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Opinion

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Do we need an exit permit for expats?

WE appreciate the measures taken by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef to open up the country. These measures have been warmly welcomed by citizens and expatriates alike, and have stimulated commercial activity.

Today, Kuwait is poised to become a leading destination for tourism and trade, providing a comfortable business environment. These positive developments will soon become more evident.

Thus, allowing expatriates in Gulf countries to enter Kuwait is stimulating the stagnant waters and has begun to reinvigorate hotels, real estate and markets.

His Excellency the First Deputy Prime Minister promised to develop the 'Kuwait Visa' platform to make it more advanced than others in the region and the world.

This demonstrates the conviction that Kuwait has significant

potential, which was not visible in recent years due to artificial obstacles. We will not discuss these obstacles today, as they are well known to everyone.

We want these blessed procedures to be completed. We do not want them to be spoiled by a ministerial circular requiring company owners, businesspersons and workers to obtain an exit permit.

This circular obstructs more than it benefits. In one way or another, it is beneficial to visa traders who exploit every hint to impose new fees on ordinary workers.

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HH Amir receives Crown Prince, PM, First Deputy PM

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received His High-

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

Additionally, His Highness the Amir received Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh

Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace.

His Highness the Crown Prince also received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

LETTER TO MINISTER OF EDUCATION

Where is the truth ... regarding the suspicions of manipulation and profiteering in the printing of school books?

Excluding major printing presses and adopting smaller ones without justification wastes millions of Kuwaiti dinars and threatens the stability of the school year.

One Kuwaiti Dinar topples a giant printing press... and one of them pops up in the ministry's tenders.

Excluded printing presses were addressed as qualified, and a company was promoted from category B to A without procedures.

Printing presses that lost: We prepared papers and ink worth KD400,000 and guarantees worth KD256,000... then we were excluded.



Education Minister Jalal Al-Tabtabaei

Demands to open a comprehensive investigation into the incident and urgent questions on the table of Minister Al-Tabtabaei await answers.

Qualified printing presses were excluded after opening the bids and contracts worth millions were awarded to printing presses with limited capabilities.

Duplicate tenders for books with valid contracts... and the absence of a preliminary meeting for qualified printing presses raises suspicion of exploitation by some employees who do not have experience with the law to drag them into the furnace of suspicion and fraud.

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Filipino pay hike rattles Kuwait homes

Gratuity at risk under DMW \$500 domestic worker wage rule

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Head of Kuwait Federation of Domestic Labor Office Owners Khaled Al-Dakhnan confirmed that the decision of the Philippine Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) will affect Kuwaiti citizens.

He explained that Filipino workers in Kuwait receive an end-of-service gratuity equivalent to one month salary for each year of service, while other countries do not apply this system.

He told the newspaper that if the new decision is implemented, the end-of-service gratuity should be abolished. He said "we will submit an official proposal in this regard to the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), especially since other countries do not offer this gratuity."

Al-Dakhnan added that increasing the workers' salary by KD30 (approximately \$100) is a huge burden on Kuwaiti families, considering many households employ two to three maids.

He pointed out that the current salary is \$120, so the increase is "significant" given the other financial obligations.

He reiterated the Federation's demand to abolish the end-of-service gratuity to ease the burden on citizens.

He asserted that the other points included in the Philippine circular are of a regulatory nature that pertain only to the Philippine side and do not constitute any obstacle or problem

to the work of Kuwaiti offices.

Regarding medical examination procedures, he said "this is normal and we do not object to it."

The DMW had earlier issued a circular regarding the adoption of enhanced reform programs for Filipino domestic workers, in accordance with the directive of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., aimed at protecting workers' rights and ensuring their dignity and well-being.

The circular stated that the new reforms include raising the minimum monthly salary for domestic workers from \$400 to \$500, which must be incorporated into current and new contracts.

It stipulated the mandatory annual medical test of workers to ensure their safety, with agencies and employers bearing the costs of treatment in the event of work-related accidents

or illnesses.

It confirmed the implementation of the 'Know Your Employer' (KYE) protocol through mandatory video interviews between the worker and the employer before signing the contract, and the launch of the 'Kumusta Kabayan' digital system to periodically monitor the workers' conditions and uncover any complaints or problems.

The reforms include vocational training and qualification programs in the fields of healthcare, home management, hospitality services, digital literacy and language proficiency, in addition to tightening recruitment agency housing standards to guarantee the safety and health of workers, and imposing penalties on non-compliant agencies.

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Kuwait reports KD1.06 billion budget deficit for 2024/2025

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The revenues of ministries and government departments exceeded KD22 billion, while their expenditures reached around KD23.1 billion as per the approved final account of the State Financial Administration for fiscal 2024/2025.

The actual budget deficit reached

KD1,055,932,608.

Regarding the final account of Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) for fiscal 2024/2025, the expenditures reached about KD3.35 million, while revenues totaled KD103,500. This is according to the approved final account of KAPP, as published in the Official Gazette -- Kuwait Al-Youm.

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Public sector to observe holiday on Sept 4, work resumes Sept 7

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has announced the closure of all ministries, government agencies and public institutions Thursday (Sept 4) on the occasion of the birthday of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) for the year 1447 AH, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In its official account on the X platform, the CSC revealed that work in the above-mentioned entities will resume on Sept 7.

It added that institutions with certain duties are allowed to schedule their own holiday depending on the work requirements and in the interest of the public.



Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah with British Ambassador to Kuwait Belinda Lewis.

Sheikh Mubarak commends UK envoy

His Highness Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah met with British Ambassador to Kuwait Belinda Lewis, on the occasion of the end of her tenure in the country.

The visit marked an official farewell to Ambassador Lewis, who played a vital role in strengthening and developing bilateral relations between the State of Kuwait and the United Kingdom.

During the meeting, Sheikh Mubarak expressed his deep appreciation for the efforts of the dedicated and influential ambassador throughout her work, praising her spirit of cooperation and understanding. He also commended her significant

contribution to promoting permanent friendship and strategic partnership between the two countries.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Lewis expressed her sincere appreciation and gratitude to the leadership and people of Kuwait for the hospitality and support she received throughout her tenure, expressing her best wishes for the continuous progress and prosperity of the country.

A friendly exchange of opinions was observed at the meeting, during which the main landmarks of bilateral cooperation achieved throughout the tenure of Ambassador Lewis were discussed.

Do you know him?

THE Saturday Mouse has no capacity to fulfill the tenders he obtained, which he clandestinely plotted in the dead of night with those who shared the lizard meat with him.

The Saturday Mouse has been laughing at other bidders for years, and he used to direct the ministry that issued the tenders through some of its puppets, who shared the lizard meat with him after slaughtering it.

Over the years, the Saturday Mouse has gained weight, grown stronger, and his jaws have gotten bigger by seizing the opportunities of others and the public funds that the observers turned a blind eye to.

He said big things, that he is protected ... Do you know him? Ask the people of knowledge. And as long as the eyes are oblivious ... My heart, do not be sad.

Kuwait gold hits KD33 per gram amid Fed's rate-cut speculation

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): Gold prices in Kuwait rose noticeably last week, mirroring global trends, as growing speculation of U.S. interest rate cuts fueled investor demand.

According to the latest report by Kuwait-based firm Dar Al-Sabaek issued on Sunday, the price of 24-karat gold reached approximately KD 33.170 per gram, and 22-karat gold stood at KD 30.400 per gram. Silver also saw a strong performance, priced at KD 426 per kilogram.

These local increases came as international gold markets recorded significant rise. Gold closed at \$3,371 per ounce last Friday, after hitting a daily high of \$3,378, supported by a decline of more than one percent in the U.S. dollar index and falling ten-year U.S. Treasury yields, which dropped to 4.261 percent.

Dar Al-Sabaek's weekly report highlighted that the rally was driven largely by expectations of an imminent U.S. interest rate cut, following dovish remarks by Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell in his speech at the Jackson Hole symposium on Friday. Powell indicated that downside risks to the labor market are growing, even as inflationary pressures persist. As a result, markets are now pricing in a

nearly 90 percent chance of a rate cut at the Federal Reserve's September meeting, with potential for additional cuts by year-end.

Powell's comments reignited investor appetite for gold as a safe-haven asset amid renewed geopolitical tensions, particularly following recent Russian escalations in Ukraine. The seasonal slowdown in other asset classes also contributed to increased gold demand, as investors sought defensive positioning.

The Dar Al-Sabaek report highlighted that silver outperformed, ending the week at its highest level since September 2011, supported by industrial demand and expectations of continued weakness in the U.S. dollar.

Despite the recent gains, gold remains within a relatively tight trading range between \$3,300 and \$3,500 per ounce since April, without surpassing its previous all-time high. Technical indicators suggest that a breakout above \$3,465 could open the door to levels of \$3,500 and possibly \$3,600. However, analysts remain divided, as some express cautious optimism for a short-term upward trend, while others await more clarity on the Fed's policy stance.

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Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait's anti-corruption watchdog was set to host the annual gathering of a pan-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) expert committee on Monday, which will look into national and global efforts to clamp down on corruption.

Experts and officials from anti-corruption watchdogs around the wider Gulf Arab region will assemble for the talks, presided over by Kuwait's Anti-Corruption Authority, the body's chief **Abdulaziz Al-Ibrahim** told the press, citing a firm "commitment" to boost transparency in efforts to fight corruption.

On the agenda for the talks, the official said it runs the gamut from anti-corruption ideologies to indicators gauging public awareness about the matter, highlighting such gatherings as instrumental in ratcheting up GCC-wide cooperation in the fight against cooperation. (KUNA)



Warba Bank sponsors KISR's training program to promote concepts of 'sustainable development'



NBK honors graduates of Prime Leadership & Pioneers Programs

LETTER TO MINISTER OF EDUCATION

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Education Minister Jalal Al-Tabtabaei

- Demands to open a comprehensive investigation into the incident and urgent questions on the table of Minister Al-Tabtabaei await answers.
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- Duplicate tenders for books with valid contracts... and the absence of a preliminary meeting for qualified printing presses raises suspicion of exploitation by some employees who do not have experience with the law to drag them into the furnace of suspicion and fraud.

Your Excellency the Minister of Education, in this report, we put into your hands the facts about the school book printing file, which recently raised a storm of questions within educational and media circles, after the exclusion of major printing presses with extensive experience and advanced technical equipment, and the awarding of contracts worth millions of Kuwaiti dinars to limited-capacity printing presses. It is no longer merely an internal administrative matter.

This issue has transformed into a public issue that touches on the integrity of procedures, the safety of public funds, and even the readiness of the next academic year.

In one of the most serious issues threatening the stability and integrity of educational work and widely opening the door to suspicions of squandering public funds, a widespread controversy erupted within the Ministry of Education regarding the printing of school books for the 2025/2026 academic year and the violations it entails.

What appeared on the surface as mere "practices" and standard tenders quickly escalated into a public issue, against the backdrop of the exclusion of major printing presses with extensive experience and equipment under flimsy pretexts, while contracts worth millions of Kuwaiti dinars were awarded to limited-capacity printing presses.

According to an official memorandum and complaints submitted to Minister Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei, what happened raises suspicion and the question: Are we facing a passing administrative glitch, or a network of vested interests and influence that is tampering with the ministry's capabilities and flouting regulations, systems and the principle of equal opportunity?

Tenders 'Violation'

The excluded printing presses explained that they participated in the tender after they officially qualified and had their names published in the Official Gazette on July 20, 2025.

They also purchased the tender booklets, paid the fees, and submitted financial offers supported by approved bank guarantees.

Surprisingly, the ministry's purchasing committee decided to exclude them after the tenders were opened.

This step is a clear violation of Public Tenders Law No. 49/2016, which stipulates that the reasons for exclusion must be clearly stated in the official minutes before tenders are opened.

Even more bizarre, the ministry awarded the printing contracts to printing presses that only possess limited production

lines, and some of which have outdated cutting or printing machines.

This threatens to delay book deliveries and possibly disrupt the start of the new school year.

One Dinar Pretext

The One Kuwaiti Dinar Pre-text Documents revealed that one printing press was excluded under the pretext of an old case in which it did not pay the court fee of only "one Kuwaiti Dinar."

Despite the fact that it paid the amount immediately, the ministry did not back down from the decision and continued to exclude it!

Another printing press was excluded because its bid did not mention the paper type.

Paper Quality

The tender document did not include any clause requiring companies to specify the paper type.

Furthermore, the printing press practically adhered to the same paper type the ministry used in previous years.

Executive Seizure

A third printing press was excluded under the pretext of

an "executive seizure" with a bank.

Surprisingly, this procedure is outdated and does not affect its legal or technical capacity.

In fact, the printing press executed the ministry's contracts during the years the seizure existed and participated in bids accompanied by official bank guarantees from the same bank.

Duplicate Decisions

One of the shocking ironies is that on July 29, the director of the Curriculum Department addressed all printing presses—including those excluded—under the title "Printing Presses Qualified by the Ministry of Education" regarding amending the specifications for middle school textbooks.

