and Africa 2025

Chemicals, tech drive growth

MENA M&A deals jump 31% in first half of 2025

KFH hosts ‘Fun with Weaving’ program for Baiti customers

CAIRO, Aug 20: According to the latest EY MENA M&A Insights report, the MENA region recorded 425 M&A deals in the first half of 2025, marking a 31% increase in deal volume and a 19% rise in total value to US\$58.7b compared with the same period in 2024.

This performance builds on the steady flow of transactions seen in 2024, with strong momentum in early 2025 supported by regulatory reforms, policy shifts, and an improving macroeconomic outlook. While activity moderated slightly in Q2 due to evolving global trade policies and regional conflicts, overall market sentiment remained positive, with deal-making driven by diversification strategies and growth in high-potential sectors.

**Brad Watson, MENA EY-Parthenon Leader, says:**

“The positive performance in the first half of 2025 underscores the strength, dynamism, and resilience of MENA’s M&A market. We are witnessing record-breaking cross-border activity as investors look beyond short-term volatility, actively pursuing scale, innovation, and new market opportunities. The United Arab Emirates (UAE), in particular, remains a magnet for global capital, supported by a stable regulatory framework and a focus on economic diversification, while regional partnerships with Europe, Asia, and North America are opening doors to fresh growth channels.”

In the MENA region, the UAE and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) received investments worth US\$25.4b and US\$2.5b, respectively, mainly in chemicals, technology, industrials and real estate – attracting a combined total of US\$27.9b in the first half of this year.

**Cross-border deals reach five-year high**

Cross-border transactions accounted for 55% of total deal volume and 78% of total deal value in H1 2025, with 233 deals worth US\$45.9b – the highest level in the past five years. Chemicals and technology together contributed 67% of cross-border deal value, led by major transactions such as Borealis AG and OMV AG’s acquisition of a 64% stake in Borouge plc for US\$16.5b. This reflects a 40% increase in deal volume and 7% rise in deal value when compared to H1 2024.

**Anil Menon, MENA EY-Parthenon Head of M&A and Equity Capital Markets Leader, says:**

“MENA’s deal making continues to thrive in 2025, reflecting investor confidence in the region’s long-term fundamentals. Stable oil prices, ongoing infrastructure development, and a strategic focus on technology, chemicals, and industrials are creating solid foundations for sustained activity. As the year progresses, we expect intensifying competition for high-quality assets, particularly those that align with national transformation agendas and offer strategic



Anil Menon, EY MENA Head of M&A and Equity Capital Markets Leader

- The UAE and KSA led MENA deal value, attracting a combined US\$27.9b in the first half of 2025
- Cross-border M&A reached a five-year high, accounting for 55% of total deal volume and 78% of total deal value
- Government-related entities and sovereign wealth funds contributed US\$21b in deal value across 54 transactions during H1 2025

value beyond financial returns.”

**Domestic and inbound activity remain strong**

During the first six months of the year, domestic transactions accounted for 45% of total deal volume and 22% of total value, with 192 deals worth US\$12.8b – a 22% increase in volume and a 94% rise in value year-on-year. Diversified industrial products and technology led domestic deal value, representing over half of the total. The largest domestic deal was Group 42’s US\$2.2b acquisition of a 40% stake in Khazna Data Center.

Inbound M&A activity rose 53% to 107 deals, with total value increasing from US\$6.4b to US\$21.5b in H1 2025. The UAE was the leading destination, capturing 50% of inbound deal volume and 98% of inbound value. Austria emerged as the top investor, contributing 77% of inbound deal value, driven by a landmark chemicals sector transaction.

**Outbound flows and sovereign-backed investments fuel growth**

Outbound activity reached 126 deals valued at US\$24.4b in H1 2025, up 30% in volume from the same period in 2024. The UAE and KSA together accounted for 87% of outbound value, supported by government-related entities playing a major role. Notable deals included ADNOC and OMV AG’s acquisition of Canada’s Nova Chemicals and Saudi Aramco’s US\$3.5b acquisition of Primax in South America.

Government-related entities and sovereign wealth funds contributed US\$21b in deal value across 54 transactions, with leading players such as ADIA, PIF, and Mubadala actively targeting chemicals, technology, and industrial sectors in line with long-term diversification goals.

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) organized a program, in cooperation with Sadu House, for Baiti account customers. Titled “Fun with Weaving”, the program aims to encourage children to protect the environment by working with fully recycled materials in line with Keep it Green initiative.

Fun with Weaving reflects KFH’s ongoing efforts to sponsor diverse cultural activities, aiming to preserve national heritage and reinforce the Bank’s commitment to social responsibility and sustainability.

The strategic partnership between KFH and Sadu House contributes to enhancing Sadu House’s educational and cultural endeavors, especially those initiatives focused on promoting traditional weaving as a pillar of Kuwaiti heritage. Through practical training, children are trained the traditional handicrafts, strengthening their connection to national identity, and introducing them to Kuwait’s unique textile heritage, most notably Sadu weaving.

Moreover, this program helps nurture their talents and stimulate creative thinking. It also instills in them an appreciation for tradition-



KFH’s Fun with Weaving program.

al arts, opening wider horizons for innovation and creativity through knowledge exchange and the development of their creative thinking skills.

The strategic partnership also highlights the environmental aspect, aligning with the concept of sustainability, a key component of the Bank’s strategy, vision, and mission.

Additionally, the Fun with



The strategic partnership with KFH’s Keep it Greencampaign by using recycled materials to convey to the children the significance of recycling and environment protection.

It is worth noting that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) included Sadu weaving on its List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, and AISadu Society as an advisory organizer at UNESCO.

The Conversation

Data centers consume massive amounts of water – companies rarely tell the public exactly how much

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

By Peyton McCauley  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

As demand for artificial intelligence technology boosts construction and proposed construction of data centers around the world, those computers require not just electricity and land, but also a significant amount of water. Data centers use water directly, with cooling water pumped through pipes in and around the computer equipment. They also use water indirectly, through the water required to produce the electricity to power the facility. The amount of water used to produce electricity increases dramatically when the source is fossil fuels compared with solar or wind.

A 2024 report from the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory estimated that in 2023, U.S. data centers consumed 17 billion gallons (64 billion liters) of water directly through cooling, and projects that by 2028, those figures could double - or even quadruple. The same report estimated that in 2023, U.S. data centers consumed an additional 211 billion gallons (800 billion liters) of water indirectly through the electricity that powers them. But that is just an estimate in a fast-changing industry.

We are researchers in water law and policy based on the shores of Lake Michigan. Technology companies are eyeing the Great Lakes region to host data centers, including one proposed for Port Washington, Wisconsin, which could be one of the largest in the country. The Great Lakes region offers a relatively cool climate and an abundance of water, making the region an attractive location for hot and thirsty data centers.

The Great Lakes are an important, binational resource that more than 40 million people depend on for their drinking water and supports a US\$6 trillion regional economy. Data centers compete with these existing uses and may deplete local groundwater aquifers.

Our analysis of public records, government documents and sustainability reports compiled by top data center companies has found that technology companies don’t always reveal how much water their data centers use. In a forthcoming Rutgers Computer and Technology Law Journal article, we walk through our methods and findings using these resources to uncover the water demands of data centers.

In general, corporate sustainability reports offered the most access and detail - including that in

2024, one data center in Iowa consumed 1 billion (3.8 billion liters) gallons of water - enough to supply all of Iowa’s residential water for five days.

The servers and routers in data centers work hard and generate a lot of heat. To cool them down, data centers use large amounts of water - in some cases over 25% of local community water supplies. In 2023, Google reported consuming over 6 billion gallons of water (nearly 23 billion liters) to cool all its data centers.

In some data centers, the water is used up in the cooling process. In an evaporative cooling system, pumps push cold water through pipes in the data center. The cold water absorbs the heat produced by the data center servers, turning into steam that is vented out of the facility. This system requires a constant supply of cold water.

In closed-loop cooling systems, the cooling process is similar, but rather than venting steam to the air, air-cooled chillers cool down the hot water. The cooled water is then recirculated to cool the facility again. This does not require constant addition of large volumes of water, but it uses a lot more energy to run the chillers. The actual numbers showing those differences, which likely vary by the facility, are not publicly available.

One key way to evaluate water use is the amount of water that is considered “consumed,” meaning it is withdrawn from the local water supply and used up - for instance, evaporated as steam - and not returned to its source.

For information, we first looked to government data, such as that kept by municipal water systems, but the process of getting all the necessary data can be onerous and time-consuming, with some denying data access due to confidentiality concerns. So we turned to other sources to uncover data center water use.

Many companies, especially those that prioritize sustainability, release publicly available reports about their environmental and sustainability practices, including water use. We focused on six top tech companies with data centers: Amazon, Google, Microsoft, Meta, Digital Realty and Equinix. Our findings revealed significant variability in both how much water the companies’ data centers used, and how much specific information the companies’ reports actually provided.

Sustainability reports offer a valuable glimpse into data center water use. But because the reports are voluntary, different companies report different statistics in ways that make them hard to combine or compare. Importantly, these disclosures do not consistently include the indirect water consumption from their electricity use, which the Lawrence

Berkeley Lab estimated was 12 times greater than the direct use for cooling in 2023. Our estimates highlighting specific water consumption reports are all related to cooling.

Amazon releases annual sustainability reports, but those documents do not disclose how much water the company uses. Microsoft provides data on its water demands for its overall operations, but does not break down water use for its data centers. Meta does that breakdown, but only in a company-wide aggregate figure. Google provides individual figures for each data center.

In general, the five companies we analyzed that do disclose water usage show a general trend of increasing direct water use each year. Researchers attribute this trend to data centers.

To take a deeper look, we focused on Google and Meta, as they provide some of the most detailed reports of data center water use.

Data centers make up significant proportions of both companies’ water use. In 2023, Meta consumed 813 million gallons of water globally (3.1 billion liters) - 95% of which, 776 million gallons (2.9 billion liters), was used by data centers.

For Google, the picture is similar, but with higher numbers. In 2023, Google operations worldwide consumed 6.4 billion gallons of water (24.2 billion liters), with 95%, 6.1 billion gallons (23.1 billion liters), used by data centers.

Google reports that in 2024, the company’s data center in Council Bluffs, Iowa, consumed 1 billion gallons of water (3.8 billion liters), the most of any of its data centers.

The Google data center using the least that year was in Pflugerville, Texas, which consumed 10,000 gallons (38,000 liters) - about as much as one Texas home would use in two months. That data center is air-cooled, not water-cooled, and consumes significantly less water than the 1.5 million gallons (5.7 million liters) at an air-cooled Google data center in Storey County, Nevada. Because Google’s disclosures do not pair water consumption data with the size of centers, technology used or indirect water consumption from power, these are simply partial views, with the big picture obscured.

Given society’s growing interest in AI, the data center industry will likely continue its rapid expansion. But without a consistent and transparent way to track water consumption over time, the public and government officials will be making decisions about locations, regulations and sustainability without complete information on how these massive companies’ hot and thirsty buildings will affect their communities and their environments. (AP)



# US seeks 10% stake in Intel in landmark deal

Trump admin eyes Intel investment shift

**SAN FRANCISCO, Aug 20, (AP): U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick on Tuesday confirmed the U.S. government is vying for a 10% stake in Silicon Valley pioneer Intel in an unusual deal that would deepen the Trump administration’s financial ties with major computer chip manufacturers and punctuate a dramatic about-face from the president’s recent push to oust the company’s CEO.**

The ambitions that Lutnick confirmed in a televised interview with CNBC came the day after various news outlets reported on the negotiations between the Trump administration and Intel. The investment would be made by converting federal government grants previously pledged under President Joe Biden’s administration into a bushel of Intel stock that would turn the U.S. government into one of the company’s largest shareholders.

“We think America should get the benefit of the bargain,” Lutnick told CNBC as he explained why President Donald Trump is pushing for the deal. “It’s obvious that it’s the right move to make.”

Intel declined to comment on the negotiations with the Trump administration.

The notion of the U.S. government holding a huge stake in Intel would have seemed inconceivable back in the company’s heyday when its processors were powering a personal computer boom that began in the mid-1970s. But Intel has been mired in tough times after missing mobile computing era unleashed by the iPhone’s 2007 debut.

Intel has fall even farther behind in recent years during an artificial intelligence craze that has been a boon for two of its once-smaller rivals, Nvidia and Advanced Micro Devices. The Trump administration is hitching a ride on their success by imposing a 15% commission on their sales of their chip sales in China in exchange for their export licenses. Those fees are expected to translate into billions of dollars in additional government revenue.