If these printing presses were "qualified" based on official correspondence, how could their subsequent exclusion be justified?

Strangely, the ministry announced seven new tenders for the printing of Science and Mathematics books, and these tenders were awarded to one of the excluded companies, worth KD415,000.

This is despite the fact that these books were covered by previous three-year contracts with another company.

This is tantamount to duplication of contracts and opens the door to the waste of public funds.

Controversial Promotion

The controversy did not stop at the exclusion alone. It extended to the direct promotion of one of the companies from Category B to Category A, without going through the usual procedures, such as a field inspection or approval from the Supply Department.

This move raised several questions: Who was behind this sudden promotion? Why were the applicable regulations bypassed? Was a technical report prepared to prove the company's eligibility?

Behind the scenes, educators and media professionals are discussing a powerful figure who is said to have used his influence to eliminate competitors and secure contracts for certain printing presses.

This figure, according to sources, resorted to multiple tricks, including exploiting female employees with no legal experience, drawing them into suspicion and deceiving them. His real goal was to secure tenders for specific printing presses.

Millions in Losses

For their part, the excluded printing presses confirmed in their narrative that they already prepared materials, ink and paper worth more than KD400,000 and provided initial bank guarantees amounting to KD256,000 reflecting their full readiness to implement the contract.

By excluding them, the ministry would have lost bids at much lower prices, opening the door to millions of Kuwaiti dinars in losses for the public purse to less capable printing presses.

Doubts and Suspicions

On the other hand, the award of the textbook printing contracts has raised widespread doubts within educational circles, noting that "the contract was approved without holding a preliminary meeting for qualified printing presses — a procedure essential to ensuring transparency and equal opportunities for all competitors."

The ministry's failure to hold this meeting—which allows printing presses to inquire about technical specifications and clarify requirements before submitting bids—widely opens the door to questions about the seriousness of the competition and reinforces suspicions of prior arrangements to award contracts to specific printing presses.

الكتاب اليوم العدد 1748 السنة الحادية والسبعون	
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عن الوزارة رقم (م د 119 : 2025 - 2026) ج 1 لائحة	
وتوريد كتاب مدرسة - جامعة : طباع الجوزة الدولية والطابع	
أخر وزير التربية من طرح لائحة المناهج هناك طباعة وتوريد كتاب مدرسة	
جامعة : طباع الجوزة الدولية والطابع جنة الشريعة والفرص والحقائق	
في واقع شريعة	
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Tender announcement including qualified companies.

URGENT QUESTIONS BEFORE THE MINISTER

The issue today, Your Excellency the Minister, is no longer an internal administrative matter, as it is rather a matter of public opinion, with the following questions awaiting clear answers:

- Why were major printing presses excluded after opening bids?
- Who authorized the award of contracts to printing presses that are technically incapable of completing the task?
- Where is the role of the legal department in reviewing decisions before issuing them?
- Did the purchasing committee submit to pressure from influential figures?
- How are tenders issued for books that had already been contracted for three years?
- Who bears responsibility for delaying the books if the new printing presses are late in printing and delivering them?

OFFICIAL MEMORANDA AND COMPLAINTS

The excluded printing presses attached to their complaints to His Excellency the Minister a memorandum confirming the following:

- They met all the conditions stipulated in the Tenders Law.
- They provided bank guarantees certified by the National Bank of Kuwait and others.
- They continued to deal with the ministry under previous contracts without any comments.
- Their exclusion was based on a decision that was legally and technically unjustified.

EXCLUSION OF A LEGAL BASIS

On Oct 3, 2024, a bank dealing with one of the excluded printing presses withdrew the executive formula for the facilities contract, closed the implementation file, and officially lifted all executive reservations, pursuant to documents issued by the Ministry of Justice.

Despite the disappearance of the alleged reason on which the Procurement Committee based its exclusion decision, the exclusion continues.

This practice lacks legal basis and a clear violation of the principles of equality and equal opportunity.

It raises major questions about the standards of integrity and transparency in the management of the school textbook printing file.

THE CASE BEFORE THE MINISTER

The entire matter is now on the table of Education Minister Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei, who faces today a real test of reform and combating corruption.

Either an urgent, transparent investigation will be launched to restore the principle of equal opportunity and expose the 'Saturday Mouse' and those behind it, or suspicions will continue to spread, harming the ministry's reputation and the public's trust in it.

The educational community, parents and students are all awaiting the minister's firm decisions to protect public funds and ensure that school books reach students' desks on time, free from any suspicious deals or narrow calculations.

diwaniya

ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Correcting the wrongs
or back to square one

“WITH the stroke of a pen, a decree was signed to dismiss 155 leaders working in the field of education, including school principals, directors and vice principals,” **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Their Kuwaiti citizenship was revoked, and so they were demoted from the positions they held.

“We were students receiving our education in those distant years — elementary, middle and high school.

“The school principal was an expatriate, the vice principal was an expatriate, the school secretary was an expatriate, the inspectors were expatriates, as were the curriculum developers and textbook authors, let alone the rest of the positions in schools or in the institution, which was later renamed the Ministry of Education.

“We got our lessons at the hands of these venerable expatriate teachers who did not hesitate, if necessary, to beat up unruly students, or those who were late for the morning assembly or for the first period, or who caused disturbances in the classroom.

“We did not see the absence of the Kuwaiti teacher and the presence of the expatriate teacher as a problem, or as a deficiency or a flaw.

“The correct thing is the presence of a Kuwaiti educator, leader, principal or school supervisor.

“We were afraid of the teacher, carrying his cane, passing by the classes to check absences or attendance.

“This is how education was until a few years ago, until Kuwaitization took place.

“We, as students, did not feel humiliated or wronged, nor did we feel superior if a Kuwaiti student was subjected to a foreign teacher. Rather, we would laugh, in addition to our respect and appreciation for the teacher.

“Then the Kuwaiti teacher entered the educational field to take the place of the foreign teacher.

“So what happened was that their citizenship was revoked, they were demoted, their pensions reduced, and they were considered expatriates.

“In what condition, psyche or face does this Kuwaiti educator, whose citizenship was revoked, after being a Kuwaiti until yesterday, stand stripped of all his positions and his pension reduced, and after the awe and respect, he returned to being an ordinary employee, without a position and with a reduced pension?

“Those whose citizenship was revoked by the Ministry of Education and whose jobs and salaries were reduced will, in any case, psychologically face their colleagues, whether in the ministry, in schools or in front of their students.

“Would it not have been more appropriate and better to keep them in their positions, not out of appreciation for them as individuals, but out of appreciation for the educators, and in front of students who see them as role models and leaders?

“Frankly, I do not understand the revocation of citizenship, along with the revocation of positions.

“Education employees are civilians, not military personnel. The army, police, public security and prisons were all in the hands of expatriate military personnel.

“The police were led by an expatriate military commander, the army by expatriate military commanders, and the Kuwaiti military personnel who were saluting them did not see this as an insult or belittlement of their status.

“Some consider the act of correcting the wrong situations a sin and a return to square one.

“Everyone supported the decision to revoke the citizenship of forgers and dual nationals, in accordance with the text of the Nationality Law.

“Kuwaitis have coexisted in love, and this coexistence should continue as citizens, not as expatriates or foreigners.”



Hassan Ali Karam

ing hours that must not exceed eight hours per day, except in certain cases, are stipulated in the employment contract.

“Also, the worker is entitled to sick leave and official holidays. One of the fundamental rights in an employment contract is the end-of-service gratuity, which is calculated based on the number of years of employment and is paid at the end of the contract unless there is a legal reason to deprive the worker of such right.

“This gratuity is paid in accordance with the legal framework defined by the legislator, so as not to leave this matter subject to the whims and will of the employer.

“In addition to the above, there are rights that are not explicitly mentioned in many contracts despite the clarity of the law regarding them. Some contracts ignore or marginalize them, although they are important rights.

“These rights include overtime pay and daily and weekly rest periods. According to the law, the worker must receive at least one hour of rest after five consecutive hours of work, and the right to a paid weekly rest period after every six workdays.

“The worker has the right to obtain a copy of his contract, which is vital to ensuring that rights are established, and that transfer or substantial changes in the nature of work are prohibited without the worker’s consent. Moreover, the worker has the right to a safe working environment, free from any kind of discrimination.

“The most vital legal questions that can be raised in this regard are when an employment contract is unfair and whether it is invalid if such unfairness is proven.

“To answer this from a legal perspective, we say that any employment contract includes terms that violate the principle of equality or fairness, such as imposing illegal penalties or arbitrary termination clauses, or if the contract was concluded under duress or without the employee’s knowledge of all its terms.

“If the contract is not registered with the Public Authority for Manpower, especially private sector contracts, the employee has the right to resort to the judiciary to claim his rights, even if he signed the contract.

“We also add to this the right of an employee who is arbitrarily dismissed in fixed-term contracts to receive compensation equal to the employee’s wages for the remaining term of the contract due to the harm incurred as a result of that arbitrary dismissal.

“In this regard, we point out a common misconception among some who believe that the role of the legal representative arises when it comes to lawsuits and courts.

“In fact, reviewing the employment contract before signing it can spare the employee serious future problems, such as disputes over benefits or the nature of duties.

“A specialized legal understanding helps protect both the employee and the employer by ensuring that the contract complies with the law and drafting protective clauses, especially for the weaker party.

“Aside from documenting any subsequent verbal agreement with subcontracts or legal appendices, or in the event of amendments to the contract during its validity, such as a change in job title or salary adjustment, the lawyer must also exercise a legal awareness-raising duty by providing legal advice on the pre-signing stage of the employment contract.

“In accordance with this duty, we always advise, at every available awareness-raising opportunity, to carefully and thoroughly read the contract, not rush into signing it no matter how tempting the offer, and to request a copy of the contract immediately upon signing.

“We also advise against relying on verbal promises, as unless they are written down, the law does not recognize them, particularly in employment contracts. Thus, you should request an explanation of any vague or ambiguous clause.

“Never be shy about asking anything you do not understand in the contract, no matter how simple, if you lack sufficient background. Do not hesitate to seek specialized legal advice if the contract is lengthy or includes financial obligations or penalty clauses.

“The bottom line on this issue is that do not wait for the moment of conflict to determine your rights and obligations.

“A contract is not just a commitment between two parties, it is an agreement and consent between the two parties based on respect for human rights and dignity in the workplace.”

— Compiled by Mohammad Wangengi/Simi K. Kutty



Mol personnel checking the Civil IDs of ‘Friday Market’ visitors last week.

Raids in Souk Juma: 52 illegal expats of various origins held

Asian trio making, selling liquor nabbed in Jleeb

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: As part of an ongoing crackdown on residency and labor law violators, the Public Security Sector — represented by the Farwaniya Security Directorate — conducted a security campaign at Souq Al-Juma (Friday Market) in Al-Rai, reports Al-Anba daily. The operation resulted in the arrest of 52 expatriates of various nationalities found to be in violation of residency regulations. A detailed report listing the names of the detainees has been sub-

mitted to Major General Hamad Al-Munifi, Head of the Public Security Sector, for approval of their deportation.

A security source confirmed that the raid was carried out in line with the sector’s broader strategy to apprehend violators and individuals wanted by authorities. This initiative is one of several coordinated campaigns aimed at addressing the issue of illegal labor and residency violations across the country.

In a separate operation, Farwaniya security forces apprehended three Asian expatriates in the Hasawi and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh areas for possessing and promoting lo-

cally produced alcohol. The suspects were caught with 23 bottles of liquor prepared for sale.

The arrests were made during an evening patrol in Al-Hasawi, as part of the rapid deployment strategy led by the Director General of Farwaniya Security. Officers noticed the individuals behaving suspiciously while carrying bags on foot. Upon attempting to flee from the patrol, they were pursued and subsequently detained.

During questioning, the suspects confessed to producing alcohol at their residence and distributing it through a delivery service. A security official indicated that they are likely to face deportation, with their names being added to the list of individuals banned from re-entering the country.

Kuwait-Iraq border clogged

‘Customs staff first line of defense’

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC) affirmed the vital role played by inspectors at Abdally border during the religious season in the Republic of Iraq, in light of the heavy traffic of travelers and vehicles arriving from various Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

KGAC explained that work at the border is ongoing round the clock to ensure smooth entry and exit traffic, while implementing

strict control measures to prevent the entry of any banned materials to maintain national security and guarantee the safety of society.

The administration indicated that exceptional measures have been taken to keep pace with the increasing number of arrivals and departures during this period.

These measures include intensifying inspection and verification efforts, and activating cooperation mechanisms with the relevant security authorities to achieve a balance between facilitating the pas-

sage of visitors and ensuring the highest level of customs control.

KGAC emphasized that customs personnel at the border are the first line of defense for the nation’s borders, affirming that their efforts constitute a fundamental pillar in confronting smuggling attempts or the entry of prohibited materials.

The administration is committed to developing capabilities, including technical capabilities, to overcome various security challenges during such seasons.



KUNA photo

Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Maj. Gen. Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receives the senior Egyptian Army officer.

Kuwait, Egypt hold talks on military cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Maj. Gen. Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Sunday met with a visiting Egyptian military delegation to discuss matters of mutual interest.

In a press statement, the General Staff of the Army announced that Major General Sabah Jaber received the Egyptian military delegation, headed by Major General Amr Jameel and accompanied by Major General Mostafa Al-Qwaisny.

The meeting included friendly discussions and an exchange of views on key topics of mutual interest, particularly those related to military cooperation.

The meeting was also attended by Commander of the Land Forces, Brigadier General Hamad Al-Suwaidi, and Head of Armament and Supply Authority, Brigadier General Khalifa Duaij Al-Sabah.

GTD nabs 65 juveniles, issues 31,153 citations

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Traffic patrols arrested 65 juveniles last week and referred them to the Juvenile Prosecution, in addition to the issuance of 31,153 traffic tickets.

This is a confirmation of the report published by the newspaper earlier about launching traffic campaigns targeting juveniles during the summer vacation.

The weekly statistics of the General Traffic Department revealed the impoundment of six vehicles, referral of 16 individuals to traffic police stations, seizure of 69 vehicles, and arrest of 51 individuals wanted by law for absconding and residency violations and 103 individuals for violating the Residency Law.

Less usage
of power
in summer

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The power consumption rate this year increased by only 0.4 percent, compared to six to seven percent in previous years, due to the measures and policies implemented this summer to protect the electricity grid and improve its performance -- both technically and rationally, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources from the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy.

Sources explained that the ministry takes into account an annual consumption rate of up to seven percent -- a natural increase resulting from urban expansion and development projects. Sources disclosed that the highest load recorded so far was 17,710 megawatts at the end of July, a difference of only 70 megawatts from the highest load of 17,640 megawatts last year -- an increase of only 0.4 percent.

Sources pointed out that all of these measures and policies, which include maintenance and technical works in the electricity network, rationalization measures in government agencies, particularly the facilities of the ministries of Education and Endowments, as well as arrangements with factories and rationalization campaigns in private institutions and residential facilities, and the cessation of illegal mining activities, have all led to a reduction in the percentage of increase in consumption.

Sources expect that the highest load will not exceed what has been recorded so far despite the fact that the peak summer season ends in mid to late September as per the ministry. Sources pointed out that the continuous implementation of these measures and stable temperature stabilized the consumption rates.

Sources confirmed that the measures and policies implemented this summer will continue until the winter season -- the maintenance season, given their importance in maintaining the quality and efficiency of the electricity network and providing uninterrupted service to consumers.

They explained that reducing the increase rate to 0.4 percent is a major achievement, as the ministry was able to cover it through available production and with the help of the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA), hence, programmed power outages were rarely resorted to.

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Kuwaiti youth level up in electronic game industry

NCCAL empowers 85 young developers

By Shahed Kamal

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): Founder and Director of the Electronic Game Industry Program at the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), Omaima Al-Saad, affirmed that the success of the intensive programming camp on the electronic game industry marks an important milestone in enhancing the presence of Kuwaiti youth in this promising global sector.

Al-Saad told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) during the closing ceremony on Saturday that 85 participants received training over eight days on various topics, including developing games using global engines, game design, music creation, writing design files and investment proposals, as well as revenue generation strategies. The training was supervised by an elite group of specialists and experts.

She expressed pride in the achievements of this edition, noting that the passion and creativity of Kuwaiti youth in the electronic game industry were clearly evident. She added that this success will serve as a starting point for more advanced courses in the future, featuring broader programs and updated tools that keep pace with global changes in the sector.

She stressed that the Council pays special attention to fans of electronic games and digital sports as forms of modern culture and art that reflect the



Part of honoring the participants.



Omaima Al-Saad, Founder and Director of the Electronic Game Industry Program at the NCCAL

spirit of the times, emphasizing that investment in these fields contributes to strengthening the creative economy and creating promising opportunities for Kuwaiti youth at both local and international levels.

She explained that the Council has, over the past years, organized

a series of specialized events aimed at supporting young talents and honing their skills in this field, including the Electronic Games Challenge, held in two consecutive editions.

During this challenge, the Council brought together dozens of youth teams that competed in designing and

developing innovative games, providing them with a platform to showcase their creative energy while encouraging teamwork and innovative thinking. This initiative has been an important source for discovering new talents capable of competing regionally and globally.



Participant Ahmed Al-Saif after being honored.

Amiri Decree designates new leadership at Kuwait Customs

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Decree No. 162/2025 was published Sunday in the Official Gazette (Kuwait Al-Yaum) on appointing Yousef Khaled Zaid Al-Nuwaif as Director General of Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC) with the rank of

Undersecretary, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The decree also stipulated the appointment of Saleh Mohammad Yousef Al-Omar and Fatima Hamza Abbas Al-Qalaf as Deputy Directors General of KGAC with the rank of Assistant Undersecretary.

53K homes get infrastructure boost PAHW rolls out 14 contracts to upgrade new residential areas

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) is currently implementing 14 contracts covering road works and service networks in three new residential areas, totaling 53,731 plots and government homes, as part of infrastructure projects in major housing cities.

The newspaper obtained the latest report issued by PAHW, stating that South Sabah Al-Ahmad Housing Project includes four contracts -- one for the main roads and three for the construction and maintenance of infrastructure networks and internal roads serving 20,380 plots.

The report also indicated that South Saad Al-Abdullah Housing

Project includes four main contracts covering the main roads and internal infrastructure works for a total of 23,551 plots.

It added that the Affordable Housing Project includes six contracts covering the construction and maintenance of 9,800 government homes.

In a related development, reliable sources affirmed that PAHW is keen on following up the infrastructure works in its housing projects, in line with the plan of the State in this regard.

Sources indicated that these projects are part of the strategy of PAHW to provide modern and advanced residential cities with integrated service networks, which enhance the quality of life in new residential areas and provide a safe and sustainable urban environment for Kuwaiti families.

MoHE approves 45 students into foreign scholarship plan

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Ministry of Higher Education has announced the acceptance of 45 stu-

dents into the foreign scholarship plan for holders of the English High School Certificate and International Baccalaureate (IB/DP) certificate issued from Geneva for the 2025/2026 academic year.

KFAS and KISR lead revolution

Kuwait advances scientific achievements nationwide

By Amna Al-Shammari

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): Interest in scientific research has been growing in Kuwait, stemming from its belief in the vital importance of this field in driving national development, enhancing a knowledge-based economy, developing national talent and offering innovative solutions to societal challenges.

Kuwait's commitment to promoting scientific research is rooted in its constitution, which states that education is a fundamental pillar of societal progress, guaranteed and supported by the state, along with arts and literature, and an encouragement of scientific research.

In recent months, Kuwait has recorded several scientific achievements by public and private academic and research institutions, as well as by individual Kuwaiti innovators who have registered notable inventions.

Kuwait University announced on August 18, 2024, that the Computer Engineering Department at the faculty of Engineering and Petroleum won first place in Huawei's "Seeds for the Future 2024" competition held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) announced on August 27, 2024 that Dr. Badriya Al-Helaili, from its Energy and Building Research Center, was selected as the first Kuwaiti to join the judging panel for scientific research at the Renewable and Sustainable Energy Conference.

On November 12, 2024 the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, affiliated with the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), honored Kuwaiti inventors Dr. Kholoud Al-Najjar and Dr. Sultan Al-Sharif for receiving a patent from the US Patent and Trademark Office.

On January 14, the center also announced winning Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award.

On November 19, 2024, the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the global innovation and entrepreneurship company, Plug and Play, to implement innovation programs.

On November 23, it signed another MoU with the University of California, Berkeley to enhance international cooperation and support innovation and creativity.

On November 25, the center signed an MoU in Riyadh with the King Abdulaziz and His Companions Foundation for Giftedness and Creativity (Mawhiba) to support talented students and teachers, and develop scientific and technological activities locally and internationally.

On December 16, KISR announced that its Environment and Life Sciences Research Center had received a US patent for inventing a vertical tuber planting and harvesting device.

KISR signed an MoU with the World Health Organization (WHO) office in Kuwait on January 29 to enhance cooperation in research and development, and support scientific studies in public health, science, technology and innovation.

KISR, on February 1, achieved a scientific breakthrough by completing the life cycle farming of the sheem fish for the first time in the Middle East.

Abdullah Al-Salem University signed on February 1 a partnership agreement with King's College London, a leading institution in medical education, to establish a College of Medicine and Health Sciences at the university.

On February 24, the Kuwait Science Club announced it had won two gold medals and a special award at the 2025 Egypt International Science and Technology Fair (EISTF) held in Cairo.

Dr. Nawaf Al-Hajri, faculty member at the College of Life Sciences at Kuwait University, announced on February 28 that he had won the 2025 Khalifa International Award for Date Palm and Agricultural Innovation in the UAE, in the category of pioneering developmental and productive projects aimed at enhancing food and water security and sustainable development.

On March 5, Kuwait signed a strategic partnership agreement with Microsoft to accelerate digital transformation and boost Kuwait's position as a regional hub in artificial intelligence, in line with Kuwait Vision 2035.

On April 3, KISR announced the completion of a scientific study on the origin and development of freshwater reserves in northern Kuwait aquifers using advanced hydrochemical techniques and with support from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Kuwait University signed an agreement with KFAS on April 23 to establish and operate the Kuwait National Space Research Center, aiming to advance scientific research in space science and technology and support education and research programs in Kuwait.

On May 28, KFAS launched its new strategy for 2025-29, aiming to advance the national scientific and research ecosystem, and leverage science, technology and innovation to address national challenges and achieve sustainable development.

Kuwait Scientific Center signed on June 2 a partnership agreement with the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat) to boost cooperation in environmental awareness, sustainable education, and community engagement.

On June 29, Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaei announced the establishment of the Office for the Gifted, affiliated with the Minister's Office, to support and sponsor Kuwait's creative youth and prepare them to represent the country in international scientific forums.

On July 2, KFAS signed a strategic cooperation agreement with the British King's Foundation, aiming to enhance joint efforts in areas including food security, education, scientific research and the preservation of cultural and environmental heritage.

On August 7, Minister of Oil and Chairman of the Board of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, Tareq Al-Roumi, inaugurated the Artificial Intelligence Innovation Center affiliated with the Kuwait Oil Company, as part of digital transformation strategy in the energy sector.

On August 12, KISR launched "ICARUS," Kuwait's first integrated national platform for high-performance computing and artificial intelligence, designed to support the scientific and research communities and strengthen Kuwait's presence in advanced technologies.



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AmCham Kuwait delegation led by Ms. Paola De La Roche welcomed by Abdulrahman Al-Houti and Dar Almuhamma associate.

Dar Almuhamma Law Firm hosts AmCham Kuwait delegation

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Dar Almuhamma Law Firm was honored to host a distinguished delegation from the American Chamber of Commerce in Kuwait (AmCham Kuwait), as part of its ongoing efforts to strengthen cooperation between Kuwait and the United States and to explore new avenues for partnership in the legal and commercial sectors.

The delegation was led by Ms. Paola De La Roche, Executive Director, accompanied by Mr. Yousif Almahdi, Government Relations Advisor, and Ms. Aisha Alqabandi, Business Development & Partnership Associate. They were warmly received by Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Houti, Founding Partner of Dar Almu-

hama Law Firm, along with a team of partners and associates.

The discussions underscored the importance of collaboration between legal and commercial institutions in strengthening bilateral relations, supporting Kuwait's business environment, and contributing to the country's ongoing drive toward economic and legislative openness.

Dar Almuhamma Law Firm expressed its pride in hosting this visit, which reflects its role as a leading legal institution in Kuwait and reaffirms its commitment to building bridges of cooperation with international organizations and chambers of commerce. The firm remains dedicated to positioning Kuwait as a regional hub for trade, investment, and law.

Crown Prince, PM extend wishes

Kuwait Amir congratulates Ukraine on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy on his country's national day on Sunday.

His Highness the Amir wished Zelenskyy good health and more development and prosperity for Ukraine and its people. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President of

Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy on his country's national day on Sunday.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished Zelenskyy good health and more development and prosperity for Ukraine and its people.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy on his country's national day on Sunday.

KGOC, Aramco advance major projects to boost Khafji output

New directors appointed to drive expansion and efficiency

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (KGOC) has appointed Tariq Al-Masoud as Executive Director of the Khafji Joint Operations Department, say reliable sources.

Sources explained that Al-Masoud was chosen for this sensitive position due to his extensive professional experience in the oil sector, spanning many years.

Sources confirmed that KGOC aims to appoint nationals with high professional competencies and expertise. They indicated that Al-Masoud previously served as Director of Commercial Affairs at KGOC and was a

member of the joint technical committees for Wafra Joint Operations, Khafji Joint Operations, Durra Technical Committee, and the procurement committees at KGOC. They added that he held several positions at Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) and Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC).

In a related development, the same sources revealed that Chairman of the Joint Operations Committee for Khafji Operations Ali bin Saleh Al-Ajmi recently issued an administrative decision on new appointments.