The U.S. government’s negotiations to become a major Intel shareholder are coming on a heels of a \$2 billion investment Japanese technology giant SoftBank Group disclosed late Monday that it plans to make in the Santa Clara, California, company. Softbank is accumulating its 2% stake in Intel at \$23 per share - a slight discount from the stock’s price



The logo of Japanese mobile provider SoftBank is seen at its shop in Tokyo on June 14, 2018. (AP)

when its investment was announced.

Intel’s shares surged nearly 7% to close at \$25.31 on the news of Softbank’s big bet on Intel, coupled with Trump’s designs on the company.

SoftBank invests in an array of companies that it sees as holding long-term potential. It has been stepping up investments in the United States since Trump returned to the White House. In February, its chairman Masayoshi Son joined Trump, Sam Altman of OpenAI and Larry Ellison of Oracle in announcing a major investment of up to \$500 billion in a project to develop artificial intelligence called Stargate.

“Semiconductors are the foundation of every industry, Son said in a statement.” This strategic investment reflects our belief that advanced semiconductor manufacturing and supply will further expand in the United States, with Intel playing a critical role.”

Trump’s interest in Intel is also being driven by his desire to boost chip production in the U.S., which has been a focal point of the trade war that he has been waging throughout the world since he returned to the White House earlier this year for his second term in office. “We want Intel to be successful in America,” Lutnick said during his CNBC interview.

Boosting domestic production of computer chips also ranked high on the Biden administration’s agenda, which resulted in the 2022 passage of the CHIPS and Science Act.

Intel was among the biggest beneficiaries of the program, but it hasn’t been able to revive its fortunes while falling behind on construction projects spawned by the CHIPS program. The company has received about \$2.2 billion of the \$7.8 billion pledged under the incentives program - money that Lutnick derided as a “giveaway” that would better serve U.S. taxpayers if it’s turned into Intel stock, which he said would be in the form of non-voting shares so the

government wouldn’t be able to use the stake to sway how the company is managed.

But Intel’s ongoing struggles also means the U.S. government is taking on a risky investment. The company is in the midst of its latest turnaround attempt under CEO Lip-Bu Tan, who was hired in March to shake things up. Tan’s turnaround effort so far has been focused on a cost-cutting spree that is gutting the company’s workforce and further delaying construction on a chip plant in Ohio that has been in the works since 2022.

Intel’s market value is hovering around \$110 billion, only a slight uptick from where it was when Tan arrived and leaving it more than 60% below its peak reached about a quarter-century ago during the early phase of the internet boom.

In another strange twist to the new alliance, President Donald Trump had demanded that Tan resign in an August 7 post spurred by concerns about investments that Tan had made in China chipmakers while he was working as a venture capitalist.

But Trump backed off after the Malaysia-born Tan professed his allegiance to the U.S. in a public letter to Intel employees and went to the White House to meet with the president, who applauded the Intel CEO for having an “amazing story.” That truce apparently sparked the negotiations that may culminate in the U.S. government owning a chunk of Intel.

Although rare, it’s not unprecedented for the U.S. government to become a significant shareholder in a prominent company. One of the most notable instances occurred during the Great Recession in 2008 when the government injected nearly \$50 billion into General Motors in return for a roughly 60% stake in the automaker at a time it was on the verge of bankruptcy. The government ended up with a roughly \$10 billion loss after it sold its stock in GM.

## Commerce Department broadens Section 232 tariffs

# Trump tariffs now cover 400 more products

WASHINGTON, Aug 20, (Xinhua): The U.S. Commerce Department said Tuesday that 50 percent tariffs have taken effect on 407 additional product categories containing aluminum or steel.

The new tariffs expanded the list of goods subject to Section 232 tariffs on steel and aluminum imports, covering wind turbines and their parts, mobile cranes, bulldozers, railcars, furniture, compressors, pumps, and hundreds of other products.

Customs brokers and importers in the United States had little time to prepare for the abrupt move, which quietly took effect Monday, applying even to goods already in transit. It’s unclear whether the metals levies stack on top of country-specific tariffs.

“Today’s action expands the reach of the steel and aluminum tariffs and shuts down avenues for circumvention -- supporting the continued revitalization of the American steel and aluminum industries,” said Jeffrey Kessler, under secretary for industry and security

of the U.S. Commerce Department.

The agency identified newly targeted goods only by customs codes, such as “8424.10.0000” for fire extinguishers, making it hard for the public to determine which products are affected.

In early June, U.S. President Donald Trump raised the tariff on steel and aluminum imports from 25 percent to 50 percent. He invoked Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, Section 301 of title 3 of the United States Code, as well as Section 604 of the Trade Act of 1974 in the order.

In late July, Trump announced a 50 percent levy on copper-based products, effective Aug. 1.

Experts warned that the sector-specific tariffs would have a vast impact.

The levies “will likely ripple through the manufacturing supply chain, raising production costs across construction, automotive, and electronics sectors,” CNN reported, citing an analysis.

## Soaring airfares drive inflation higher

# UK inflation rises to 3.8% in July

LONDON, Aug 20, (AP): Higher food and airfare prices pushed U.K. inflation above expectations in July, official figures showed Wednesday, which has tempered market expectations that the Bank of England will cut interest rates again this year.

The Office for National Statistics said consumer price inflation was 3.8% in the year to July, up from 3.6% in June. One of the contributors was airfares soaring by 30.2% between June and July, the biggest jump since the collection of monthly data began in 2001.

Most economists had anticipated a more modest rise in inflation to 3.7%.

With inflation now at its highest rate since January 2024 and nearly double the Bank of England’s target of 2%, the prospects of another rate cut in 2025 are diminishing.

“July’s outturn probably extinguishes hope of a Sep-

tember interest rate cut, while strengthening underlying inflationary pressures calls into question whether policymakers will be able to relax policy again this year,” said Suren Thiru, economics director at the chartered accountants institute ICAEW.

The bank cut its main interest rate by a quarter of a percentage point to 4% earlier this month, its fifth reduction in a year, when policy makers began lowering borrowing costs from a 16-year high of 5.25%.

The Bank of England’s key rate, a benchmark for mortgages as well as consumer and business loans, is now at the lowest level since March 2023.

The latest increase is another blow to the Labour government, which was partly propelled into power last July because of the cost-of-living crisis, which saw inflation rise to over 11% at one time.

Treasury chief Rachel Reeves acknowledged there was “more to do to ease” the cost-of-living.

## Spying fears averted

# UK drops Apple backdoor demand

LONDON, Aug 20, (AP): Britain abandoned its demand that Apple provide so-called backdoor access to any encrypted user data stored in the cloud, U.S. Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard said Monday.

Gabbard indicated London and Washington had resolved their high-stakes dispute over electronic privacy, writing on X that she and President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance spent the “past few months” working with the U.K. government.

“As a result, the UK agreed to drop its mandate for Apple to provide a ‘back door’ that would have enabled access to the protected encrypted data of American citizens and encroached on our civil liberties,” she said.

The dispute surfaced at the start of the year with a news report that British security officials had issued the U.S. tech giant with a secret order requiring the creation of backdoor access to view fully encrypted material.

Apple challenged the order, which raised fears of electronic spying by national security officials.

The British government reportedly served Apple with what is known as a “technical capability notice” ordering it to provide the access under a sweeping law

called the Investigatory Powers Act of 2016, which has been dubbed the snoopers’ charter.

The U.K. Home Office did not respond directly to Gabbard’s statement, saying it “does not comment on operational matters, including confirming or denying the existence of such notices.”

“We have long had joint security and intelligence arrangements with the US to tackle the most serious threats such as terrorism and child sexual abuse, including the role played by fast-moving technology in enabling those threats,” the office said. “We will always take all actions necessary at the domestic level to keep UK citizens safe.”

Gabbard previously said a demand for backdoor access would violate the rights of Americans and raise concerns about a foreign government pressuring a U.S.-based technology company.

Apple did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The company had reacted to the order by withdrawing its Advanced Data Protection encryption feature for new users in the U.K. and disabling it for existing users.

The opt-in feature protects iCloud files, photos, notes and other data with end-to-end encryption when they are stored in the cloud.

## Oak flat transfer delayed

# Court blocks transfer of sacred Arizona land for copper mining

ARIZONA, Aug 20, (AP): A U.S. appeals court has temporarily blocked the transfer of federal forest land in Arizona to a pair of international companies that plan to mine one of the largest copper deposits in North America.

The transfer was scheduled for Tuesday. But a panel of judges with the 9th U.S. District Court of Appeals issued a temporary injunction late Monday in response to last-minute appeals by a Native American tribe and environmentalists.

The land includes Oak Flat - an area used for centuries for religious ceremonies, prayer and gathering of medicinal plants by the San Carlos Apache people and other Native American tribes.

The tribe celebrated the pause. But President Donald Trump in a social media post said delaying the transfer by months will affect those people who are depending on new jobs and the nation’s ability to access copper domestically. He blamed “radical left activists.”

The fight over Oak Flat has spanned two decades, with the latest legal wrangling centered on a required environmental review that was released by the U.S. Forest Service earlier this summer and an appraisal of the land to be mined by Resolution Copper about 60 miles (96 kilometers) east of Phoenix.

Before the land exchange can happen, the plaintiffs argued that the federal government must prepare a comprehensive review that covers “every aspect of the planned mine and all related infrastructure.” They said the government failed to consider the potential for a dam breach, pipeline failure and if there was an emergency plan for a tailings storage area.

As for the appraisal, they said it doesn’t account for the value of the copper deposits that are at least 5,000 feet (1,500 meters) below the surface.

The appeals court plans to hear arguments on the merits of the case later this year.

Opponents of the mine say their prayers are paying off.

“This injunction comes in a desperate time of asking for miracles, all over the country and all over the world,” Wendler Nossie Sr. of the group Apache Stronghold said in a statement shared on social media.

Nossie, a former tribal chairman, described the land and water at Oak Flat as precious.

Apache Stronghold, the San Carlos Apache Tribe and other plaintiffs having been fighting for years to save what tribal members call Chi’chil Bitdagoteel. The area is dotted with oak groves and traditional plants the Apaches consider essential to their religion.

“We will continue praying that the court understands the grave injustice of trading our sacred grounds to foreign mining companies that seek to destroy Chi’chil Bitdagoteel to extract copper that will be exported overseas,” Tribal Chairman Terry Rambler said in statement.

Resolution Copper - a subsidiary of international mining giants Rio Tinto and BHP - estimates the mine will generate \$1 billion a year for Arizona’s economy and create thousands of jobs. The project has support in the nearby community of Superior.

Resolution Copper has said the project underwent an extensive review by the U.S. Forest Service that has included consultation with tribes that have ancestral ties to the land.

“The collaborative process has directly led to major changes to the mining plan to preserve and reduce potential impacts on tribal, social, environmental and cultural interests,” the company stated.

The Forest Service has argued in court filings that it has no discretion because the land exchange was mandated by Congress when language was included in a must-pass national defense spending bill that was signed into law in 2014 by then-President Barack Obama.

There have been unsuccessful legislative attempts in the years since to withdraw the Oak Flat area from mining activity.

# Target sales slump as Michael Fiddelke takes CEO role

NEW YORK, Aug 20, (AP): Target is counting on a company veteran to revive its magic as it struggles to compete with rivals like Walmart.

The Minneapolis-based retailer said Wednesday that Chief Operating Officer Michael Fiddelke, who has been with Target for 20 years, will become CEO Feb. 1.

He succeeds Brian Cornell, who helped reenergize the company when he took the helm in 2014 but has struggled to turn around weak sales in a more competitive retail landscape since the COVID pandemic.

Fiddelke has overhauled Target’s supply network and expanded the company’s stores and digital services while cutting costs. In May, the company announced that he would lead a new office focused on faster decision-making to help accelerate sales growth.

Fiddelke is taking over at time when Target’s sales are in a funk, its stores are messy and understocked, and it’s losing market share to rivals.

He said he’s stepping into the role with three urgent priorities: reclaiming the company’s merchandising authority; improving the shopping experience by making sure shelves are consistently stocked and stores are clean; and investing in technology at the company’s stores and in its supply network.

“When we’re leading with swagger in our merchandising authority, when we have swagger in our marketing, and we’re setting the trend for retail, those are some of the moments I think that Target has been at its highest in my 20 years,” he said.