The decision stipulates the appointment of Jabreen Al-Azmi as Director of the Facilities Department, Hamid Al-Hujailan as Director of the Employee Relations Department, Saleh Al-Ruwaili as Director of the Excellence and Compliance Department, Ali Al-Qahtani as Director of the Loss

Prevention and Fire Protection Department, Omar Al-Shaiji as acting Director of the Petroleum Engineering Department, Fawaz Al-Zuhair as Director of the Information Technology Department, Majed Al-Rashed as Director of the Public and Government Relations Department, Mohammad Al-Subaie as Director of the Terminal and Marine Department, Mansour Al-Subaie as Director of the Contracts Department, Nabil Al-Najrani as Director of the Information Technology Department, Yahya Al-Ghamdi as Director of the Industrial Security Department, and Youssef Al-Sharari as Director of the Technical Inspection Department.

Sources added that KGOC and Saudi Aramco Gulf Operations Company, which operate the Khafji field shared between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, are currently implementing several projects to increase the production capac-

ity of the field. These projects are utilizing precise and world-class digital technology, particularly since Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) aims to reach a sustainable crude oil production capacity, including production from the Divided Zone, of four million barrels of oil per day by 2035, while maintaining these energy quantities until 2040, they stated.

Furthermore, sources disclosed that the company aims to reach a sustainable non-associated gas production capacity of two billion cubic feet per day by 2040, indicating the joint Khafji field is among the priorities of KPC to achieve the targeted energy, considering this field contains a huge quantity of crude oil -- 60 billion barrels and 30 billion of which belong to the Kuwaiti side, while its natural gas reserves are estimated at more than 25 billion cubic meters.

Other Voices

The issue of alcohol consumption ... with an open mind

By Ahmad alsarraf

The Ministry of Health announced that the number of people poisoned due to the consumption of methanol-contaminated alcoholic beverages produced by some 'wealthy' individuals has risen to 160, including 23 deaths and several blindness cases.

I have written many times about the issue of Article 206bis, which was amended at the beginning of the democratic era of Kuwait. The text prohibited the consumption of alcoholic beverages in Kuwait.

Some 'wise' people had a different view, but it was preferred to leave the matter to the legislators.

The ban was passed with limited breathing space, which expanded after the liberation with the increasing number of foreign embassies, both Muslim and others, seeking to obtain their share of the 'ration' and dispose them in or outside the embassy.

They repeatedly demanded for the repeal of the prohibition and to make alcoholic drinks available in five-star hotels, for example.

However, our 'customs and traditions', which usually shy away as soon as the plane takes off, have always been on the lookout for any suggestion of leniency, often out of hypocrisy or fear of criticism.

The problem has exacerbated and become more troubling, with increasing speculation that continued prohibition serves the interests of those who benefit from the situation, perhaps, including alcohol dealers and smugglers or drug dealers.

It is known that the absence of alcohol often leads to increased drug consumption, and lifting the prohibition and making it available will harm smugglers.

The issue of permitting alcohol consumption has historically been troubling for many countries around the world.

The United States prohibited alcoholic beverages from 1920 to 1933, while permitting their possession within narrow limits.

The law sparked widespread controversy at the time, then it became clear it was nearly impossible to enforce due to the lack of public support and the increasing number of victims of prohibition.

Furthermore, it was a major factor in the growth of numerous



alsarraf

criminal organizations, the emergence of a black market, and the loss of many lives and sight as a result of consuming inferior brands of alcohol.

One of America's most notorious gangsters, Al Capone, also emerged during prohibition, and corruption rates among politicians and security personnel surged.

Therefore, we must discuss the prohibition of alcohol consumption in a logical manner.

The recent poisoning incident, which was the scale of a humanitarian disaster, is not the first, and it will not be the last, given the expansion of drug smuggling operations.

The excuse for the continued ban, based on the pretext that "society is conservative," is in fact meaningless.

All societies close to us consider themselves more conservative than us, yet they have not banned its use, albeit within certain limits.

This is especially true given the significant rise in the number of drug addicts among us. The official number has exceeded 80,000, which is far less than the actual number.

Half of these are citizens, and their number among smugglers and dealers is also increasing alarmingly.

Despite the tremendous efforts exerted by the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior to combat drugs, these individuals have inherited a really heavy legacy.

We need a number of rational and courageous voices in the Cabinet to discuss this issue, free from sensitivities and flattery, and with an open mind and mindset.

Note: I submitted this article for publication, and a day later, the authorities arrested two citizens – a Ministry of Interior soldier and a Customs employee – assisted by a Palestinian resident in an attempt to smuggle drugs worth KD 1.3 million.

This news confirms what we mentioned about the increasing involvement of our citizens in this horrific crime!

* * *

He has been writing for a while, trying to provoke me into responding to him, unaware that I and others know his shameful history, both professional and even family.

He certainly will not receive a response from me, which might help restore some of the prestige he has lost forever.

✉ ✉ ✉

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

SAB examines Shuwaikh tender

MEWRE issues tender for emission monitoring at power, water plants

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy intends to install a continuous emission monitoring system for power generation and water distillation plants and link it with the Environmental Monitoring Information System of the country.

Reliable sources disclosed that the ministry included in its plan for the current year a tender for the supply, installation and operation of air quality monitoring and control systems in the plants.

Sources said the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) will invite specialized companies with experience in this field to submit bids, and then make a decision on awarding the contract to the company with the best financial and technical bid in accordance with the regulations and laws.

Sources affirmed that the tender is a step towards protecting the environment from power plant emissions and ensuring good air quality, as per the rates and standards set by the Environment Public Authority (EPA).

In addition, sources stated that the ministry intends to contract with a company for the provision of logistics services to combat waste and marine

organisms at power generation and water distillation plants. Sources indicated that the ministry is scheduled to issue a tender for this purpose in the current fiscal year.

Sources explained that the tender is for combating waste and marine organisms, as well as curbing the spread of jellyfish and seaweeds and preventing heavy ship waste from entering the seawater intake channels at the plants.

Sources added the project will reduce oil spills at the sea through the installation of barriers, and the provision of oil extraction equipment and waste transport mechanisms.

Furthermore, the ministry recently referred to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) a tender for annual maintenance work on the equipment at the seawater reverse osmosis (RO) desalination project in Shuwaikh Power Generation and Water Distillation Plant, at a cost of KD 7.396 million.

The tender aims to improve the plant's efficiency and operational capacity to meet the rising demand for freshwater.

The ministry is waiting for SAB to approve the contract after studying and reviewing it, especially since the tender has gone through a number of procedures at CAPT until it obtained approval to award the contract.

Continued from Page 1

Do we

It makes business difficult for companies and their owners. It burdens the Public Authority for Manpower, which issued more than 35,000 permits during the first implementation of the circular.

It is well-known globally that an individual has the right to leave and return whenever he or she wishes to do so. No one has the right to prevent anyone from traveling except through a court order.

Furthermore, this procedure does not exist in any country.

Here, we want to ask: If someone—a company manager, a businessperson, a senior employee or an ordinary worker—wants to travel for an urgent matter, should they wait for their sponsor to authorize their departure?

If they have a leave of absence for a few days, how should they proceed? Should they wait for the leave to end before the Public Authority for Manpower approves the permit?

On the other hand, there is an unclear, rather surprising, point – domestic workers are exempted from the exit permit, while it was imposed on all other workers in the private sector that already suffers from numerous restrictions due to old decisions, some of which are still in effect.

Here, we remind His Excellency the First Deputy Prime Minister about the 'Sixty Resolution', which proved to be a failure. Upon assuming office,

Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef rescinded this unfair decision against all companies and businesses. This was a major step that corrected many of the mistakes made during the period of its implementation.

However, if the purpose of the exit permit is to prevent perpetrators of crimes or violations from traveling, this is useless. It is no longer a problem, because the criminal can obtain the permit and then leave immediately after committing the crime. Consequently, the responsibility falls on the employer, who will uncover the crime or violation after the employee's departure. This greatly preoccupies the security authorities.

Moreover, the expatriate does not leave until all fines have been paid, which is a good measure. So why the exit permit?

So, after about two months of implementing the circular, its flaws have begun to appear.

We are confident that His Excellency the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior will study these obstacles. We leave the matter for the approval of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior.

Filipino pay

The circular confirmed the adoption of a whitelist policy for agencies, limiting recruitment to agencies that adhere to ethical standards.

It also emphasized the activation

of the AKSYON Fund to cover legal, medical and financial assistance for workers in emergency situations, emphasizing that the worker's passport remains the property of the worker and should not be confiscated.

The circular clarified that these reforms will apply to new or renewed contracts 60 days after the date of issuance, affirming the commitment of all relevant agencies and offices to implement its provisions, with the DMW issuing detailed instructions to ensure full implementation.

Kuwait reports

The final account approval data indicated that the expenditures of KAPP exceeded revenues by KD3.25 million. The Ministry of Finance covered the excess expenditures from the budgets of ministries and government departments and the general accounts for fiscal 2024/2025.

As per the approved final account of Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA), its expenditures reached KD44.76 million, while the revenues amounted to KD57,019, with expenditures exceeding revenues by KD44.72 million. The Ministry of Finance covered the excess expenditures from the budgets of ministries and government departments and the general accounts.

The expenditures of Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) amounted to KD8.88

million, while revenues reached about KD1 million. The excess expenditures over revenues amounted to KD7.84 million. The Ministry of Finance covered the excess expenditures from the budgets of ministries and government departments and the general accounts.

Kuwait gold

The report emphasized that upcoming U.S. data, particularly the Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) index and unemployment figures due in early September, will be critical in shaping expectations. Should these indicators point to a softening labor market and slowing inflation, the Federal Reserve may move ahead with further rate cuts, likely supporting continued strength in gold prices.

Hazardous booze

The ministry emphasized that it continues to intensify efforts to apprehend anyone who dares to tamper with the security of society, and that it will not be lenient in enforcing the law on everyone.

It can be recalled that the Ministry of Health announced earlier the death of 23 people, mostly Asians, and the injury of 160 others as a result of consuming alcoholic beverages contaminated with methanol.

وزارة التجارة والصناعة
Ministry of Commerce & Industry
دولة الكويت | State of Kuwait

RECALL INFORMATION

Recall X7 (Fuse Box)
2021 - 2024

RECALL REASON

Electrical connections inside the fuse box do not work efficiently under high temperature conditions and may lead to electrical short circuits, which can cause fire or damage to the vehicle's electrical circuit.

REMEDY

Free Fuse Box Replacement

CONTACT

Please contact Mutawa Alkazi Company at 1833334 ext. 859 to schedule an appointment for the necessary procedures at the Shuwaikh and Ahmadi branches.

This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42,43,44,45,46,47 and48)of no.(27/2015) issuing the executive by laws no.(39/2014)on Consumer Protection

America

21 injured in bus crash near Pittsburgh: A bus carrying a junior high football team to a game crashed Saturday north of Pittsburgh, sending 21 of the 28 people on board to the hospital, officials said.

Twenty-five Aliquippa Junior High students and three adults were headed to a game in nearby Gibsonia. The crash occurred in Economy Borough, about 20 miles north of Pittsburgh.

Economy Borough Police Chief **Michael O'Brien** said he didn't have information on the medical status of those taken to hospitals.

O'Brien said he understood the bus turned on its side during the crash but came back upright as the students were evacuating the vehicle.

The police chief said the crash occurred in a tough spot in the road. "It's on a bad bend," O'Brien said. "It's being investigated now to determine what happened."

A Facebook page for the Aliquippa Junior High football team said each player was being evaluated and asked for "a thought or prayer for each player or coach that was traveling this morning." (AP)



O'Brien

Tropical Storm Fernand forms in the Atlantic Ocean: Tropical Storm Fernand formed in the Atlantic Ocean on Saturday, but it was far from land and forecast to remain over the open ocean.

The Miami-based National Hurricane Center reported that the storm was located about 325 miles (520 kilometers) southeast of Bermuda late at night.

It had maximum sustained winds of 40 mph (65 kph) and was headed north-northeast at 16 mph (26 kph).

The hurricane center said Fernand was expected to pass "well east of Bermuda," and no coastal watches or warnings were in effect. (AP)

US seeks to deport Garcia to Uganda: Immigration officials said they intend to deport Kilmar Abrego Garcia to Uganda after he declined an offer to be sent to Costa Rica in exchange for remaining in jail and pleading guilty to human smuggling charges, his defense attorneys told a court Saturday.

The Costa Rica offer came late Thursday and included a requirement that he remain in jail for the time being and then serve whatever sentence he would receive for pleading guilty, according to a brief filed in Tennessee, where the criminal case was brought. After Abrego Garcia left jail on Friday, Immigration and Customs Enforcement notified his attorneys that he would be deported to Uganda and should report to immigration authorities on Monday.

Later on Friday, "the government informed Mr. Abrego that he has until first thing Monday morning - precisely when he must report to ICE's Baltimore Field Office - to accept a plea in exchange for deportation to Costa Rica, or else that offer will be off the table forever," his defense attorneys wrote.

They declined to say whether he is still considering the offer.

Filed along with the brief was a letter from the Costa Rican government stating that Abrego Garcia would be welcomed to that country as a legal immigrant and wouldn't face the possibility of detention.

Justice Department spokesperson Chad Gilmartin responded to the brief with a statement saying, "A federal grand jury has charged Abrego Garcia with serious federal crimes ... underscoring the clear danger this defendant presents to the community. This defendant can plead guilty and accept responsibility or stand trial before a jury. Either way, we will hold Abrego Garcia accountable and protect the American people."

Abrego Garcia's case became a flash point in President Donald Trump's immigration agenda after he was mistakenly deported to El Salvador in March, despite a judge's earlier determination that he faced a "well-founded fear" of violence there. Facing a court order, the Trump administration brought him back to the U.S. in June, only to detain him on human smuggling charges.

He pleaded not guilty and asked the judge to dismiss the case, claiming that it is an attempt to punish him for challenging his deportation to El Salvador. The Saturday filing came as a supplement to that motion to dismiss, stating that the threat to deport him to Uganda is more proof that the prosecution is vindictive. (AP)

US President Trump ran on promise to use powers of government for revenge

WASHINGTON, Aug 24, (AP): Donald Trump ran on a promise to use the powers of the government for revenge against those he believed wronged him. He now appears to be fulfilling that campaign promise while threatening to expand his powers well beyond Washington.

On Friday, the FBI searched the home of John Bolton, Trump's first-term national security adviser-turned-critic, who last week in an interview called the administration "the retribution presidency."

Trump's team has opened investigations of Democrat Letitia James, the New York attorney general who sued Trump's company over alleged fraud for falsifying records, and Sen. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., who as a congressman led Trump's first impeachment. The Republican administration has charged Rep. LaMonica McIver, D-N.J., over her actions at an immigration protest in Newark, New Jersey, after arresting Mayor Ras Baraka, also a Democrat. Under investigation, too, is former New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a candidate for New York City mayor.

Trump has directed prosecutors to investigate two other members of his first administration: Miles Taylor, who wrote a book warning of what he said were Trump's authoritarian tendencies, and Chris Krebs, who earned the presi-



Members of the National Guard patrol the area around Audi Field during a soccer game between D.C. United and Inter Miami CF in Washington on Aug 23. (AP)

dent's wrath for assuring voters that the 2020 election, which Trump lost to Democrat Joe Biden, was secure.

The actions look like the payback Trump said he would pursue after being hit with four separate sets of criminal charges during his four years out of office. Those included an indictment for his effort to overturn the 2020 election that was gutted by the US Supreme Court, which said presidents have broad immunity from prosecution

for official acts while in office.

"Joe Biden weaponized his administration to target political opponents - most famously, President Trump," Abigail Jackson, a White House spokeswoman, said Saturday. Trump, she said, "is restoring law and order."

In addition to making good on his promises of retribution, Trump has deployed the military into American cities to fight crime or help with immigration arrests.

Bid to boost Republicans in 2026

Texas Governor Abbott vows to swiftly sign new GOP-leaning congressional voting map

AUSTIN, Texas, Aug 24, (AP): Texas Gov Greg Abbott on Saturday promised to quickly sign off on a new, Republican-leaning congressional voting map gerrymandered to help the GOP maintain its slim majority in Congress.

"One Big Beautiful Map has passed the Senate and is on its way to my desk, where it will be swiftly signed into law," Abbott said in a statement.

Texas lawmakers approved the final plans just hours before, inflaming an already tense battle unfolding among states as governors from both parties pledge to redraw maps with the goal of giving their political candidates a leg up in the 2026 midterm elections.

In California, Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom has approved a special election to take place in November for residents to vote on a redrawn congressional map designed to help Democrats win five more House seats next year.

Meanwhile, President Donald Trump has pushed other Republican-controlled states, including Indiana and Missouri, to also revise

their maps to add more winnable GOP seats. Ohio Republicans were also already scheduled to revise their maps to make them more partisan.

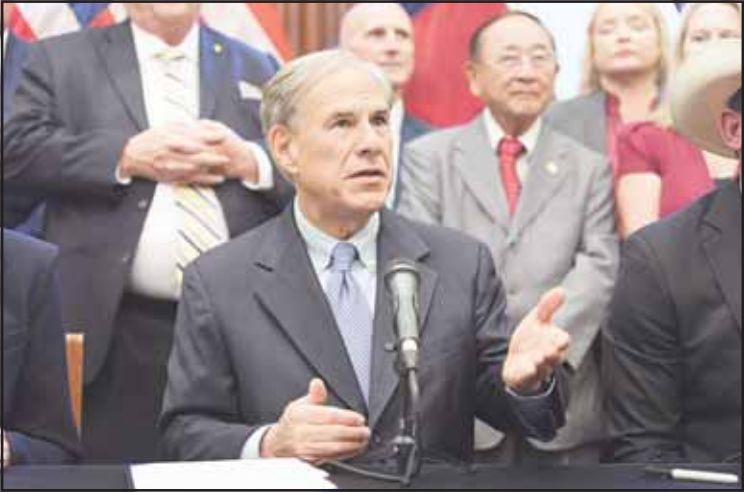
In Texas, the map includes five new districts that would favor Republicans.

The effort by Trump and Texas' Republican-majority Legislature prompted state Democrats to hold a two-week walkout and kicked off a wave of redistricting efforts across the country.

Democrats had prepared for a final show of resistance, with plans to push the Senate vote into the early morning hours in a last-ditch attempt to delay passage. Yet Republicans blocked those efforts by citing a rule violation.

"What we have seen in this redistricting process has been maneuvers and mechanisms to shut down people's voices," said state Sen. Carol Alvarado, leader of the Senate Democratic caucus, on social media after the new map was finalized by the GOP-controlled Senate.

Democrats had already delayed the bill's passage during hours of debate, pressing Republican Sen. Phil



Texas Gov Greg Abbott speaks to the media following a bill signing as Texas senators debate a bill on a redrawn US congressional map during a special session in the Senate Chamber at the Texas Capitol in Austin, Texas on Aug 22. (AP)

King, the measure's sponsor, on the proposal's legality, with many alleging that the redrawn districts violate the Voting Rights Act by diluting voters' influence based on race.

King vehemently denied that ac-

cusation, saying, "I had two goals in mind: That all maps would be legal and would be better for Republican congressional candidates in Texas."

"There is extreme risk the Republican majority will be lost" in

the House if the map does not pass, King said.

On a national level, the partisan makeup of existing districts puts Democrats within three seats of a majority. The incumbent president's party usually loses seats in the midterms.

The Texas redraw is already reshaping the 2026 race, with Democratic Rep. Lloyd Doggett, the dean of the state's congressional delegation, announcing Thursday that he will not seek reelection to his Austin-based seat if the new map takes effect. Under the proposed map, Doggett's district would overlap with that of another Democratic incumbent, Rep. Greg Casar.

Redistricting typically occurs once a decade, immediately after a census. While some states have their own limitations, there is no national impediment to a state trying to redraw districts in the middle of the decade.

The U.S. Supreme Court in 2019 ruled that the Constitution does not prohibit partisan gerrymandering to increase a party's clout, only gerrymandering that's explicitly done by

race. More Democratic-run states have commission systems like California's or other redistricting limits than Republican ones do, leaving the GOP with a freer hand to swiftly redraw maps. New York, for example, cannot draw new maps until 2028, and even then only with voter approval.

Republicans and some Democrats championed a 2008 ballot measure that established California's nonpartisan redistricting commission, along with a 2010 one that extended its role to drawing congressional maps.

Both sides have shown concern over what the redistricting war could lead to.

California Assemblyman James Gallagher, the Republican minority leader, said Trump was "wrong" to push for new Republican seats elsewhere. But he warned that Newsom's approach, which the governor has dubbed "fight fire with fire," is dangerous.

"You move forward fighting fire with fire, and what happens?" Gallagher asked. "You burn it all down."



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, (front left), and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, (front right), take part in a ceremony on Independence Day in Sophia Square in Kyiv, Ukraine, on Aug 24. (AP)

Ukraine marks independence day

Moscow blames N-plant attack on Kyiv

MOSCOW, Aug 24, (AP) Russia accused Ukraine Sunday of launching drone attacks that sparked a fire at a nuclear power plant in its western Kursk region overnight, as Ukraine celebrated 34 years since its independence.

Russian officials said several power and energy facilities were targeted in the overnight strikes. The fire at the nuclear facility was quickly extinguished with no injuries reported, according to the plant's press service on Telegram. While the attack damaged a transformer, radiation levels remained within normal ranges.

The United Nations' nuclear watchdog said it was aware of media reports that a transformer at the plants had caught fire "due to military activity," but hadn't received independent confirmation. It said its director-general, Rafael Mariano Grossi, said that "every nuclear facility must be protected at all times."

Ukraine did not immediately comment on the alleged attack.

Firefighters also responded to a blaze at the port of Ust-Luga in Russia's Leningrad region, home to a major fuel export terminal. The regional governor said approximately 10 Ukrainian drones were shot down, with debris igniting the fire.

Russia's Defense Ministry claimed its air defenses intercepted 95 Ukrainian drones over Russian territory overnight into Sunday.



A woman walks amid destroyed Russian tanks in Bucha, on the outskirts of Kyiv, Ukraine on April 3, 2022. (AP)

Russia fired 72 drones and decoys, along with a cruise missile, into Ukraine overnight into Sunday, Ukraine's air force said. Of these, 48 drones were shot down or jammed.

The incidents occurred as Ukraine marked independence day, commemorating its 1991 declaration of independence from the Soviet Union. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy delivered remarks in a video address from Kyiv's Independence Square, emphasizing the nation's resolve.

"We are building a Ukraine that will have enough strength and power to live in security and peace," Zelenskyy

said, calling for a "just peace."

"What our future will be is up to us alone," he said, in a nod to the U.S.-Russia summit in Alaska earlier in August, which many feared would leave Ukrainian and European interests sidelined.

"And the world knows this. And the world respects this. It respects Ukraine. It perceives Ukraine as an equal," he said.

U.S. special envoy Keith Kellogg was in attendance at independence day celebrations in Kyiv, during which Zelenskyy awarded him the Ukrainian Order of Merit, of the 1st degree.

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney arrived in Kyiv on Sunday morning for meetings with Zelenskyy.

"On this special day - Ukraine's Independence Day - it is especially important for us to feel the support of our friends. And Canada has always stood by our side," wrote Andriy Yermak, Zelenskyy's chief of staff.

Norway announced significant new military aid Sunday, pledging about 7 billion kroner (\$695 million) for air defense systems. Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store said Norway and Germany are jointly funding two Patriot systems, including missiles, with Norway also helping procure air defense radar.

Meanwhile, fighting continued on the front line in eastern Ukraine, where Russia claimed Saturday that its forces had seized two villages in the Donetsk region.

Female political prisoners in Belarus face humiliation, threats of losing parental rights

TALLINN, Estonia, Aug 24, (AP): Antanina Kanavalava says her four years in a Belarusian penal colony as a political prisoner were filled with a fear and anguish that still haunts her.

She nearly lost parental rights to her two young children when she was initially arrested. Her eyesight deteriorated from sewing military uniforms in a dimly lit room. Denied access to even basic needs like feminine hygiene products, she used rags or whatever she could find amid unsanitary conditions.

"Women in prison go through hell and can't even complain to anyone," Kanavalava, 37, told The Associated Press after her release in December. "The head of the prison told me straight out that people like me should be put against the wall and shot."

Belarus has nearly 1,200 political prisoners. While all endure harsh conditions like unheated cells, isolation and poor nutrition and health care, human rights officials say the 178 women behind bars are particularly vulnerable.

Pavel Sapelka, a lawyer with the Viasna human rights center, says women are often singled out for abuse and humiliation, threatened with losing their children, and having medical problems ignored.

Sapelka cited the case of Hanna Kandratsenka, 30, who died of cervical cancer in February, months after getting her freedom. She was diagnosed in prison but denied early release for treatment, he said.

Independent experts appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council describe "appalling" conditions for women in Belarusian prisons, with "a blatant lack of accountability for the ill treatment."

Authoritarian President Lukashenko



Belarus opposition activist Maria Kolesnikova stands behind bars in a defendants' cage in a court in Minsk, Belarus, on Aug 4, 2021. (AP)

has ruled Belarus for over three decades, living up to his nickname of "Europe's last dictator" by silencing dissent and extending his rule through elections the West calls neither free nor fair. A harsh crackdown followed a disputed 2020 vote, when hundreds of thousands took to the streets. Over 65,000 people were arrested, thousands were beaten by police and hundreds of independent media outlets and nongovernmental organizations were closed and outlawed.

Opposition figures are either imprisoned or have fled abroad. Among those behind bars is Nobel Peace Prize laureate Ales Bialiatski, the founder of Viasna, and Maria Kolesnikova, an opposition leader. Although Lukashenko has freed over 300 political prisoners in the last year, still others are arrested in a revolving door of repression.