The change in leadership was announced Wednesday at the same time that Target reported another quarter of sluggish results.

The announcement surprised some analysts who expected Target to pick an outsider to turn things around. Neil Saunders, a managing director at GlobalData Retail, said he had mixed feelings.

“While we think Fiddelke is talented and has a somewhat different take on things compared to current CEO Brian Cornell, this is an internal appointment that does not necessarily remedy the problems of entrenched groupthink and the inward-looking mindset that have plagued Target for years,” he said.

Target reported a 21% drop in net income in the quarter ended Aug. 2. Sales were down slightly and the company reported a 1.9% dip in comparable sales - those from established physical stores and online channels. Target has seen flat or declining comparable sales in eight out of the past 10 quarters including the latest period.

Target, which has about 1,980 U.S. stores, has been the focus of consumer boycotts since late January, when it joined rival Walmart and a num-



A Target sign is shown on a store in Upper Saint Clair, Pa., on Friday, July 7, 2023. (AP)

ber of other prominent American brands in scaling back corporate diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

Target’s sales also have languished as customers defect to Walmart and off-price department store chains like TJ Maxx in search of lower prices. But many analysts think Target is stumbling because consumers no longer consider it the place to go for affordable but stylish products, a niche that long ago earned the retailer the jokingly posh nickname “Tarzhay.”

In fact, out of 35 merchandise categories that Target tracks, it gained or maintained market share in only 14 during the first half of the company’s fiscal year, Fiddelke said.

Meanwhile, Walmart gained market share among households with incomes over \$100,000 as U.S. inflation caused consumer prices to rise rapidly. Lower-income shoppers have driven customer growth at Target, suggesting it may have lost appeal with wealthier customers, according to market research firm Consumer Edge.

“It’s probably not the best sign, especially because higher-income consumers continue to hold up a little bit better” during times of economic uncertainty, said Consumer Edge Head of Insights Michael Gunther.

In March, members of Target’s executive team told investors they planned to regain the chain’s reputation for selling stylish goods at budget prices by expanding Target’s lineup of store label brands and shortening the time it took to get new items from the idea stage to store shelves. The moves would help the company stay close to trends, executives said.

“In a world where we operate today, our guests are looking for Tarzhay,” Cornell told investors. “Consumers coined that term decades ago to define how we elevate the everything everyday to something special, how we had unexpected fun in the shopping that would be otherwise routine.”

Before joining Target in 2014, Cornell, 66,

spent more than 30 years in leadership positions at retail and consumer-product companies, including as chief marketing officer at Safeway Inc. and CEO at Michaels, Walmart’s Sam’s Club and PepsiCo America Foods. In September 2022, the board extended his contract for three more years and eliminated a policy requiring its chief executives to retire at age 65. When Fiddelke takes over, Cornell will transition to be executive chair of the board.

When he got to Target, the company was facing a different set of challenges.

Cornell replaced former CEO Gregg Steinhafel, who stepped down nearly five months after Target disclosed a huge data breach in which hackers stole millions of customers’ credit- and debit-card records. The theft badly damaged the chain’s reputation and profits.

Cornell reenergized sales by having his team rev up Target’s store brands. It now has 40 private label brands in its portfolio. And even before the pandemic, Cornell spearheaded the company’s mission to transform its stores into delivery hubs to cut down on costs and speed up deliveries.

Target’s 2017 acquisition of Shipt helped bolster the discounter’s same-day, store-based fulfillment services. Cornell also focused on making its stores better tailored to the local community.

The coronavirus pandemic delivered outsized sales for Target as well as its peers as people stayed home and bought pajamas, furnishings and kitchen items. And it continued to see a surge in sales as shoppers emerged from their homes and went to stores. But the spending sprees eventually subsided.

As inflation started to spike, Target reported a 52% drop in profits during its 2022 first quarter compared with a year earlier. Purchases of big TVs and appliances that Americans loaded up on during the pandemic faded, leaving the retailer with excess inventory that had to be sold off.

In July 2023, as shoppers feeling pinched by inflation curtailed their spending, Target said its comparable sales declined for the first time in six years.

Moreover, Target started losing its edge as an authority on style by focusing too much on home furnishings basics, and not enough trendy items, Fiddelke said.

A customer backlash over the annual line of LGBTQ+ Pride merchandise Target stores carried that year further cut into sales.

Although Walmart retreated from its diversity initiatives first, Target has been the focus of more concerted consumer boycotts. Organizers have said they viewed Target’s action as a greater betrayal because the company previously had held itself out as a champion of inclusion.



Dave Koz, musicians turn flight delay into viral jazz moment

## Tamar Braxton says she ‘almost died’ in weekend accident

LOS ANGELES, Aug 20, (AP): Singer, actor and reality TV star Tamar Braxton said Tuesday that she “almost died” in a weekend accident that she doesn’t remember.

“I was found in a pool of blood from my friend with a face injury,” Braxton wrote in an Instagram post. “I fractured my nose, lost some teeth and mobility.” She added, “I don’t even know what happened to me.”

Braxton, 48, earlier in the day had posted “Thank you God for waking me up today,” in an Instagram story.

She said she was getting calls after and was struggling to talk so she shared what had happened to her.

The post also said “the way I look at life now is totally different. As my health is on the mend my mental journey begins... pray for me for real.”

An email to Braxton’s manager seeking more details was not immediately answered.

Braxton was part of a singing group with her sisters, including Toni Braxton, who went on to a major solo career.

They and other family members appeared on the reality series “Braxton Family Values” starting in 2011, and Tamar Braxton has since appeared in spin-offs



Tamar Braxton arrives at the BET Awards on June 26, 2022, at the Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles. (AP)

and other reality shows.

As an actor, her recent credits include the TV series “Kingdom Business.” And she has spent much of the year on a solo singing tour.

□ □ □

Passengers on a flight from St. Louis to Seattle got an unexpected pick-me-up when jazz saxophonist Dave Koz and bandmates held an impromptu jam session in the aisle while the plane was stuck on the tarmac hundreds of miles from their final destination.

It happened Aug. 11, when Koz and fellow musicians on the Dave Koz & Friends Summer Horns Tour were headed to Seattle for two days of shows.

What was supposed to be a direct flight was beset by delays, including having to divert to Boise, Idaho, after flight crew members timed out and needed to be relieved and the plane encountered a mechanical issue, Koz said Tuesday.

This wasn’t the first delay the band experienced since its tour started around mid-July, and it even had to cancel two shows because of travel-related issues, Koz said.

But the delay last week was particularly deflating not just for the musicians but for everyone on the plane.

“You could just feel the energy. Everybody was so frustrated,” Koz said.

A flight attendant who saw the musicians bring their instruments on board asked if they’d be willing to play

a song while they were stuck in Boise.

A video of them performing Stevie Wonder’s “You Haven’t Done Nothin’” - the closer to their show - went viral on social media. It shows Koz and fellow saxophone player Marcus Anderson grooving in the aisle with other horn players behind them and Jeff Bradshaw on trombone getting creative to play the large instrument between seats.

Passengers are seen smiling and swaying in their seats, with some recording the performance on their phones.

Anderson said it felt good to lift spirits, though Koz admitted being nervous that some passengers might not like “horns playing in people’s ears.”

Anderson likened the feeling afterward to that of a great workout at the gym. The musicians never thought about the possibility of going viral, he said. “It was just doing something good for the people.”

They performed just the one song, but they knew that was enough.

“It just was right, and it brought everybody together in a way that was very special,” Koz said. “I’ll remember that moment for the rest of my life.”

### Books

#### Short tales

### Writers probe ‘Stand’ world

By Rob Merrill

Stephen King’s “The Stand,” originally published in 1978, is beloved by his “Constant Readers,” but has never really made a leap off the page. Two TV mini-series in 1994 and 2020 both flopped, but while fans wait to see what happens with a movie adaptation in development, they can turn instead to “The End of the World As We Know It,” a collection of 34 short stories set in the world King created.

King himself blessed the project (he wrote the introduction) and the nearly 800-page collection was edited by Christopher Golden and Brian Keene, both accomplished writers of fantasy and horror books, comics and graphic novels. The stories are written by a few authors you might recognize (Richard Chizmar, Joe R. Lansdale, Caroline Kepnes, Meg Gardiner) and many you won’t. What they all have in common is a true affection for the world of “The Stand.” All are set either during or after the events of King’s novel, which tells an epic story of good vs. evil following a super-flu that kills more than 99% of people on earth.

There’s one featuring astronauts aboard a stranded Space Shuttle, suddenly without a Mission Control to guide them home. There’s another told from the point of view of an African Painted Dog, no longer contained in his zoo enclosure and bewildered by the smell of rotten human meat everywhere. They’re not all absurd, though. There’s real heart in a lot of them, like “Came the Last Night of Sadness” by Catherynne M. Valente, which introduces readers to Fern Ramsey, a teenager born after the events of “The Stand,” who has learned “You can do fine as long as you know how to read and have a knife, a map, a fishing pole and a bicycle - as long as you know how to fix the last two.” A great many reference either Mother Abagail or Randall Flagg, the two characters representing good and evil in “The Stand.”

One I particularly liked was “Grand Junction,” set 30 years after the end of “The Stand” as a thriving community in the Colorado title town begins to feel threatened by stories of bad things happening in nearby Telluride. “The seasons, the rain and snow and sun, day and night and back into day, the feelings in our heart chasing each other - it’s all a cycle,” writes Chuck Wendig, expanding on the “Life is a Wheel” theme King refers to often in his writing. “And good and evil are on that cycle... Righteousness rules. And then the wheel turns on its axis. Goodness softens. Weakens... Evil gathers at the edges. Just outside the firelight, waiting for its chance.” (AP)



This cover image released by Simon & Schuster shows “The End of the World as We Know It: New Tales of Stephen King’s The Stand.” (AP)

### Music

‘A Matter of Time’ aims to inspire young audiences

## Laufey explores anger, love on new album

LOS ANGELES, Aug 20, (AP): Long before the Icelandic Chinese artist Laufey became recognized the world over for her neoclassical jazz-meets-pop music, she was a student, answering a familiar year-book prompt: “Where do you see yourself in 10 years?”

Her answer: Move to the US, sign a record deal and win a Grammy. The 26-year-old has done all three.

“I must have been so confident to write that because I remember that being a very far-sought kind of thing,” the musician born Laufey Lín Jónsdóttir told The Associated Press.

Those aren’t her only accomplishments: She’s collaborated with Barbra Streisand, shared the stage with Hozier, Noah Kahan and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. An unexpected nonconformist to the rules of contemporary pop, Laufey’s third album, “A Matter of Time” out Friday, pulls inspiration from country and Icelandic folk music as well as classical and bossa nova sounds.

“My ultimate goal is to introduce young audiences to jazz music, to classical music, to encourage them to learn instruments and explore their own sound,” Laufey said.

In a recent interview, Laufey discussed her new album, embracing anger on the record, working with her twin sister and more. Responses are edited for clarity and brevity.

**AP:** What’s the story behind the title “A Matter of Time?”

**Laufey:** I knew I wanted the album to have time as a central theme. I was just so fascinated by how it’s kind of like this one thing that humans have no control over, and sometimes we want to speed up and sometimes we want to slow down, but ultimately it’s out of our control. And there’s something romantic about that to me.

Now it’s taken on a little bit of a different meaning in that it’s basically me baring my soul to the world and baring my soul to a lover. And it’s kind of like, “a matter of time until you find out everything about me.”

**AP:** The end of “Sabotage” felt very jarring, which is unexpected. Are you embracing anger on this album?

**Laufey:** For sure. I think I was never allowed to embrace anger. I was a very good kid growing up. I was very polite and very quiet. I used this as a way to show that you can be angry, and rather, to show



Laufey poses for a portrait on July 24, 2025, in Los Angeles. (AP)

also that you can be both a soft, spoken person while still harboring anger.

I think the understanding of women and characters has so much been like one or the other. She’s

like this, she’s a mad woman, she a soft, sweet woman. Like, we’re all everything.

**AP:** How do you compare this album to your past projects?

**Laufey:** This is just the most

free I’ve been. I wasn’t following any type of compass in that I wasn’t trying to create something as education. I was more so just making music from the heart. I just approached with a whole lot more

confidence, even though the album’s all about anxiety and learning about oneself and insecurity and delusion. And it’s tapping into emotions that I maybe wouldn’t have dared to tap into before. It is the most confident I’ve been, because I don’t think I’d have the confidence to put out the music in this album before.