U.S. President Donald Trump said

last week on social media that he spoke with Lukashenko and encouraged him to release more. On Friday, Lukashenko responded: "Take them, bring them over there."

Of the harsh conditions, Lukashenko says Belarus treats inmates "normally," adding that "prison is not a resort."

The government has refused to allow international monitors and independent observers into the prisons.

Kanavalava was a confidant of opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, who challenged Lukashenko in the 2020 election but later fled the country amid the subsequent protests.

With her husband also jailed, Kanavalava was convicted of "participating in mass riots" and sentenced to 5 1/2 years. Authorities threatened to send her 6-year-old son, Ivan, and 4-year-old daughter, Nasta, to an orphanage at the start of her sentence.

Europe

Pope meets with Chagos refugees: Pope Leo XIV

strongly affirmed the right of people to return to their homes after an unjust exile, issuing the message during an audience Saturday with refugees from Chagos, the Indian Ocean archipelago that is home to the strategic US-UK military base.

"No one can force them into exile," history's first American pope said.

Leo met with a delegation of about 15 refugees from Chagos, some 2,000 of whom who were evicted from their homes by Britain in the 1960s and 1970s so the United States could build a naval and bomber base on the largest of the islands, Diego Garcia.



Pope Leo XIV

Displaced islanders fought for years in UK courts for the right to go home. In May, Britain and Mauritius signed a treaty to hand sovereignty over the islands to Mauritius that allows resettlement, while still ensuring the future of the base.

Leo told the refugees he was "delighted" the treaty had been reached, saying it represented a "significant victory" in their long battle to "repair a grave injustice. He praised in particular the role of the Chagossian women in peacefully asserting their rights to go home. (AP)

Three dead as violent storms sweep Romania:

Three people were killed and four others injured after violent storms hit Romania on Friday evening, emergency services said Saturday.

The storms battered 18 counties and the capital Bucharest, toppling more than 240 trees and power poles, flooding dozens of basements and courtyards, and damaging over 70 cars, the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (IGSU) reported. (Xinhua)

Missiles effective in countering aerial threats

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un supervises test of new anti-air missiles: state media

SEOUL, South Korea, Aug 24, (AP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un supervised the test-firing of two types of new anti-air missiles, state media said Sunday, displaying his expanding military capabilities as the South Korean and US militaries carry out joint drills.

The North’s official Korean Central News Agency said the test Saturday proved the missiles effective in countering aerial threats such as drones and cruise missiles, and that Kim assigned unspecified “important” tasks to defense scientists ahead of a major political conference expected early next year.

The report did not specify the missiles that were tested or where the event took place. It did not mention any remarks by Kim directed at Washington or Seoul.

The test coincided with new South Korean President Lee Jae Myung’s trip to Tokyo for a summit with Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, where they vowed to strengthen bilateral cooperation and their trilateral partnership with the United States to address common challenges, including North Korea’s nuclear ambitions. Lee was to depart for Washington on Sunday for a summit with US President Donald Trump.

Kim’s government has repeatedly dismissed calls by Seoul and Washington to restart long-stalled negotiations aimed at winding down his nuclear weapons and missiles programs, as he continues to prioritize Russia as part of a foreign policy aimed at expanding ties with nations confronting the United States.

Since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, Kim has sent thousands of troops and large shipments of weapons, including artillery and ballistic missiles, to help fuel President Vladimir Putin’s warfighting.

That has raised concerns Moscow could provide technology that strengthens Kim’s nuclear-armed military, with experts pointing to North Korea’s aging anti-air and radar systems as a likely area of cooperation. South Korea’s previous conservative government said in November that Russia supplied missiles and other equipment to help strengthen air defenses of the North Korean capital of Pyongyang, but did not specify which systems were provided. Kim held a ceremony in Pyongyang last week to honor North Korean soldiers who fought in Ukraine, awarding state “hero” titles to those who returned and placing medals beside 101 portraits of the fallen, praising them as “great men, great heroes and great patriots,” state media reported. According to South Korean assessments, North Korea



In this photo provided on Aug 24, 2025, by the North Korean government, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, (left), supervises the test-firing of two types of new anti-air missiles at an undisclosed location, North Korea on Aug 23. (AP)

rea has sent around 15,000 troops to Russia since last fall and about 600 of them have died in combat. Kim has also agreed to send thousands of military construction workers and demonstrators to Russia’s Kursk region, a deployment South Korean intelligence

believes could happen soon.

North Korea accused South Korea of a “serious provocation” Saturday after South Korean troops fired warning shots at North Korean soldiers setting up barriers along their tense border.

Ko Jong Chol, vice chief of the North Korean People’s Army’s General Staff, noted that Tuesday’s warning shots coincided with the South Korea-US summertime military drills and accused Seoul of deliberately trying to raise tensions.

Shortly after Ko’s statement, South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff confirmed it had fired warning shots Tuesday afternoon at North Korean soldiers who briefly crossed the military demarcation line in the central border region while carrying out unspecified construction work. The South’s military said the soldiers returned to North Korean territory without incident and that the North didn’t return fire.

In recent months, South Korea’s military has occasionally used loud-speaker warnings and fired warning shots to repel North Korean soldiers crossing the military demarcation line. The incidents were largely seen as accidental as North Korean troops build anti-tank barriers, plant mines and carry out other work to reinforce border defenses amid heightened tensions.

Ko said the North Korean soldiers were conducting a “barrier project to permanently block the southern border,” as part of broader efforts of “completely separating” the territory between the Koreans, when the South responded with an audio warning and warning shots. Ko said the North had informed US forces in the South of their plans for the border work on June 25 and July 18 to prevent accidental clashes.

“As the commanding officer responsible for the southern border management and security, I strongly demand (the South) to immediately stop the dangerous provocation aimed to make the fortification project in the southern border necessary for defending our sovereignty an excuse for escalation of tension,” Ko said in a statement.

Animosity between the Koreans is running high now as North Korean leader Kim Jong Un continues to flaunt his military nuclear capabilities and align with Russia over President Vladimir Putin’s war on Ukraine.

Asia

3 dead, 1 injured in Philippine road crash: Three motorists have died and one has been injured after a van crashed into two roadside houses along a highway in Quezon province, southeast of Manila, police said Sunday.

In a report, police said the van was enroute to a village from the town center when it crashed into two houses in San Narciso town around 4:30 p.m. local time Saturday.

The accident killed the car’s 45-year-old male driver and his two passengers, a 62-year-old male and a 57-year-old female. Another 48-year-old female passenger was also injured in the accident.

No occupants of the two houses were injured in the crash. Police are investigating the cause of the crash. (Xinhua)

3 hospitalized in Sydney stabbing: Three people have been hospitalized, including two with stab wounds, after being found unresponsive at a home west of Sydney on Sunday morning.

Police in the Australian state of New South Wales said that emergency services were called to conduct a welfare check at the home in the suburb of Leura, 80 km west of central Sydney, at around 7:30 a.m. local time on Sunday.

Officers arrived and found two men, both believed to be aged in their 40s, with multiple stab wounds, and a woman believed to be in her 60s, unconscious at the scene. All three were unresponsive.

They were treated by ambulance paramedics before being taken to hospital. Both men were in serious but stable conditions, and the woman was critical. (Xinhua)

Kajiki drenches southern China’s Hainan: Strong

winds and heavy rain whipped southern China’s Hainan island and nearby parts of Guangdong province on Sunday, as Typhoon Kajiki passed over open waters to the south and headed toward Vietnam’s central coast.

About 20,000 people were evacuated from potentially hazardous areas ahead of the storm, China’s official Xinhua News Agency said. Fishing boats returned to port and more than 21,000 crew members came onshore.

Kajiki gained strength as it moved west over the sea with maximum sustained winds of 162 kilometers (100 miles) per hour, China’s National Meteorological Center said.

Rainfall of 25 to 35 centimeters (10 to 14 inches) was forecast for southern parts of Hainan island including Sanya, a popular beach resort. (AP)

Chinese FM and Pakistani PM meet: Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meets Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, saying that the friendship between Pakistan and China is unique, with their all-weather friendship covering various fields and levels.

Sharif said he very much looks forward to attending the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Tianjin Summit in China and commemorative events marking the 80th anniversary of victory in the Chinese People’s War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War.

He said that the Pakistani side hopes to work with China to promote the building of an upgraded Version 2.0 of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), deepen cooperation in agriculture, mining, energy and resources, aviation and aerospace, information technology, infrastructure construction and other fields, and enhance the vitality of Pakistan’s economic and social development. (Xinhua)



Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meets with visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, in Islamabad, Pakistan on Aug 21. (Xinhua)

War-displaced Sudanese return to shattered Khartoum eager to rebuild lives and homes

KHARTOUM, Sudan, Aug 24, (AP): All that remains of Afaf al-Tayeb’s home in Sudan’s Khartoum province is a charred, windowless structure with peeling paint - yet in June, she eagerly returned, feeling safe again for the first time since the Sudanese army said it retook the capital from the rival Rapid Support Forces.

Al-Tayeb had been displaced with her son Mohamed al-Khedr and their family at least four times since the civil war in the North African nation broke out over two years ago. They were displaced in different areas in Khartoum, yet nothing has ever felt as comforting as their house in the Al-Qawz district of Khartoum City.

She misses the photographs of her parents and late husband which were lost when her home was damaged by fire in March, along with all her other possessions. The loss of her home left her in tears and deep sorrow, she told The Associated Press.

The family was first displaced to the Hilaliya area, in Gezira province, taking nothing but the clothes they were wearing, until the RSF made advances in the province and forced them to return to Al-Qawz.

Al-Tayeb said RSF fighters then expelled her and her family, and they had to flee to east Khartoum onto Shendi and then Om Durman city.

“They looked very strange - indescribable - and their appearance was frightening,” she said of the RSF fighters who raided her home.

Al-Tayeb and her son are among roughly 1.2 million people who returned to Sudan between December 2024 and May this year, according to the latest estimates by the International Organization for Migration.

The U.N.’s refugee agency says more than 12 million people have been forcibly displaced since the current conflict began in April 2023, with 3.2 million Sudanese seeking refuge in neighboring countries.

The conflict has killed more than 40,000 people, pushed many to the brink of famine, and caused several disease outbreaks.

Khartoum was the epicenter of fighting at the start of the war, but the army said it had recaptured the capital earlier this year, including important landmarks such as the airport and ministerial buildings.



Afaf El-Tayeb, 63, sits at her damaged and looted home after her return, following the fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), in Khartoum, Sudan on Aug 15. (AP)

frightening,” she said of the RSF fighters who raided her home.

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6 killed and many injured as heavy rain wreaks havoc in India’s Jharkhand

NEW DELHI, Aug 24, (Xinhua): At least six people were killed and many others injured as heavy rains hit several parts of India’s eastern state of Jharkhand over the past 24 hours, officials said Saturday.

The rains, accompanied by gusty winds, uprooted trees and electricity poles in several places and collapsed houses.

On Friday night, a woman and her seven-year-old son were killed, while eight others were injured after a house collapsed in Seraikela-Kharsawan district.

In a separate incident in the Kol Shimla area of the district, a five-year-old was killed and three others were injured after a wall of a house collapsed on Saturday morning.

A couple was washed away in the swelling Siyari River in Chatra district. According to officials, the body of the husband was fished out while the search for his wife is underway.

Meanwhile, another person was also killed in Khairatola village Chatra district, in a rain-related incident.

The incessant rains inundated roads, low-lying localities and farmlands in the affected areas.

The rains have also triggered waterlogging and resulted in traffic congestion at several places.

Also:

NEW DELHI: At least 10 people were killed and three others critically injured Saturday in a collision between an autorickshaw and a truck in the eastern Indian state of Bihar, the police said.

The accident took place on **Daniyawan-Hilsa** state highway-4 in **Patna**, the capital city of Bihar.

“Today, a truck rammed into the autorickshaw, carrying 13 people, including the driver, that was coming from the op-



Rain clouds hover over the Kangra valley in Dharamshala, India on Aug 24. (Xinhua)

posite direction. Seven people were killed on the spot while three others succumbed to their injuries in the hospital,” a senior police official said. “Three injured have been moved to the hospital, and their condition is stated to be critical.”

Officials said of the 10 deceased, nine were women and the tenth was identified as the autorickshaw driver.

The autorickshaw was completely crushed due to the impact of the collision.

The police suspect the accident was caused by the truck driver, as he fled from the scene after the crash.

The police have registered a case and ordered an investigation to ascertain the cause of the accident. A police team has been formed to arrest the truck driver.

Argentina investigates alleged kickback scheme entangling Milei’s inner circle

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, Aug 24, (AP): Argentine police on Friday raided over a dozen luxury homes and offices including the headquarters of a national agency charged with providing disability benefits, an official said, escalating a corruption investigation that threatens to ensnarl the closest advisers of libertarian President Javier Milei, including his powerful sister Karina.