**AP:** Your twin sister Junia is credited on the album. What’s it like working with her?

**Laufey:** It’s so special. We do everything together. Like, she does everything, pretty much, - other than the music, the literal music making - she has her hands in.

All the merch, that’s all her. The album covers, all the creative, like, music videos, everything - she’s such a part of the project. And then she literally plays violin on some of the songs. I know so many artists who talk about how it can be quite lonely, but I’ve never really been alone. Like, I’ve always done it in tandem with my sister.

**AP:** You’ve spoken about the importance of Asian role models. I think you’ve become one yourself.

**Laufey:** I grew up in a very, very different, like, homogeneous Icelandic community. I didn’t see people who looked like me every single day. I saw my mom, that was it. And I guess I saw my identical twin sister, who looked exactly like me. But it’s so powerful, seeing someone who looks like you, that you can look up to.

I already see more representation, but there’s still such a long way to go. I’m still a half-white Asian woman, you know? And I don’t want young Asian women to look up and see all of the stars in front of them be half-White either, because what kind of message is that sending? So, I don’t know. Anything I can do to lift up voices, create those communities, and empower young Asian artists to do their thing, that’s, like, at the center of my philosophy.

**AP:** You’ve done all the things you said you wanted to do in your yearbook. What’s next?

**Laufey:** I’d love to score a film or do, like, a theme song to a film, preferably a James Bond theme song, because that’s, like, my dream. But it’s so hard to say because I’ve ticked off all those simple things off - many are big, but the tick-able ones. I hope I’m still making music and I still hope that I love it.

### World’s largest live music event

## Eurovision Song Contest 2026 to take place in Vienna

VIENNA, Aug 20, (AP): The Eurovision Song Contest 2026 will take place in Vienna.

Austria’s public broadcaster ORF, which will organize the world’s largest live music event, announced the location Wednesday morning.

Following Austrian singer JJ’s victory with “Wasted Love” in Basel this spring, the music competition will be held in May 2026 at the Wiener Stadthalle.

“After thorough examination and based on a unanimous jury assessment, ORF has concluded that Vienna’s bid is the most attractive not only in terms of infrastructure and logistics, but also economically,” ORF Director General Roland Weissmann said.

Innsbruck also applied to host the event. It will be Vienna’s third time as host, following 1967 and 2015.

“As mayor of Vienna, I am naturally delighted that Vienna has prevailed and will once again represent Austria next year. I am convinced that we will have a wonderful May together,” Mayor Michael Ludwig wrote on X.

He added that the city will have a budget of about 22.6 million euros (\$26.3 million) to spend on Eurovision, including on events related to the contest that are open to all and free of cost.

“As mayor of Vienna, it is very important to me that cultural events are accessible to everyone, regardless of the size of their wallet,” Ludwig said.

Eurovision’s finale will take place May 16 after the semi-finals are held May 12 and 14, 2026.

JJ, whose winning song combined operatic, multi-octave vocals with a techno twist, and who also sings at the Vienna State Opera, won the contest in May.

JJ, whose full name is Johannes Pietsch, was Austria’s third Eurovision winner, after Conchita Wurst in 2014 and Udo Jürgens in 1966. The song contest is always held in the country whose singer won the competition the previous year.

The last Eurovision song contest, which has been uniting and dividing Europeans since 1956, was watched by 160 million viewers.



Winner of the Eurovision Song Contest JJ from Austria performs the winning song “Wasted Love” during the Grand Final of the 69th Eurovision Song Contest, in Basel, Switzerland, early Sunday, May 18, 2025. (AP)



Rising tourism erodes local charm

Paris residents fight ‘Disneyfication’ of Montmartre

PARIS, Aug 20, (AP): When Olivier Baroin moved into an apartment in Montmartre about 15 years ago, it felt like he was living in a village in the heart of Paris. Not anymore.

Stores for residents are disappearing, along with the friendly atmosphere, he says. In their place are hordes of people taking selfies, shops selling tourist trinkets, and cafés whose seating spills into the narrow, cobbled streets as overtourism takes its toll.

Baroin has had enough. He put his apartment up for sale after local streets were designated pedestrian-only while accommodating the growing number of tourists.

“I told myself that I had no other choice but to leave since, as I have a disability, it’s even more complicated when you can no longer take your car, when you have to call a taxi from morning to night,” he told The Associated Press.

From Venice to Barcelona to Amsterdam, European cities are struggling to absorb surging numbers of tourists.

Some residents in one of Paris’ most popular tourist neighborhoods are now pushing back. A black banner strung between two balconies in Montmartre reads, in English: “Behind the postcard: locals mistreated by the Mayor.” Another, in French, says:

“Montmartre residents resisting.”

Atop the hill where the Basilica of Sacré-Cœur crowns the city’s skyline, residents lament what they call the “Disneyfication” of the once-bohemian slice of Paris. The basilica says it now attracts up to 11 million people a year - even more than the Eiffel Tower - while daily life in the neighborhood has been overtaken by tuk-tuks, tour groups, photo queues and short-term rentals.

“Now, there are no more shops at all, there are no more food shops, so everything must be delivered,” said 56-year-old Baroin, a member of a residents’ protest group called Vivre a Montmartre, or Living in Montmartre.

The unrest echoes tensions across town at the Louvre Museum, where staff in June staged a brief wild-cat strike over chronic overcrowding, understaffing and deteriorating conditions. The Louvre logged 8.7 million visitors in 2024, more than double what its infrastructure was designed to handle.

Paris, a city of just over 2 million residents if you count its sprawling suburbs, welcomed 48.7 million tourists in 2024, a 2% increase from the previous year.

Sacré-Cœur, the most visited monument in France in 2024, and the surrounding Montmartre neighbor-

hood have turned into what some locals call an open-air theme park.

Local staples like butchers, bakeries and grocers are vanishing, replaced by ice-cream stalls, bubble-tea vendors and souvenir T-shirt stands.

Paris authorities did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Visitors seemed largely to be enjoying the packed streets on a sunny Tuesday this week.

“For the most part, all of Paris has been pretty busy, but full of life, for sure,” said American tourist Adam Davidson. “Coming from Washington, D.C., which is a lively city as well, I would say this is definitely full of life to a different degree for sure.”

In Barcelona, thousands have taken to the streets this year, some wielding water pistols, demanding limits on cruise ships and short-term tourist rentals. Venice now charges an entry fee for day-trippers and caps visitor numbers. And in Athens, authorities are imposing a daily limit on visitors to the Acropolis, to protect the ancient monument from record-breaking tourist crowds.

Urban planners warn that historic neighborhoods risk becoming what some critics call “zombie cities” - picturesque but lifeless, their residents displaced by short-term visitors.



A tourist takes a picture of the Sacre Coeur basilica in the Montmartre district in Paris, France, Monday, Aug. 4. (AP)

Museum



Al-Shareef Museum



Outdoor sessions



A collection of old coffee pots



Old household utensils



Old weapons room



Ancient weaponry

KUNA photos

Windows to the past ... Al-Shareef Museum showcases Saudi’s rich history

In Taif, Saudi Arabia, Al-Shareef Museum stands as a remarkable cultural landmark, offering visitors a vivid glimpse into Saudi Arabia’s traditions and past.

Al-Shareef Museum showcases a rich collection of rare arti-

facts, unique tools, coins, and traditional attire that reflects the Kingdom’s cultural and social life across different areas, and is considered one of the largest museums in Saudi Arabia.

The museum is divided into several sections and halls,

including reconstructed kiosks and shops that highlight traditional crafts. Visitors can also explore dedicated galleries for historical weaponry, manuscripts, and even a unique collection of vintage automobiles. (KUNA)

Online

ATP insights

White House joins TikTok

WASHINGTON, Aug 20, (Agencies):The White House launched an official TikTok account on Tuesday, less than a month before U.S. President Donald Trump’s deadline for the social media app to either find a new owner or face a ban in the United States.

The account posted its debut video on Tuesday afternoon -- a 27-second clip featuring footage of Trump walking and interacting with his supporters, accompanied by audio from his acceptance speech at the 2016 Republican National Convention.

A few hours after the debut video, the account has garnered over 57,000 followers, while the TikTok account Trump used for his presidential campaign last year has more than 15 million followers.

In his first term, Trump signed an executive order effectively seeking to ban the app, owned by the Chinese firm ByteDance, in the country unless ByteDance sold its US operations to a US company. The order did not go into effect amid legal challenges.

Since his second term, Trump has extended the deadline twice, each by 75 days on Jan. 20 and April 4, respectively. On June 19, Trump signed an executive order to keep TikTok running in the United States for another 90 days, extending the deadline to Sept. 17, 2025.

The newest popular influencer on TikTok’s “For You” page might be the scroller’s favorite tennis player. At least, the ATP hopes so.

The governing body of men’s professional tennis announced Tuesday it will be partnering with TikTok to further develop tennis content and bolster engagement on the platform.

The partnership is two-fold. One of its stated goals is player engagement, aimed at helping more ATP players build up followings on the platform and give tennis fans “exclusive behind-the-scenes” access to the sport, according to a press release.

Its other goal is the creation of the “Tennis Creator Network,” an initiative that will help existing non-athlete creators create TikTok content at ATP tour events.

“This strategic content partnership with TikTok builds on current trends with our audiences, places ATP at the forefront of the intersection of culture and sport, and creates discoverable content that cuts through for both players and tournaments,” Andrew Walker, senior vice president of brand and marketing for the ATP, said in the release.

Currently, only 20 of the ATP’s top 100 players have a presence on TikTok. Some of those 20 have become verifiable stars on the platform - Carlos Alcaraz has 1.1 million followers, Novak Djokovic has 666,000 and Ben Shelton has 448,000, to look at the upper echelon. They share everything from behind-the-scenes looks at tournaments to clips of them mowing the lawn and learning calligraphy.

The ATP TikTok account itself has nearly 600,000 followers.

The partnership is an acknowledgement of a blazing trend in sports media - candid, behind-the-scenes content created by athletes. Its popularity and virality is on the rise, manifesting itself everywhere from TikTok accounts to podcast studios.

In July, a pair of Minnesota Lynx players - Courtney Williams and Natisha Hiedeman, nicknamed “The Studbudz” - amassed hundreds of thousands of views and followers after live streaming the entirety of WNBA All-Star weekend, parties and all. The duo have now turned the momentum into official merchandise and newfound stardom.

Athlete-hosted podcasts, with an hour of casual conversation from star athletes, have also repeatedly become headline makers.

Buyers prevent ‘news deserts’ in Wyoming, South Dakota

Local newspapers rescued from closure by new owners

SIOUX FALLS, S.D., Aug 20, (AP): A dozen recently shuttered newspapers across Wyoming and South Dakota are set to publish again, after buyers stepped up within days to prevent the rural communities from becoming “news deserts” where little or no local media remains.

The swift rescues stand out in an industry where roughly two and a half newspapers disappear each week, according to a 2024 report from the Medill School of Journalism. The editor at one revived paper said his new owner saw ongoing profitability, while other outlets will be grabbed by publishers motivated by a sense of civic duty.

“It’s a little overwhelming, to be honest,” said Kayla Jessen, general manager of the Redfield Press, one of the rescued papers in South Dakota. “We’re all excited that we can bring news back to the community again.”

The turnarounds happened quickly. Illinois-based News Media Corporation announced on Aug. 6 it was immediately closing 31 outlets in five states because of financial problems. In less than two weeks, a publishing group in Wyoming said it would buy eight papers in the state, while a company in North Carolina said it would purchase four newspapers in South Dakota. Both buyers say all staff will be offered a chance to return.

The fate of other papers in Arizona, Illinois and Nebraska re-



The office of the Brookings Register newspaper is shown, Monday, Aug. 18, in Brookings, S.D. (AP)

mains unclear.

After the closures, journalists and their communities scrambled for options to save the publications. In addition to regional news, many of the papers serve as their towns’ official outlet for legal notices.

Rural areas often don’t have local radio or TV stations, said Benjy Hamm, director at the University of Kentucky’s Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues. That can leave a lone newspaper as the only media outlet in the area.

“If it goes out, it has a significant impact on the community itself, not just the media,” Hamm said.

The publishers in Wyoming said they stepped in because they couldn’t imagine more newspapers going dark in their state.

“We believe in the importance of a newspaper in a community,” said Jen Hicks, co-publisher the Buffalo Bulletin. “We know that in communities without newspapers, that civic engagement goes down and specifically, voter participation goes down, which is a really tangible way to see the decline in civic life.”

Jen and her husband Robb Hicks said they teamed up with Rob Mortimore, president of Wyoming Papers, Inc., to enter into a purchase agreement with News Media Corporation for its eight publications in the state.

Hicks declined to share how much they’ll pay for the newspapers.



Pakistan reports new monkeypox case

NYC confirms fifth death linked to Legionnaires’ disease outbreak

NEW YORK, Aug 20, (Agencies): Health officials have uncovered another death in connection with a Legionnaires’ disease outbreak in New York City, health officials said.

The outbreak in Central Harlem has sickened dozens since it began in late July and the latest death was announced late Monday night. Officials said they had concluded the death of a person with the disease who died before mid-August is associated with the cluster, bringing the death toll in the city to five.

Fourteen people were hospitalized as of Monday, according to the health department.

The bacteria that causes Legionnaires’ disease had been discovered in 12 cooling towers on 10 buildings, including a city-run hospital and sexual health clinic, health officials said. Remediation efforts have since been completed on all of the cooling towers.

Legionnaires’ disease is a type of



This 1978 electron microscope image made available by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows Legionella pneumophila bacteria which are responsible for causing the pneumonic disease Legionnaires’ disease. (AP)

pneumonia that is caused by Legionella bacteria, which grow in warm water and spread through building water systems. The city’s outbreak has been linked to cooling towers, which use water and a fan to cool buildings.

People usually develop symptoms - a cough, fever, headaches, muscle aches and shortness of breath - between two days to two weeks after exposure to the bacteria, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

City health officials say people who live or work in the area should contact a health care provider if they develop flu-like symptoms.

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**Monkeypox:** Pakistan has reported a new monkeypox case after a 42-year-old man from Attock district in eastern Punjab province tested positive, health authorities said Tuesday.

The National Institute of Health (NIH) confirmed the case through laboratory testing on Monday, Mumtaz Ali Khan, the NIH’s focal person for infectious diseases, told Xinhua. He said the patient is receiving treatment under isolation protocols.

Pakistan has so far recorded 18 monkeypox cases in 2025, compared with nine each in 2024 and 2023, according to the NIH official. One fatality was reported in 2023, while no deaths have been recorded this year, he added.

Health authorities said regular monitoring is underway to track the situation and ensure that precautionary measures are fully implemented.

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**Chikungunya:** The number of local cases of Chikungunya fever has dropped from a daily peak of over 600 to less than 100 in Foshan, south China’s Guangdong Province, indicating further progress delivered by effective prevention and control

measures during the early stage, according to experts with a national disease control and prevention team dispatched to the city.

Statistics from Foshan’s public health authority showed that 84 new confirmed cases of Chikungunya fever were reported on Aug. 14 in the city, which has been hit the hardest by the mosquito-borne viral disease since its recent outbreak in China. Starting from Aug. 9, the city’s tally of newly confirmed cases has continued to decline at a steady pace.

At present, new cases in Foshan are sporadic, said Ren Dongsheng, a researcher with the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (China CDC), adding that in the next step, prevention and control measures will be taken in a more precise and targeted manner to further stem the transmission of the disease.

Superbugs monitoring

Australia launches ‘trial’ for long COVID diagnosis

CANBERRA, Aug 20, (Xinhua): Australian researchers said Tuesday they are recruiting participants for a clinical trial to develop the world’s first long COVID diagnostic test.

No single test currently diagnoses long COVID, leaving millions uncertain, but a potential biomarker discovery offers hope for a future diagnostic test, according to a statement released by Australia’s University of Adelaide (UoA).

“Because there’s no test that can clearly diagnose long COVID, patients go through a long process of elimination, which adds stress to what’s already a difficult situation,” said Associate Professor Branka Grubor-Bauk of UoA.

“It is complicated and presents very differently in each person,” Grubor-Bauk said.

The project builds on earlier UoA studies showing COVID-19 can disrupt the immune system long after the initial infection. Those with the most severe immune dysfunction were the ones who later developed long COVID, Grubor-Bauk said.

Around 5 percent of patients experience symptoms like fatigue, brain fog, and chest pain for over three months after infection, sometimes lasting a year, regardless of age or initial severity of infection, she said.

Long COVID volunteers will provide blood samples and symptom questionnaires, with follow-up tests if symptoms improve to track biomarkers, researchers said.

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**Superbugs:** Aircraft toilet wastewater could warn of the global spread of antimicrobial-resistant (AMR) superbugs, Australian-led research finds.

Researchers analyzed wastewater from 44 international flights to Australia from nine countries, detecting nine high-priority pathogens and multiple antibiotic resistance genes, including hospital-acquired, multi-drug resistant strains, according to a statement released Monday by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), Australia’s national science agency.

Using advanced molecular techniques, the international team led by CSIRO found a gene for resistance to last-resort antibiotics on 17 flights, but it was absent from

Australia’s urban wastewater, indicating likely introduction via international travel.

The study found five of the pathogens in all flight samples, with geographic variation in resistance levels. Flights from Asia carried higher concentrations of resistance genes compared with those from Europe, it said.

“Aircraft wastewater captures microbial signatures from passengers across different continents, offering a non-invasive, cost-effective way to monitor threats like AMR,” said senior author Warish Ahmed, a principal research scientist from CSIRO.

Researchers confirmed that genetic material remains stable in aircraft toilet disinfectants for up to 24 hours, underlining the reliability of the method for surveillance.

AMR is expected to cause more than 39 million deaths globally by 2050, surpassing cancer, the authors said, adding the study suggests aircraft wastewater monitoring could offer early warnings of superbug threats, similar to COVID-19 wastewater testing.

The research, detailed in Microbiology Spectrum published by the American Society for Microbiology, was conducted in partnership with Xiamen University in China, the University of South Australia and Michigan Technological University in the United States.

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**HIV/AIDS:** The Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has launched a new booklet to support people newly diagnosed with HIV in Fiji.

The booklet, titled Power of Life and developed by people living with HIV, aims to reassure those affected that they are not alone and are part of a supportive community.

It has been published in English, Fijian, and Fiji Hindi to ensure accessibility across Fiji’s major language groups, reported Fiji Broadcasting Corporation on Tuesday.

UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador Ratu Epeli Nailatikau said the booklet encourages people living with HIV to seek support and avoid isolation, which often creates fear and reluctance to seek treatment.

According to UNAIDS, more than 1,000 people are estimated to be living with HIV in Fiji, with a rise in new infections reported in recent years.

Africa sees 95% of malaria deaths in 2023

New malaria drug for babies offers hope to health workers in Uganda

KAMPALA, Uganda, Aug 20, (AP): Alice Nekesa did not know she was infected with malaria-causing parasites until it was too late. She was in the fourth month of pregnancy last year when she started bleeding, a miscarriage later attributed to untreated malaria in her.

The Ugandan farmer said recently that she regretted the loss of what would have been her second child “because I didn’t discover malaria and treat it early.”

Variations of such cases are commonly reported by Ugandan health workers who witness stillbirths or feverish babies that die within days from undiagnosed malaria. The deaths are part of a wider death toll tied to the mosquito-borne disease, the deadliest across Africa, but one easily treated in adults who seek timely medical care.

Until recently, a major gap in malaria treatment was how to care for newborns and infants infected with malaria who weren’t strong enough to receive regular medication. That changed last month when Swiss medical regulators approved medicine from the Basel-based pharmaceutical company Novartis for babies weighing between 2 and 5 kilograms (nearly 4½ to 11 pounds).

Swissmedic said the treatment, a sweet-tasting tablet that disperses into a syrup when dropped into water, was approved in coordination with the World Health Organization under a fast-track authorization process to help developing countries access much-



A child receives a vaccine shot at Wakiso Health Centre IV in Wakiso, Uganda, July 23, 2025. (AP)

needed treatment.

Africa’s 1.5 billion people accounted for 95% of an estimated 597,000 malaria deaths worldwide in 2023, according to the WHO. More than three-quarters of those deaths were among children.

In Uganda, an east African country of 45 million people, there were 12.6 million malaria cases and nearly 16,000 deaths in 2023. Many were children younger than 5 and pregnant women, according to WHO.

Nigeria, Congo and Uganda - in that order - are the African countries most burdened by malaria, a parasitic disease transmitted to humans through the bites of infected mosquitoes that thrive and breed in stagnant water.

The drug approved by Swiss authorities, known as Coartem Baby in some countries and Riamet Baby in others, is a combination of two antimalarials. It is a lower dose version of a tablet previously approved for other age groups, including for older children.

Contamination

Shrimp recalled over ‘radiation’

NEW YORK, Aug 20, (AP): Walmart has recalled frozen, raw shrimp sold in 13 states because federal health officials say it could have potential radioactive contamination.

The US Food and Drug Administration asked Walmart to pull three lots of Great Value brand frozen shrimp from stores after federal officials detected Cesium-137, a radioactive isotope, in shipping containers and a sample of breaded shrimp imported from Indonesia.

The products could pose a “potential health concern” for people exposed to low levels of Cesium-137 over time, FDA officials said.

“If you have recently purchased raw frozen shrimp from Walmart that matches this description, throw it away,” FDA officials said in a statement.

The risk from the recalled shrimp is “quite low,” said Donald Schaffner, a food safety expert at Rutgers University.

Cesium-137 is a byproduct of nuclear reactions, including nuclear bombs, testing, reactor operations and accidents. It’s widespread around the world, with trace amounts found in the environment, including soil, food and air.

The level detected in the frozen breaded shrimp was far lower than FDA intervention levels. However, the agency said that avoiding potentially contaminated products could reduce exposure to low-level radiation that could lead to health problems over time.

The FDA is investigating reports of Cesium-137 contamination in shipping containers and products processed by P.T. Bahari Makmur Sejati, doing business as BMS Foods of Indonesia. U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials alerted FDA that they found Cesium-137 in shipping containers sent to U.S. ports in Los Angeles, Houston, Miami and Savannah, Georgia.

FDA officials collected several product samples and detected contamination in one sample of frozen breaded shrimp. The shipping containers and products were denied entry into the U.S.

However, the FDA then learned that Walmart had received potentially affected products imported after the first detection, from shipments that did not trigger contamination alerts.

NASA telescope spots new moon around Uranus

NEW YORK, Aug 20, (AP): The Webb Space Telescope has spotted a new tiny moon orbiting Uranus.

The new member of the lunar gang, announced Tuesday by NASA, appears to be just six miles (10 kilometers) wide. It was spotted by the telescope’s near-infrared camera during observations in February.

Scientists think it hid for so long - even eluding the Voyager 2 spacecraft during its flyby about 40 years ago - because of its faintness and small size.

Uranus has 28 known moons

that are named after characters from Shakespeare and Alexander Pope. About half are smaller and orbit the planet at closer range. The new moon, still nameless, ups the planet’s total count to 29.

The new addition could hint at more bite-sized moons waiting to be found around Uranus, said planetary scientist Matthew Tiscareno with the SETI Institute, who was involved in the discovery.

“There’s probably a lot more of them and we just need to keep looking,” said Tiscareno.



This is an image provided by NASA showing the planet Uranus, taken by the spacecraft Voyager 2 in 1986. (AP)

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# Sun finally shines on the road



Las Vegas Aces guard Jackie Young (0) shoots a layup between Atlanta Dream forward Brionna Jones (24) and guard Te-Hina Paopao (2) during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Las Vegas. (AP)

## Las Vegas beats Atlanta for 8th straight win

WASHINGTON, Aug 20, (AP): Saniya Rivers scored 17 points, Olivia Nelson-Ododa had 15 points and nine rebounds, and the Connecticut Sun beat the Washington Mystics 80-69 on Tuesday night to end a 13-game road losing streak.

Connecticut (7-27) secured its first road win since May 30 against Indiana to improve to 2-15 away from home. The Sun have won five of their last six road games against the Mystics, with a 104-67 loss earlier this season.

Tina Charles added 13 points and nine rebounds for Connecticut. Aaliyah Edwards scored eight points in 16 minutes in her first game against her former team.

Sonia Citron led Washington (16-19) with 19 points. Shakira Austin added 12 points and Jade Melbourne had 11. Citron passed Chamique Holdscaw (525) for most points by a rookie in Washington's franchise history - with nine games remaining.

### Storm 94, Sky 88

In Chicago, Skylar Diggins scored 24 points, Nneka Ogumike added 21 points and Seattle beat Chicago.

Chicago (8-26) has lost five games in a row and 13 of its last 14.