Ordered by federal judge Sebastián Casanella, the operation targeted 15 locations in and around Buenos Aires as fallout spread from audio recordings leaked to local media purporting to show Diego Spagnuolo, President Milei’s personal lawyer and the head of the country’s disability agency, describing a kickback scheme tied to government health contracts that funneled money to top officials.

An Argentine official with knowledge of the investigation, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the case publicly, gave details of Friday’s raids to The Associated Press.

It’s not the first time Milei’s inner circle has been accused of taking bribes. The first big scandal of his presidency erupted earlier this year after he promoted an unknown cryptocurrency token called SLIBRA that shot up in value after his endorsement then cratered, prompting dozens of criminal complaints alleging fraud from Buenos Aires to New York City.

This latest firestorm saw Milei’s government dismiss Spagnuolo from his post Thursday over the released recordings in which he can be heard complaining about how pharmaceutical companies pay bribes to Karina Milei, the president’s chief of staff and top adviser, to secure government drug purchases for disabled people.

The date and location of the audio, recorded in secret, remain unclear. Only Spagnuolo’s voice can be heard over the low clatter of cutlery and coffee cups, suggesting the conversation was captured in a cafe or some other public place. The other interlocutors cannot be identified.



Argentine President Javier Milei, (left), and his sister Karina Milei, the general secretary of the presidency, attend the opening ceremony of the Rural Society's annual exposition, in Buenos Aires, Argentina on July 26. (AP)

The government has not confirmed nor denied the authenticity of the recordings.

In the audio, Spagnuolo can be heard calling out the major pharmaceutical company Suizo Argentina as offering bribes to Karina Milei through her close confidant, Eduardo “Lule” Menem.

“They’re embezzling my agency. They’ve assigned a guy who handles everything related to my coffers,” the alleged voice of Spagnuolo says. “They’re going to ask people for money, the providers.”

Lat/Am

‘Bolsonaro received \$5m over 1 year’: Brazilian federal police accuse former president Jair Bolsonaro of receiving large sums of money without apparent justification between March of 2023 and February of 2024, according to documents obtained by The Associated Press, potentially adding to the embattled former leader’s legal woes.

Investigators say Brazil’s financial watchdog suspects it has a case of money laundering involving Bolsonaro, who in early September will face the verdict and sentencing phase of his trial over an alleged coup plot. The former president could face another trial if the attorney general decides to charge him on accusations of obstruction of justice.

Bolsonaro did not immediately comment on the latest accusation but in the past has claimed he is being persecuted politically by the government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. (AP)

Quake strikes off coast of El Salvador: A large earthquake struck in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Guatemala and El Salvador Saturday morning, the US Geological Survey reported.

The magnitude 6.0 tremor was recorded at 4:14 am at a shallow depth of 10 kilometers (6 miles). Its epicenter was 81 kilometers (50 miles) southwest of Acajutla, El Salvador and 107 km (66 miles) south-southeast of Puerto San Jose, Guatemala.

Acajutla is El Salvador’s principal commercial port and is also used by cruise ships. Puerto San Jose is the largest town on Guatemala’s Pacific coast.

There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties. (AP)

Nigerian military airstrikes free 76 hostages, including children

ABUJA, Nigeria, Aug 24, (Agencies): At least 76 hostages, including children, have been freed after Nigeria’s military targeted militants with precision airstrikes in the country’s northwest, local authorities said.

The airstrikes were launched on targets around Pauwa Hill, located in the Kankara area of Katsina state, in the early hours of Saturday, Nasir Mu’azu, the state’s commissioner for internal security, said in a statement. The air assault was launched in a manhunt for a notorious kidnapper.

The rescued hostages include some of those kidnapped during an attack on a mosque in Unguwan Mantau that led to the death of at least 50 people, the commissioner said.

In recent months, there has been an uptick in attacks on communities in the northwest and north-central regions of Africa’s most populous country, where farmers often clash over limited access to land and water. An attack last month in north-central Nigeria killed 150 people.

Separate airstrikes in the northwest of Nigeria killed 35 militants. Despite the efforts by the government of **Bola Tinubu** to curb jihadi attacks, the militancy has persisted.



Tinubu

Kuwaiti oil tanker arrives in Lebanon

BEIRUT, Aug 24, (Xinhua): The first Kuwaiti oil tanker arrived in Lebanese territorial waters on Saturday under a deal to supply Lebanon with urgently needed fuel for its power plants, according to the office of Lebanon's energy minister.

Under the agreement, Kuwait will provide 132,000 metric tons of gas oil to Lebanon's state-run power utility EDL, with 66,000 tons granted as a donation.



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

COP30 must deliver fairness

AEO Chief: Oil, gas to keep dominant role in energy mix

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): Arab Energy Organization (AEO) Secretary-General Jamal Al-Loughani emphasized on Sunday, the importance of diversifying the energy mix, stressing that oil and gas will remain dominant with over 50 percent share both now and in the future.

Al-Loughani made this statement to KUNA on the occasion of the Secretariat's release of the quarterly monitoring report concerning developments in new and renewable energies, energy transitions, and climate change for the second quarter of 2025.

Al-Loughani attributed this dominance mainly to rising demand for oil and gas across various economic sectors, including transport and electricity, alongside their indispensable role in key industries such as petrochemicals, fertilizers, and several heavy industries critical for development.

He explained that increased investment and innovation by member states in clean technologies, like carbon capture, utilization, and storage, will ensure that the petroleum industry becomes more sustainable and reliable in meeting growing global energy demand effectively.

The renewable energy sector, meanwhile, experienced notable global expansion during the second quarter of 2025, driven by large investments and supportive policies, with China continuing leadership by securing half of global solar capacity and developing pioneering wind technologies.

Al-Loughani pointed out that in the US, clean energy supplied the majority of electricity for three consecutive months, March to May, marking an unprecedented milestone, while India recorded strong growth in renewable capacities.

He also highlighted that several Arab countries continued pursuing policies to support renewable energy, in alignment with broader strategies of economic diversification and long-term sustainability, thus strengthening resilience against external shocks and volatile global energy markets significantly.

Despite positive momentum, renewable energy faced challenges including political and regulatory instability in some markets, stressing that reinforcing renewable infrastructure has become a necessity, particularly as climate risks escalate alongside global interest in sustainable energy.

Al-Loughani affirmed that Arab countries possess the capacity to produce green hydrogen competitively, enabling carbon reduction directly or via derivatives like ammonia, while attracting foreign in-

vestment, creating jobs, improving trade balance, and exporting low-carbon products internationally.

He stressed that aligning ambitions with implementation capacity is essential for a successful energy transition, noting it is no longer merely an environmental issue but a cornerstone of economic stability.

This requires adopting realistic strategies, securing long-term investments, and establishing reliable regulatory frameworks.

Despite global progress, a significant financing gap remains, with over 90 percent of clean energy investments since 2021 concentrated in advanced economies and China.

This is in contrast to the fact that 80 percent of future energy demand growth is expected from developing countries, which highlights a structural imbalance that must be addressed to ensure a fair and effective global transition.

He emphasized the strategic role of nuclear energy in enhancing global energy security and reducing emissions. While challenges remain, continued advances in reactor technologies present new, flexible, and efficient options suitable for a wide range of national needs.

Critical minerals markets, he said, are central to the clean energy shift. However, geopolitical constraints pose key challenges.

He underscored the importance of boosting investments in exploration, recycling technologies, and global partnerships to ensure market stability and prevent supply disruptions that could hinder the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Al-Loughani also highlighted the growing role of data centers as vital infrastructure for the digital global economy. As artificial intelligence and digital services expand, he called for greater coordination between tech firms, governments, and energy providers to secure clean and reliable power sources, while promoting innovative solutions to reduce consumption and enhance operational efficiency.

Climate change, he stated, has become a pressing reality requiring urgent global action for adaptation and mitigation.

He called for COP30 to be a turning point in delivering fairness, equity, and financial support for those most vulnerable to climate risks.

Finally, he noted that artificial intelligence holds vast potential to curb greenhouse gas emissions by optimizing energy use, improving distribution, monitoring industrial emissions, enhancing grid efficiency, forecasting energy demand, and enabling early warning systems for extreme weather to allow for proactive disaster risk management.

Business

Encouraging the youth to plan and maximize their savings

KFH offers Injaz investment plan for the youth

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: In line with its leadership in delivering innovative and customer-centric financial products, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continues to stand out by offering the best investment plans and solutions that meet international standards of quality and excellence. A prime example is the Injaz Investment Plan, which enables the youth to achieve their future dreams by investing their savings for specific goals, such as starting a business or purchasing a home.

The Injaz investment plan is available for customers aged 21 to 55, with saving durations ranging from 2 to 15 years. By committing to monthly savings that yield investment profits, customers gain access to a growing fund available whenever they need it. When opened, Injaz will automatically have a Takaful insurance coverage. This insurance will cover the unpaid savings due to death or total disability (due to sickness or accident) during the saving period. The investment plan also offers the convenience of adjusting investment amounts, or monthly installments at any time, with automatic monthly transfers from the customer's account.

KFH's investment plans are recognized for their flexibility. Customers may withdraw up to 60% of the balance in the first year, and up to 60% each year following the initial withdrawal. They can also deposit fixed amounts in addition to their monthly savings without affecting the plan schedule. The full investment amount, together with the accumulated profits, becomes avail-



KFH empowers youth with Injaz investment plan.

able at the end of the term. Customers may cancel the investment plan at any time, in which case the invested amount and any profits earned up to the cancellation date will be refunded to their account.

Injaz reflects KFH's broader strategy to serve all segments of customers with banking products tailored to their evolving needs, while also enhancing financial security in the community, and fostering a culture of saving and future planning among families.

It is worth noting that KFH offers a variety of saving plans tailored to different investment goals. These plans include Jameati Investment Plan which is designed to support children's college education when they reach 18 years old. KFH also offers Rafaa Marriage Investment Plan, helping parents cover their children's wedding expenses and plan for their future family life. Additionally, Thimar investment plan assists individuals in achieving a comfortable retirement after years of dedication.

Students with special needs receive tablets through Warba initiative

Warba Bank sponsors KISR's training program to promote concepts of 'sustainable development'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: As part of its commitment to social responsibility and its role in supporting initiatives that promote sustainable development and serve all segments of society, Warba Bank announced its sponsorship of a training program organized by the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR).

The program is dedicated to instilling the principles of sustainable development among school students, with a particular focus on students with special needs.

The program targeted approximately 162 students from the 10th and 11th grades across various schools in Kuwait. It featured eight specialized scientific programs centered on daily and practical applications, enabling students to become active ambassadors of positive change within society. Eight students with special needs were selected to participate, and Warba Bank provided them with tablets to support their continued use of the program's content during and after the course.

Commenting on this new collaboration, Dr. Mohammad Barakat, Chief Marketing and Corporate Communication Officer at Warba Bank, stated: "We are proud to sponsor this program, which combines education with the instilling of sustainability concepts in students. We firmly believe that investing in the awareness of future generations is an investment in Kuwait's future and its development vision. Involving students with special needs and providing them with tablets reflects our commitment to inclusivity and our deep belief that every individual in society deserves equal opportunities to be a partner in driving positive change."

Dr. Barakat emphasized that this initiative reflects the Bank's strategic direction in recent years towards supporting sustainability pro-



Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) training program.

grams and enhancing inclusivity, with a particular focus on individuals with special needs as an integral part of society. He stressed that investing in the education of future generations is, ultimately, an investment in the future of Kuwait and its development aspirations.

He added: "We view this initiative as an extension of Warba Bank's long-standing approach to reinforcing the values of social and humanitarian responsibility. We place people at the heart of every initiative, and we continuously strive to support national programs that create a lasting impact on society."

The Institute, in cooperation with Warba Bank, launched the program on August 19 this year to coincide with World Humanitarian Day and in tribute to the late Adel Al-Tararwa, a student with Down syndrome who had been one of the outstanding participants

in previous editions of the program.

Warba Bank continues its role as a trusted financial partner that combines innovation with social responsibility in delivering best-in-class services and initiatives. This reaffirms its position as a leading Islamic financial institution that places people and society at the core of its strategy.

Warba Bank is among the institutions that have achieved remarkable success in a relatively short period. It has established a leading position in the field of Islamic digital banking and today stands as one of the local banks with the largest shareholder bases, making it close to all segments of society. This accomplishment further reinforces Warba's standing as a trusted banking partner that combines innovation and social responsibility in offering the best financial services and products.

Officials review joint efforts on industrial cooperation

Saudi-Egyptian council holds first meeting in Riyadh

RIYADH, Aug 24, (KUNA): The General Secretariat of the Saudi-Egyptian Supreme Coordination Council held its first meeting on Thursday in the Saudi capital Riyadh to discuss ways to strengthen strategic relations between the two Arab countries.

Royal Court Advisor Mohammad Al-Tuwaijri represented the Saudi side in this meeting while Egypt was represented by Deputy Prime Minister for Industrial Development and Minister of Industry and Transport Kamel Al-Wazir, the Saudi Foreign Ministry said a press statement.