Dominique Malonga had 15 points, seven rebounds and a career-high three blocks for Seattle (18-18). The 19-year-old rookie hit 7 of 13 from the field and has made 106 total field goals to become the first player in WNBA history with 100 field goals before the age of 20.

Brittney Sykes scored 12 points and Ezi Magbegor had 11 points, eight rebounds and four blocks for the Storm.

Angel Reese, who returned from a



Las Vegas Aces center A'ja Wilson (22) celebrates after making a basket against the Atlanta Dream during the second half of a WNBA basketball game in Las Vegas. (AP)

seven-game absence due to a back injury, and Ariel Atkins scored 19 points apiece for Chicago and Kia Nurse added 13. Kamilla Cardoso had 10 points, six rebounds, six assists and three blocks and Elizabeth Williams added 10 points and nine rebounds.

### Aces 74, Dream 72

In Las Vegas, A'ja Wilson had 32 points, 12 rebounds and five blocks to help Las Vegas win its eighth straight game, a victory over Atlanta.

Wilson, who entered averaging 28.4 points and 14.4 rebounds in her last five games, secured her 116th career double-double - and 33rd with at least 30 points and 10 rebounds. It was Wilson's third straight 30-point game and third career game with 30-plus points, 10-plus rebounds and five-plus blocks - the most in WNBA history, surpassing Brittney Griner and Candace Parker.

Jackie Young added 16 points and Chelsea Gray had eight points, seven

rebounds and 11 assists for Las Vegas (22-14). Wilson, who was 12 of 24 from the field, became the youngest and fastest player in WNBA history to reach 2,000 career made field goals.

Rhyn Howard had 19 points and six assists for led Atlanta (22-13), which had won seven of its last eight games. Allisha Gray and Griner each added 16 points.

### Mercury 98, Valkyries 91

In San Francisco, Kahleah Copper scored 25 points with five 3-pointers, Satou Sabally scored 10 of her 17 points after halftime, and Phoenix came back to beat short-handed Golden State.

Veronica Burton scored 13 of her 24 points in the second quarter and dished out a career-high 14 assists as Golden State took control, but the team couldn't make the key defensive plays down the stretch.

The Mercury roared back late with a 20-8 run over nearly seven minutes

before Carla Leite's 3-pointer for the Valkyries with 6:33 remaining.

Alyssa Thomas added 13 points, nine rebounds and eight assists for Phoenix, which outscored Golden State 21-14 in the third quarter to get within 73-68. The Mercury pulled to 77-76 on Sabally's 3 at the 8:39 mark of the fourth then she put her team ahead on a layup the next time down.

Leite wound up with 15 points in her sixth start. Janelle Salaun added 13 points - 11 in the opening period for her best scoring performance in one quarter - and six rebounds.

### Liberty 85, Lynx 75

In New York, Jonquel Jones had 22 points and 10 rebounds, Sabrina Ionescu added 17 points and 11 assists, and the New York Liberty beat the Minnesota Lynx after losing the first three meetings between the teams this season.

Both teams were without a star player - Minnesota's Napheesa Collier missed her fifth game with a right ankle sprain, and the Liberty's Breanna Stewart is still sidelined with a bone bruise in her knee.

Courtney Williams and Natisha Hiedeman picked up the mantle for Minnesota (28-6), scoring 17 points and 16 points, respectively. Jessica Shepard had 10 rebounds.

New York (22-13) opened a 12-point lead in the first quarter. By the time Ionescu hit a 3-pointer to end the first half, they were still ahead by 11 points.

A series of Lynx steals and Hiedeman 3-pointers shrunk New York's lead to 66-60 heading into the final quarter, and New York's advantage thinned to four as time wound down.

But another long-range 3-pointer from Ionescu widened the lead to seven in the final minutes - to the celebration of a packed Barclays Center - and a final layup from Kennedy Burke sealed the deal.

## Mendy joins Rayo from Betis

## Marseille puts Rabiot & Rowe on transfer list after reported fight

MARSEILLE, France, Aug 20, (Agencies): Marseille's season is already in turmoil after France midfielder **Adrien Rabiot** and England Under-21 forward Jonathan Rowe were put on the transfer list and told to leave the club for "unacceptable behavior." The pair reportedly argued and fought in the locker room after Friday's 1-0 loss to Rennes, which prevailed with a stoppage-time goal despite being down to 10 players in their Ligue 1 season opener.

Marseille's move puts doubt into team-building plans for coach Roberto De Zerbi just one week before the 1993 Champions League winner takes part in the draw for this season's competition.

"This decision was taken due to unacceptable behavior in the dressing room after the match against Rennes," Marseille said in a statement.

Rabiot and Rowe have been exiled "in agreement with the technical staff and in accordance with the club's internal code of conduct," said the club whose majority owner is American businessman Frank McCourt, the former Los Angeles Dodgers owner.

Marseille qualified for the Champions League by finishing runner-up to Paris Saint-Germain in Ligue 1 in De Zerbi's first season at the club.

The 30-year-old joined as a free agent last September after his contract expired at Juventus. Weeks earlier, Rowe had moved from English second-tier Norwich on an initial loan deal that was made permanent before this season.

The transfer window in Europe closes Sept. 1.

Rayo Vallecano has signed Senegalese center-back Nobel Mendy from

Real Betis to strengthen its back line for the new season.

The 20-year-old arrives in a deal that allows Rayo to make the move permanent at the end of the campaign.

The transfer ends a summer which saw Mendy's proposed move to Dutch side PSV Eindhoven fall through because he was unable to get a work visa. He was also close to signing for Glasgow Rangers, but the Scottish club had doubts over his fitness.

Rayo will face Belarusian club Neman Grodno in the UEFA Conference League play-off on Thursday night.

Mendy joined Betis on loan from Paris FC in 2023, with the Seville-based club playing one million euros (1.16 million U.S. dollars) to make the move permanent a year later. However, Mendy only made five first team appearances last season, including two in La Liga.

Charlotte FC acquired goalkeeper Drake Callender from Inter Miami, the clubs announced on Tuesday.

Inter Miami received \$400,000 in general allocation money for 2025, and another \$350,000 for 2026. Miami could also receive \$75,000 in conditional general allocation money, and will retain a sell-on percentage in the event of a future permanent trade or transfer of the goalkeeper.

Callender, 27, has barely played this season after suffering an injury while playing with the United States national team in January. He had sports hernia surgery in May before losing his starting role to 39-year-old Oscar Ustari.

Callender joined Inter Miami in 2019 ahead of the club's inaugural season and spent two seasons in the club's development pathway with Inter Miami CF II before making his first start for the first team in 2022.

The player from Sacramento, California, has made a club-record 118 appearances across all competitions, including 96 in MLS play. He gave up 140 goals and had 14 shutouts for Inter Miami.

## AfroBasket quarterfinals stage set as Cameroon and Cape Verde advance

NAIROBI, Aug 20, (Xinhua): The qualification round to the 2025 FIBA AfroBasket quarterfinals concluded on Tuesday in Angola's capital Luanda, as Cameroon knocked out the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) 77-68, clinching the final spot in the last eight.

The matchup was tightly contested from the outset, until late in the first quarter when Brice Eyaga Bidiias drained back-to-back 3-pointers to put Cameroon 17-13 ahead before closing the period with a 19-13 lead, but the DRC quickly responded in the second quarter, trimming the deficit to just one point at halftime.

Cameroon pulled away in the third quarter with a 13-0 run. Despite a spirited fightback from a tenacious DRC side, a clutch free throw made by Tamenang Choh and a decisive 3-pointer from Williams Narace sealed a 77-68 victory.

Three Cameroon players scored in double figures, led by the 2024 NBA draftee Yves Missi, who posted a game-high 20 points and 12 rebounds - the only double-double of the match.

"We came with a different mindset," Missi said at the post-match conference. "Play hard despite the mistakes we're doing. Just keep playing. Doesn't matter what's going on off the court, even what the referee is doing, whatever we're doing doesn't matter. Just keep playing through mistakes and give it on the court." Meanwhile, defending champion Tunisia fell short of the quarterfinals after an 87-54 loss to Cape Verde, the last edition's fourth-placed finisher.

Cape Verde led from start to finish, particularly catching fire from beyond the arc in the second half, which saw an 18-0 run in the third quarter stretch its lead to 22 points.

Although Jawhar Jawadi bagged a game-high 19 points, Tunisia struggled offensively and grabbed 34 rebounds, compared to the opponent's 49, seeing its hopes of a three-peat evaporate.

With the group winners directly qualifying for the quarterfinals, the remaining spots were decided through the two-day qualification round starting on Monday.

Earlier, Mali narrowly defeated Guinea 70-67 on Monday, while the previous edition's bronze medalist Senegal overcame Africa's top-ranked South Sudan 78-65.

"We had a tough tournament. We had a very disappointing tournament. We'll regroup and start focusing on what's next," said South Sudan head coach Luol Deng.

"But I think for African basketball, I'm very happy, because the players deserve it. I think the game is getting better, and the players are better. So the more teams get better, the more respect we'll get, all as a whole," he added.

The quarterfinals will start on Wednesday, with Cote d'Ivoire to face Mali, while Nigeria meets Senegal.

‘Coming in second is not the objective, and it’s not acceptable’

## Celtics have new owner: The drive to add more NBA championships won’t change

BOSTON, Aug 20, (AP): The Boston Celtics have a new owner, and there's one thing that isn't going to change at the NBA's most decorated franchise.

"Coming in second is not the objective, and it's not acceptable," private equity mogul Bill Chisholm said Tuesday after taking control of the team from Wyc Grousbeck. "The ultimate yardstick is winning championships. Wyc's got two, and we're going to get more, and he and I together are going to help drive that." Chisholm leads a group that bid \$6.1 billion for the Celtics - a record price for an American professional sports franchise. The NBA unanimously approved the deal last week, and all that was left was for the money to change hands on Tuesday.

"We are committed to building on the legacy of the Celtics and raising banners," Chisholm said. "And I can't wait for the team to get back out there this fall." A Massachusetts native, Chisholm said his earliest Celtics memories are of the Dave Cowens, JoJo White, and John Havlicek teams that won two NBA titles in the 1970s, but he really fell hard for the teams with Larry Bird, Robert Parish, and Kevin McHale that added three more banners to the Boston Garden rafters in the '80s.

"I became a rabid fan during the Bird, McHale, Parish era. That was my team," Chisholm said in an interview with The Associated Press shortly after the deal was finalized. "How can you be a teenager in Massachusetts, or New England, with that group and not end up being a lifelong Celtics fan?" The team was put on the market last summer, soon after Tatum and Brown vanquished the Dallas Mavericks in the NBA finals. Chisholm won the bidding in March and leads a group that now has majority ownership control of the team, with full control coming by 2028 at a price that could bring the total value to \$7.3 billion.

That's the highest price ever paid for a team in the four major North American sports, though a piece of the Los Angeles Lakers changed hands this summer at a price that would value the entire franchise at \$10 billion.

Other investors include Aditya Mittal, Bruce Beal, Andrew Bialecki, Dom Fer-



In this file photo, Lucky the Leprechaun, the Boston Celtics team logo, peers out from in between Celtics championship banners hanging in their new basketball team practice facility in Boston. (AP)

rante, Rob Hale, Mario Ho, and Ian Loring. Sixth Street is also a "major participant" in the investment group, the team said in a news release.

Grousbeck and co-owner Steve Pagliuca led a group that bought the Celtics in 2002 for \$360 million and presided over an era in which the Celtics won two NBA titles, lost in the finals two other times, and made the playoffs in 20 of 23 seasons.

The team's most recent title came in 2024, led by Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown.

Team president Rich Gotham, general manager Brad Stevens, and coach Joe Mazzulla are all expected to remain in their positions. Chisholm will represent the team in league matters as governor, with Grousbeck remaining as co-owner, CEO, and alternate governor to oversee day-to-day operations alongside Chisholm.

"We've got a really solid core to the roster. We've got, I think, the best basketball people that there are. And we've got a really talented business operations team," Chisholm said. "And then we've got a leader like Wyc. I mean, why would you go make major changes to that? 'I think there are things we can always improve on,' he said. 'But that is a really, really good place to start.'" Grousbeck said he can already tell that Chisholm understands the significance of owning one of the NBA's charter franchises, with its unmatched 18 championships and a history of Hall of Famers from Red Auerbach, Bob Cousy, and Bill Russell to Paul Pierce and Kevin Garnett.

"It's an unbelievable responsibility, and an unbelievable thrill," Grousbeck said. "But it's a huge challenge because the greats built it. And we're just here trying to maintain the legacy, which is a great honor." Chisholm takes over the team in a bit of a transition just two seasons after its latest title.

Tatum is recovering from surgery to repair the ruptured right Achilles tendon injury he suffered in Boston's Eastern Conference semifinal loss to the New York Knicks, dooming the Celtics' hopes of a repeat. Jrue Holiday and Kristaps Porzingis - key parts of the title-winning team - were traded to avoid the NBA's punitive second apron payroll tax.

Grousbeck said the days of outspending opponents to win championships are over.

"We had our two years at supermax, 100 mph, and now you take a year to reset a little bit, which every team will be doing," Grousbeck said. "And we'll be back. We're coming back as hard as we

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## Italy to lead title race at revamped women's volleyball worlds

BEIJING, Aug 20, (Xinhua): The revamped FIVB Women's Volleyball World Championship opens in Thailand on Friday, with reigning Olympic and Volleyball Nations League (VNL) champion Italy leading the title race.

In the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic cycle, the women's world championship will be held every two years instead of every four, with the competitions expanded from 24 to 32 teams, who will play in round-robin preliminaries in eight groups with the top two finishers from each group advancing to the knockout stage.

Building on success at last year's VNL and Paris Olympic Games,

Italy secured 15 consecutive victories in this year's VNL preliminary and final rounds for their third major title in a row. Their unbeaten streak at international competitions now stands at 29 matches, and they entered the worlds as the world's top-ranked side.

"The gold medal match was very difficult, and Brazil never gave up," head coach Julio Velasco said after Italy beat Brazil 3-1 in the VNL final. "We didn't play our best volleyball, but we fought the entire time. Our bench players made a difference. I'm very proud of the group. This is a special team with a lot of talent and a strong mentality." Brazil, who reached the VNL final with

an 11-1 preliminary record and victories over France and Japan in the finals, will also be a strong contender for the world title. Drawn with Puerto Rico, France and Greece in Group C, Brazil is expected to cruise into the knockout stage.

Reigning world champion Serbia will also be among the teams to watch. After resting several top players in the early weeks of the VNL and finishing 15th with a 3-9 record, the team returns to the grand stage with star players including Tijana Boskovic.

Poland, Türkiye, the United States, the Netherlands, Japan and the Dominican Republic are also seen as potential medal challengers.



Fluminense reaches Copa Sudamericana last 8

# São Paulo holds nerve in penalties to seal Copa quarterfinal spot

SAO PAULO, Aug 20, (Xinhua): Former Arsenal defender Cedric Soares converted the decisive spot-kick as Sao Paulo beat Atletico Nacional on penalties to advance to the Copa Libertadores quarter-finals.

After a goalless draw in last week’s first leg in Medellin, Andre Silva put the Brazilian side ahead at Morumbi stadium by nodding home from Alan Franco’s corner.

The Colombian side showed greater initiative after halftime and Alfredo Morelos equalized from the penalty spot after he was brought down by Enzo Diaz.

Nacional was forced to play the last 25 minutes with 10 men after Edwin Cardona was sent off for a second bookable offense.

With the scores locked at 1-1 after 90 minutes, the match went to penalties and Soares held his nerve with his team’s fifth attempt as the Tricolor Paulista prevailed 4-3 in the shootout.

“We have a lot of room for improvement,” Sao Paulo manager Hernan Crespo told a post-match news conference. “We played against a very difficult rival with great experience and tactical organization. It’s true that we had good moments but we need to do better.”

In other round-of-16 second-leg fixtures on Tuesday, Racing Club



Mahe Carrizo of Argentina's Velez Sarsfield, left, and Ze Welison of Brazil's Fortaleza battle for the ball during a Copa Libertadores round of sixteen second leg soccer match in Buenos Aires, Argentina. (AP)

advanced by virtue of a 3-1 home win over Penarol, and Velez Sarsfield progressed after a 2-0 victory over Fortaleza in Buenos Aires.

Kevin Serna and Matheus Martinelli scored either side of half-time as Fluminense reached the Copa Sudamericana quarterfinals on Tuesday with a 2-0 home win over America de Cali.

After a 2-1 away victory in last week’s first leg, Fluminense extended its overall lead through Serna before Martinelli added another goal just before the hour.

The Brazilian side cruised thereafter at Maracana stadium to seal a 4-1 aggregate triumph.

In Buenos Aires, Once Caldas advanced by virtue of a 3-1 away win over Huracan, a result that gave the Colombian side a 4-1 win on aggregate.

Huracan finished the game with nine men after Juan Bisanz and Matko Miljevic were sent off.

In Tuesday’s only other fixture, Independiente del Valle eliminated Mushuc Runa 4-2 on penalties in their all-Ecuadorian round of 16 duel.

# Slimmed-down Bayern still the team to beat as new Bundesliga season begins



Dresden's Dominik Kother, rear, and Mainz' Jae-sung Lee, front, challenge for the ball during the German soccer cup first round match between Dynamo Dresden and FSV Mainz 05 in Dresden, Germany. (AP)

Most of the likeliest candidates have lost key players

**BERLIN, Aug 20, (AP): Bayern Munich reclaimed its Bundesliga throne last season. Vincent Kompany and Harry Kane are looking for another title to consolidate their rule and build their own dynasty.**

Ahead of the opening game of the league season Friday between Bayern and Leipzig, the defending champion remains the team to beat and the role of closest challenger is wide open.

Most of the likeliest candidates - Bayer Leverkusen, Borussia Dortmund, Stuttgart, Leipzig and Eintracht Frankfurt - have lost key players. Few have made standout signings since last season.

Leverkusen, the only team to break Bayern’s dominance over the last 13 years, has had a huge overhaul of the side that won the Bundesliga in 2024. Gone are key players like Florian Wirtz, Granit Xhaka, Jeremie Frimpong and captain Jonathan Tah, as is star coach Xabi Alonso. Former Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag has been tasked with leading the rebuilt team’s fresh start.

Luis Díaz’s arrival from Liverpool gives Bayern a new attacking threat, as he showed last

weekend with a goal on his debut as Bayern lifted the German Supercup.

In Kane’s third season as Bayern’s star striker, the structure around him is no longer a holdover from the club’s Robert Lewandowski era.

Leroy Sané, Thomas Müller, Kingsley Coman and Mathys Tel have all left. This slimmed-down squad will require Díaz and the experienced Serge Gnabry - the only remaining forward from Bayern’s 2020 Champions League win - to be consistently effective.

The biggest pressure might be on Michael Olise. A long-term injury at the Club World Cup means Jamal Musiala may not return before 2026, leaving Olise, usually a winger, to occupy a less familiar role in the center. Racking up 20 goals and 23 assists last season was a strong start, but Olise was mostly on the right flank.

Tah adds strength and experience to the defense after signing from Leverkusen. Kompany can call on some exciting young midfielders after Tom Bischof and Lennart Karl both shone in preseason.

From Jude to Jobe, there’s a Bellingham running Dortmund’s midfield again.

Still only 19, the younger of the Bellingham brothers signed from Sunderland and straight away looked at home on a bigger stage when he made his Dortmund debut



Bayern's Harry Kane, centre, and Stuttgart's Atakan Karazor challenge for the ball during the German Super Cup final soccer match between VfB Stuttgart and Bayern Munich in Stuttgart, Germany. (AP)

at the Club World Cup.

Jobe Bellingham is the standout new arrival among the group of would-be Bayern challengers, who are each trying to adapt after stars departed. Leverkusen said goodbye to a host of title-winners, while Frankfurt bid farewell to Hugo Ekitiké and goalkeeper Kevin Trapp, and Jamie Gittens left Dortmund for Chelsea.

Ahead of Jürgen Klopp’s first

full season as Red Bull’s head of global soccer, Leipzig has reportedly spent over 110 million euros (\$128 million) on seven young players - Brazilian striker Rômulo is the oldest at 23 - but lost Benjamin Šeško to Manchester United.

There could be more signings before the transfer window closes Sept. 1. Leverkusen and Frankfurt in particular have earned much more than they’ve spent so far.

Promoted teams Hamburger SV and Cologne’s biggest challenge will be to stay in the top division.

Cologne brought back veteran coach Friedhelm Funkel for its last two games to make sure of its return as second division champion, but former Paderborn coach Lukas Kwasniok has been appointed to ensure it stays.

Hamburg, which was the longest surviving founding member of the Bundesliga, endured seven seasons away. Elation at finally securing its return has given way to sober reality after a summer of discouraging results. Hamburg needed extra time to get past fifth-tier Pirmasens in the first round of the German Cup last weekend.

Merlin Polzin’s team starts its Bundesliga campaign at Borussia Mönchengladbach on Sunday before hosting St. Pauli for what is sure to be an emotional city derby the following weekend.

Qadsia storms past Al-Wehda 4-1 in Turkey

By Hassan Mosa  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

ISTANBUL, Aug 20: Qadsia continued its preseason preparation in Turkey with a 4-1 friendly win over Saudi side Al-Wehda. Goals came from Mubarak Al-Fanini, Eid Al-Rashidi, Abdullah Al-Awadhi, and Rashid Al-Dosari.

Earlier in the camp, Qadsia drew 2-2 with Al-Faisaly, lost 1-0 to Al-Okhdood, and beat UAE’s Fujairah 2-0. Its next friendly is against Bahraini team Sitra on Saturday, the same opponent it will face in Group A of the Gulf Club Champions League starting September 30. The camp concludes with a match against Saudi club Al-Orouba on August 28.

Algerian professional Sofiane Bouchar missed the match due to his mother’s passing, while Moroccan Mehdi Barhama

was absent following a disagreement with the club’s management.

Kuwait Club claimed its second friendly win during its Prague training camp, defeating Slavia Prague 3-2. Goals were scored by Amro Abdel-Fattah, Ali Hussein, and Mohamed Daham.

The team resumes training today as it prepares for the Zain Premier League opener against Al-Tadamun on September 12.

Al-Arabi opens its Dubai preseason camp with a friendly against Dubai City today, followed by a clash with Al-Arabi UAE on Sunday. The team will remain in Dubai until August 28 in preparation for its domestic season opener against Al-Shabab on September 12.

Al-Salmiya continues its Turkish camp with a second friendly today against Izmir Korulu, following a 4-1 win over Magusa in its first match.



A glimpse of the Kuwait vs. Slavia Prague match.

## Best of the Rest

**Wolves signs defender Tchatchoua:** Premier League side Wolverhampton sealed the signing of Cameroon international right back Jackson Tchatchoua from Hellas Verona for a fee of 12.5 million euros, the side confirmed.

The signing sees one of the fastest players in Italy’s Serie A arrive at the Premier League to strengthen a Wolves’ defense that lost Nelson Semedo at the end of last season on a free transfer.

23-year-old Tchatchoua has played 10 times for the Cameroon national team, and scored two goals for the Italian outfit last season. (Xinhua)

**Napoli signs defender Gutiérrez:** Italian champion Napoli signed defender Miguel Gutiérrez on Tuesday from Girona, which lost another star player from the club’s surprising third-place finish in the Spanish league in 2024.

Napoli did not disclose the transfer fee for the 24-year-old left-back who reportedly signed on a five-year deal for 18 million euros (\$21 million).

The former Real Madrid youth player was a standout performer when unheralded Girona placed third in La Liga two seasons ago after leading the standings as late as January. Madrid won the title and Barcelona was runner-up.

Gutiérrez played six games in Girona’s debut European campaign in the Champions League last season and scored in the team’s only win in the league phase, against Slovan Bratislava. He earned an Olympic gold medal when Spain won the men’s soccer tournament at the Paris Games last year.

Girona then finished 16th in La Liga last season, just one point and two places above the relegation zone. Loan signing Savinho had moved to parent club Manchester City and top scorer Artem Dovbyk was sold to Roma. (AP)

# Broken promises as Isak breaks silence amid transfer talks

NEWCASTLE, England, Aug 20, (AP): Alexander Isak has gone public for the first time about his discontent at Newcastle, saying the club has broken promises and that “the relationship can’t continue.”

The Sweden striker was the subject of a bid from Liverpool during the offseason and has been training away from the Newcastle squad, having indicated he wanted to explore his options.

Isak was not involved in Newcastle’s Premier League opener on Saturday, a goalless draw at Aston Villa.

On Tuesday, the 25-year-old Isak, who scored 27 goals in 42 games for the Magpies last season, was named in the PFA team of the season for the Premier League and used a social media post expressing his gratitude to address his situation at Newcastle for the first time.

“I’ve kept quiet for a long time while others have spoken,” Isak wrote. “That silence has allowed people to push their own version of events, even though they know it doesn’t reflect what was really said and agreed behind closed doors.

“The reality is that promises were made and the club has known my position for a long time. To act now as if these issues are only emerging is misleading. When promises are broken and trust is



Newcastle's Alexander Isak celebrates after scoring his side's opening goal during the English Premier League soccer match between Liverpool and Newcastle, at Anfield stadium in Liverpool, England. (AP)

lost, the relationship can’t continue.”

Isak finished his post by saying: “That’s where things are for me right now - and why change is in the best interests of everyone, not just myself.”

Newcastle responded with a statement saying: “We are clear in response that Alex remains under contract and that no commitment has ever been made by a club official that Alex can leave

Newcastle The Newcastle statement said the club wanted to keep its best players “but we also understand players have their own wishes and we listen to their views.”

Isak joined Newcastle in 2022 from Spanish team Real Sociedad and has blossomed into one of the most sought-after strikers in the world.

Newcastle manager Eddie Howe said last week there was still a chance Isak could be reintegrated into the Newcastle squad, despite the difficult current situation.

Howe said the offseason has been challenging given the absence of his star striker but that the squad has “really come together in the latter stages of preseason.”

Newcastle’s statement said the club strived to “retain our family feel.”

“Alex remains part of our family and will be welcomed back when he is ready to rejoin his teammates.”

With 23 goals in the Premier League last season, Isak was second in the scoring chart behind Liverpool’s Mohamed Salah.

Newcastle has been linked with a move for Brentford striker Yoane Wissa, who also sat out the opening round of games.

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Al Qadisiyah's Mateo Retegui, left, fights for the ball with Al Ahli Saudi's Roger Ibanez during the Saudi Super Cup semi-finals soccer match between Al Ahli Saudi and Al Qadisiyah at the Hong Kong Stadium in Hong Kong. Al Ahli won 5-1 to reach the final against Al Nassr. (AP)

# Sports

## Kuwait wins gold in Asian Shooting Championship

Shooters deliver outstanding performance

ASTANA, Aug 20: Kuwait's national shooting team claimed a gold medal yesterday at the ongoing Asian Shooting Championship in Kazakhstan, finishing first in the team skeet competition against strong competition from across Asia.

Chairman of the Kuwait Sports Shooting Club, Du'a'ij Al-Otaibi, said shooters Abdullah Al-Turqi, Abdulaziz Al-Saad, and Mansour Al-Rashidi delivered an outstanding performance to secure the victory. South Korea and Qatar finished second and third, while



Chairman of the Kuwait Sports Shooting Club, Du'a'ij Al-Otaibi.

China placed fourth and host nation Kazakhstan came fifth.

The Kuwaiti trio hit a combined total of 353 targets, edging out South Korea's 351 and Qatar's 346.

Al-Otaibi dedicated the victory on behalf of the club, the board, and the athletes to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid, His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Al-Abdullah, Prime Minister, and the people of Kuwait.

He also praised the shooters' high level of performance and confirmed that Kuwait's team will continue striving for more medals in the championship, which runs until August 30 and features all Olympic shooting events.



Salwa Al-Sabah's handball team.

## Salwa Al-Sabah's handball team ready for Asian Club Champ'ship after Istanbul camp

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

ISTANBUL, Aug 20: Salwa Al-Sabah's women's handball team is preparing for the 2025-2026 season and the upcoming Asian Women's Club Championship in Uzbekistan with a training camp in Istanbul, Turkey, running from August 14 to 29.

The delegation is led by Vice President Naila Al-Ali and includes administrator Amina Arab, Bahraini coach Mohammed Abdalnabi, and players Aisha Al-Saad, Noor Al-Enezi, Sarah Al-Enezi, Farah Al-Khabbaz, Ri-

tal Al-Farhan, Batool Al-Mutrouk, Zainab Al-Mutrouk, Maryam Dashti, Dana Maki, Tasneem Yassin, Dareen Al-Moussawi, and Shoug Al-Enezi.

Coach Abdalnabi praised the players' commitment during the camp. "The camp is going according to plan. We have already played two friendly matches against Istanbul Masoudiyeh and will participate in three more practice games during the camp," he said.

He also thanked the Salwa Al-Sabah Club Board of Directors, led by Club President Sheikhha Naema Al-Ahmad, for organizing the camp and removing obstacles to ensure the team is well-prepared for the new season.

## Al-Adwani: Academic commitments hinder preparation of the national handball teams

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 20: Kuwait Handball Association Secretary, Qaed Al-Adwani, stressed that academic commitments remain one of the biggest challenges facing the preparation of the national handball teams.

"When preparing our national teams for international competitions, we face many obstacles — the most significant being academic responsibilities. These prevent players from maintaining regular training schedules and, in some cases, even stop top talents from joining the national team in major tournaments," Al-Adwani explained.

He pointed to the U-19 national team's participation in the recent World Championship in Cairo as a clear example. The squad had only 18 to 20 days of preparation — far less than other teams, which train year-round. "Despite the short preparation, our players still delivered an impressive performance at the World Cup, thanks to the efforts of the coaching and administrative staff," he added.

Al-Adwani called on the re-



Al-Adwani honors Hasan Boland at World Championship.

evant authorities to cooperate with sports federations, particularly in matters related to academics, in order to ease the challenges players face and ensure Kuwait is represented on the international stage in a way that reflects its stature.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's U-17 national team continues its local training camp ahead of the Asian Championship — the qualifiers for the Junior World Cup in Morocco — which will kick off in Jordan on September 15 under Croatian

coach Ivan and his Kuwaiti assistant Khaled Al-Mulla.

On a separate note, handball referees are also preparing for the 2025-2026 season with daily training sessions and theoretical seminars. Referees Committee Chairman Ahmed Al-Mutawa highlighted that recent updates to local and international officiating regulations require practice and application to ensure referees perform at the highest level on the court.

## Salah makes history with a record third PFA Player of the Year award

LONDON, Aug 20, (Xinhua): Liverpool attacker Mohamed Salah has become the first player to win the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) Men's Player of the Year award for the third time.

Salah, who also won the award in 2018 and 2022, topped a six-player shortlist that included Liverpool teammate Alexis Mac Allister, Manchester United's Bruno Fernandes, Newcastle striker Alexander Isak, Chelsea's Cole Palmer, and Arsenal midfielder Declan Rice.

The honor marks a historic milestone for the 33-year-old following his instrumental role in Liverpool's Premier League title win last season. Salah finished the 2024-25 campaign as the league's top scorer with 29 goals, along with 18 assists.

Salah's outstanding season also saw him win the Premier League Player of the Season award and be voted the Football Writers' Association Footballer of the Year.

Aston Villa midfielder Morgan Rogers was named Young Player of the Year, with former England manager Gareth Southgate receiving the 2025 PFA Merit Award.

Arsenal midfielder Mariona Caldentey has been named Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) Women's Player of the Year, while her new teammate Olivia Smith claimed the Young Player of the Year award.

Caldentey, 29, enjoyed a remarkable debut campaign in north London after arriving from Barcelona, scoring 19 goals in 41 appearances across all competitions. That included nine goals and five assists in the Women's Super League, where she was also named Player of the Year by fans in May.



Liverpool's Mohamed Salah poses with his Player of the Year Award at the PFA Awards 2025 at Manchester Opera House in Manchester, England. (AP)

Her influence helped Arsenal finish second in the WSL behind Chelsea and lift the UEFA Women's Champions League title, with a 1-0 victory over former club Barcelona in the final.

The shortlist also featured Arsenal's Alessia Russo, Manchester City duo Mary Fowler and Yui Hasegawa, Chelsea's Erin Cuthbert and Manchester United goalkeeper Phallon Tullis-Joyce.

Meanwhile, United States head coach Emma Hayes received the PFA Merit Award for her contributions to the women's game during a trophy-laden spell with Chelsea.

## Kuwait U-17 suffers friendly loss



Players fighting for the ball.

CAIRO, Aug 20: Kuwait's U-17 girl's team lost 2-0 to Egypt's Al-Jazira Club in its first friendly match, part of its training camp currently underway in Cairo.

The team is scheduled to play several more friendly matches before the camp concludes in early September.

The team is preparing for the Asian Cup qualifiers for the 2026 finals in China. Kuwait has been drawn into Group B alongside Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Lebanon. The qualifiers will be held in Saudi Arabia from October 13 to 17.

### Best of the Rest

**Another injury setback for Moreno:** Villarreal striker Gerard Moreno has suffered another injury setback in a career that has been badly affected by physical problems in recent seasons.

The 33-year-old started his side's opening day win at home to Oviedo on Saturday evening, but the former Spain international had to leave the pitch after just two minutes of the second half with a hamstring injury in his left leg.

The striker is likely to be out of action for between four and six weeks, but given Moreno's injury history, it is likely to be closer to six weeks on the sidelines.

"I don't want to predict much, but you can't imagine how frustrating it is to not be able to have continuity, when you are doing all that is in my hands to try and be fit." "I will carry on looking for the best way to be here and to play. I will keep on working because I have a marvellous family who are always at my side and a lot of people who want me to be fit and who try and keep my morale up," wrote Moreno on Instagram. (Xinhua)

## Mbappé scores winner

## Madrid opens season with narrow win over Osasuna

MADRID, Aug 20, (AP): Kylian Mbappé got off to a scoring start in his second season with Real Madrid, leading the team to a 1-0 victory over Osasuna in their Spanish league opener.

Mbappé, the leading scorer in his debut with Madrid last season, converted a 51st-minute penalty kick to give the hosts the victory. A nice run by Mbappé through the right side of the area, followed by a neat cutback move, prompted the foul. The goal gave new coach Xabi Alonso a winning debut in his first full season with the club. The former Madrid player arrived before the Club World Cup to replace Carlo Ancelotti, who left to take the Brazil

job. "It was special to be back here as a coach, unforgettable," Alonso said. "Hopefully it was the first of many victories celebrated here."

Alonso started the match with three of the club's new signings for the season - left back Alvaro Carreras, right back Trent Alexander-Arnold and central defender Dean Huijsen. Teenage forward Franco Mastantuono came off the bench to replace Ibrahim Díaz in the 68th, being loudly cheered by the crowd at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

Some fans had not been happy after the former River Plate player praised Lionel Messi - the fellow Argentine

who was a star at rival Barcelona, during his introductory news conference. The 18-year-old Mastantuono had a chance to score in the 89th, but his shot from inside the area was saved by the Osasuna goalkeeper. "They all did well," Alonso said of the newcomers.

"They are players who will be helping us for years. None of them felt the pressure of the Madrid jersey or of the Bernabeu." Osasuna defender Abel Bretones was sent off in stoppage time with a straight red card for a high arm to block Madrid forward Gonzalo García. "They dominated, we knew it was going to be like that," Osasuna midfielder Rubén García said.

"We played a good game, but couldn't get too close to their goal. In the end, they deserved the victory." Madrid forward Rodrygo stayed on the bench the whole match, intensifying speculation of a possible transfer. Alonso downplayed Rodrygo's lack of minutes, saying he still counts on the Brazil international for now. "It was only a match," he said. "If in three months he still isn't getting these minutes, then it's different."

The game was played on Tuesday instead of last weekend, along with the rest of the opening matches, because Madrid's players needed more rest following the team's participation at the Club World Cup. Madrid's attempt to delay its debut even further was denied by the league. Madrid controlled possession - more than 70% - but struggled to break through the tight Osasuna defense early, threatening with a few long-range shots.

"There were positives, beginning with the result," Alonso said. "We still need a few things that will give us stability to keep progressing." Mbappé, with the No. 10 jersey this season, had one of Madrid's best first-half chances with a curling shot from inside the area that just missed the top corner, but finally broke through with the winner early in the second half as Madrid continued to press forward. He sent a low shot from the spot into the right side of the net as the goalkeeper dived the other way. "You can tell that Mbappé wants more," Alonso said. Barcelona began its title defense with a comfortable 3-0 win at nine-man Mallorca on Saturday, while Atletico Madrid squandered a late lead in a 2-1 loss at Espanyol on Sunday. Madrid was runner-up to Barcelona in the Spanish league last season. Osasuna finished ninth.



Osasuna's Ante Budimir, left, and Real Madrid's Dean Huijsen jump for the ball during the La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Osasuna in Madrid, Spain. (AP)