The two sides reviewed their visions for boosting the strategic relations between the two countries and preparations for the first Saudi-Egyptian Supreme Coordination Council meeting, which



KUNA photo
Royal Court Advisor Mohammad Al-Tuwaijri and Deputy Prime Minister for Industrial Development and Minister of Industry and Transport Kamel Al-Wazir

will be chaired by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman and Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah Al-Sisi.

The Saudi Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources Bandar Al-Khorayef discussed with the visiting Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and Transport Kamel El-Wazir on Thursday enhancing industrial integration between the Kingdom and Egypt.

The Saudi Press Agency reported that the two sides affirmed, during the meeting, the strength of the strategic partnership binding the two countries and the depth of their economic ties particularly the industrial sector.

They reviewed the efforts of the joint technical teams to develop industrial cooperation and integration between the two countries.

They also underlined the need to address challenges facing exporters and investors in the both countries.

Boursa Kuwait ends mixed as All Share Index plunges

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): Kuwait's stock exchange ended Sunday's session in mixed territory, with the overall market slipping despite a positive showing from the Main Market Index.

The All Share Index edged down 15.34 points, or 0.18 percent, to 8,650.50 points, as 536.5 million shares changed hands through 24,321 transactions, with a total value of KD 112.7 million (USD 343.7 million).

In contrast, the Main Market Index recorded an advance of 34.84 points, or 0.44 percent, closing at 7,945.59 points. Trading volume in this segment reached 284.4 million shares through

13,840 transactions, worth KD 38.15 million (USD 116.3 million).

Meanwhile, the Premier Market Index declined 28.62 points, or 0.31 percent, to finish at 9,253.78 points. A total of 252.12 million shares were traded across 10,481 deals, with liquidity amounting to KD 74.6 million (USD 227.5 million).

The Main 50 Index also retreated, shedding 26.90 points, or 0.34 percent, to settle at 7,964.37 points. It saw trading activity involve 197.3 million shares through 8,898 cash transactions, valued at KD 30.4 million (around USD 92.7 million).

KREC gets CMA approval to increase capital by 15%

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): Kuwait Real Estate Company (KREC) announced Sunday that the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) has approved its plan to raise capital by 15 percent through the issuance of 159.6 million new shares, valued at KD 15.9 million (USD 48.4 million).

According to a disclosure published on Boursa Kuwait's website, the company's capital will rise from KD 106.4 million (USD 324.5 million) to KD 122.4 million (USD 373.3 million).

The new shares will be offered at 100 fils per share, plus an issuance pre-

mium, with subscription rights granted to existing shareholders. KREC stated that the financial impact of the increase will be announced once all procedures with the relevant authorities are finalized.

Established in 1972 and listed on the Kuwait Stock Exchange in 1984, Kuwait Real Estate Company is active across the real estate sector. Its operations include the purchase and sale of land and properties, leasing and rental services, property development, as well as investments in similar ventures and managed portfolios.



Salah Al-Fulaij, CEO of the National Bank of Kuwait, with the trainees in the presence of Emad Al-Ablani and Hisham Al Nusif.



Part of the audience.

In line with its strategy to invest in human capital & develop national professionals

NBK honors graduates of Prime Leadership & Pioneers Programs

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: In line with its committed strategy towards investing in human capital and developing national professionals, National Bank of Kuwait celebrated the graduation of a new batch of distinguished leaders and employees from the extensive training programs Prime Leadership Program and the NBK Pioneers Program designed to upskill and help advance the careers of high potential employees.

The graduation ceremony was attended by Mr. Salah Al-Fulaij, CEO-Kuwait at National Bank of Kuwait, Mr. Emad Al-Ablani, Group Chief Human Resources Officer, Mr. Hisham Al Nusif, Chief, Consumer Banking, the Sales and Distribution Division Management from Consumer Banking Group, in addition to several other NBK management and leaders.

During the Prime Leadership Program, Learning and Development focused on enabling distinguished leaders from branch and area managers to develop their leadership skills, deepen their strategic thinking, and enhance their ability to make effective decisions in a dynamic work environment. 56 leaders graduated from this program after completing a comprehensive training journey divided into two stages. The first stage, which started in September and ended November 2024, covered key areas such as high-performing team building, strategy and decision-making, training and orientation to achieve success, and contemporary market trends. The second stage, which started in January and ended August 2025,



Najla Al-Sager

focused on advanced topics such as leading with emotional intelligence, adopting innovation in the banking services, focusing on the customer by creating a comprehensive experience, financial selling methods for non-financial managers, dealing with change, and managing multi-generational teams. The courses were tailored in collaboration with top local and international experts such as Eurotech, Lifelong, IDRAK, Mawaarid, Meran, Franklin Covey, and Trusted Advizor.

As for NBK Pioneers Program, Talent Management designed the Program to fo-

Najla Al-Sager:

- At NBK, we believe that investing in our professionals is a remarkable future investment.
- Our upskilling strategy is fruitful and guarantees our continued excellence and leadership.
- NBK has become a distinguished workplace due to its future vision that promotes professional development and innovation.
- We are dedicated to enhancing our competencies through specialized training programs as per international standards.
- Educational and training initiatives are at the heart of NBK's strategic plans.

cuson equipping the participants with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to reach their highest potential as a new generation of NBK leaders within the Sales & Distribution Divisions.

The modular based program lasted for 6 months and saw the graduation of 16 high potential employees who underwent extensive training topics such as Self-Marketing, AI in Retail Banking, Mega Trends In Technology, Fraud Prevention, Advanced Selling Skills, Business Etiquette, Leading High Performing Teams, Generation Gap And The New Tech Savvy Customer-amongst many others.

After completing the academic part, the participants underwent an Innovation Challenge, through which they developed innovative ideas and solutions and presented them to the bank' Management, and the winner was honored during the ceremony.

The top three performers were also honored in the graduation ceremony.

The graduates of NBK Pioneers will begin a training journey under the supervision of best performing NBK Prime alumni, which establishes a sustainable cycle of orientation and experience sharing at NBK.

On this occasion, Najla Al-Sager, SVP - Head of Talent Management & Learning at NBK commented: "At NBK, we believe that investing in human capital is a remarkable future investment, and we are pleased with the graduation of these new batches. This celebration confirms the fruitfulness of our professional development strategy and highlights our continued excellence and leadership spearheaded by inspiring national leaders who can lead, adapt, and innovate with confidence."

She also added: "We are dedicated to el-

evating the efficiency of our professionals through a selection of diverse and specialized training programs as per international standards, which enhances our operational efficiency and our distinguished place as a workplace that values future visions and supports professional development and innovation."

Al-Sagerindicated that educational and training initiatives are at the heart of NBK's strategy, as the bank has established a comprehensive framework for career development and guidance through diverse in-house opportunities. This multi-faceted approach is made to enable employees to envision their career paths and achieve success and innovation in a nurturing work environment.

Moreover, Al-Sageremphasized that these specialized programs mirror the depth of NBK's strategy and aim to upskill future leaders and equip them with the needed visions and skills to spearhead the banking sector transformation, as per the bank's objectives to build a sustainable future and continue to elevate and grow its businesses both locally and regionally.

It is worth noting that NBK has truly maintained a leading role at the top of private sector institutions as it diligently strives to upskill and qualify national professionals for the banking sector. Additionally, NBK has the highest employee retention rate and it's the workplace of choice for national talents in the private sector, and the biggest national employer.

The Conversation

State Department layoffs strip away business and human rights expertise

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

□ □ □

By Carey Durkin Treado
University of Pittsburgh

When more than 1,300 people at the U.S. State Department lost their jobs in a mass firing this summer, most headlines focused on what it meant for American diplomacy. But the layoffs are about more than embassies and foreign policy - they could also make it harder for U.S. companies to compete in global markets.

The July layoffs - part of a sweeping Trump administration reorganization effort, with more cuts still expected - eliminated the State Department's Business and Human Rights team, which helps American businesses avoid committing human rights abuses and violating international laws.

As an economist who studies international trade, I know that BHR is an area of growing importance for both global governance and U.S. competitiveness. In addition to being an academic, I have worked at several U.S. trade agencies and the World Bank, and in 2019-20 I served as a Franklin Fellow with the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. In that role, I worked closely with the BHR team and saw how critical their expertise was in helping U.S. companies navigate shifting global human rights risks and regulations.

Losing that support puts American businesses at risk of falling behind market trends and expectations.

Global norms governing business and human rights have been evolving for more than 75 years, starting with the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. While that landmark document was geared toward governments, in 2011 the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises represented explicit guidance from member countries - including the United States - that companies, not just governments, are responsible for respecting human rights.

This guidance means that businesses must avoid causing or contributing to human rights abuses through their operations or supply chain relationships. Potential supply chain concerns include both "upstream impacts," such as purchasing from suppliers that use forced labor,

and "downstream impacts," such as selling products to oppressive governments.

These sorts of risks are more common than you might think. Nearly 28 million people are in forced labor globally, making products from cotton to car parts, according to the International Labour Organization. Downstream concerns have focused recently on the sale of AI and surveillance tools to authoritarian governments such as Iran. Avoiding these abuses not only reduces business risk but also helps weaken incentives for such practices.

For decades, the State Department has taken the lead within the federal government in the task of promoting U.S. human rights policies globally. Historically, its three main responsibilities in this area have included reporting on human rights conditions at the country level, providing foreign assistance to promote human rights, and engaging in diplomatic efforts to improve human rights conditions globally.

The portfolio of the BHR team fell mainly within this third area of responsibility and included providing expertise as international policies related to business and human rights continued to expand.

Over the past 10 years, some of the world's largest economies have begun to enact laws that require businesses to conduct risk analyses and publicly report on their human rights impacts. These laws - known as human rights due diligence, or HRDD, laws - have been passed or proposed in the European Union, France, the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom, Australia, South Korea and Thailand.

Of particular importance is the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, which was adopted by the EU in July 2024 and will begin to go into effect in 2028. Its broad scope will reshape compliance for global companies across markets, industries and supply chains.

Although it is too soon to measure the full impact, many companies and industry groups have endorsed human rights due diligence laws. Industry groups and associations have published statements in support of HRDD laws, which they see as leveling the playing field for responsible business activity. A 2025 survey of 1,300 German corporate decision-makers found that most believed their country's HRDD law gave them an edge over European competitors - and 44% said it gave them an advantage over U.S. and Chinese companies as well. (AP)

Global markets lifted by strong data

Powell opens the door to September rate cut

By National Bank of Kuwait

This week's markets were shaped by a mix of strong economic data and dovish central bank signals. In the U.S., the S&P Global Composite PMI rose to 55.4, its strongest pace of expansion this year, with services steady and manufacturing rebounding to its best level since 2022, while Fed Chair Jerome Powell at Jackson Hole struck a dovish tone, noting that shifting risks may warrant rate cuts soon, fueling equity gains and a sharp drop in Treasury yields. Across the Atlantic, the UK Composite PMI climbed to 53, led by services, while the Eurozone Manufacturing PMI returned to expansion territory at 50.5, its first in over three years, though services growth eased. In Asia, Japan's inflation slowed to 3.1%, the lowest in nine months, easing pressure on the BoJ. On FX, the dollar weakened as investors boosted bets on a September cut. Fiscal concerns also resurfaced, with higher labor costs in the UK and tariff-driven price pressures in the U.S. highlighting the complex mix of slowing inflation but rising cost burdens globally.

United States

FOMC Meeting Minutes

The Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) minutes from the July 29-30 meeting revealed that a majority of the 18 policymakers judged inflation risks as outweighing labour market concerns. The Committee maintained the federal funds rate at 4.25%-4.50%, citing elevated uncertainty amidst moderating economic activity in H1 2025. Several members highlighted the potential for tariffs to exert lasting upward pressure on prices, warning that inflation, which has exceeded 2% for an extended period, could unanchor expectations if trade costs persist. Labour market conditions, whilst described as "solid" in the statement, showed signs of deterioration, with unemployment rising to 4.2% and payroll gains revised sharply lower, the weakest hiring pace since the pandemic. Dissenting votes from Governors Christopher Waller and Michelle Bowman underscored growing divisions within the Committee's policy outlook.

S&P Global US Composite PMI

The S&P Global US Composite PMI rose to 55.4 in August 2025 from 55.1 in July, its highest reading this year and the 31st straight month of expansion. Services growth remained strong though slightly softer, while manufacturing rebounded sharply to 53.3, the strongest since May 2022. Hiring accelerated to one of the fastest paces in three years, with firms also reporting the largest buildup of unfinished work since 2022. Input costs climbed due to tariffs, leading to the steepest rise in selling prices in three years. Business sentiment improved but stayed below early-year levels, as concerns over government policies and tariffs persisted.

Powell Speaks at Jackson Hole

Fed Chair Jerome Powell used his Jackson Hole speech to cautiously open the door to a potential rate cut in September, citing rising downside risks in the labor market despite lingering inflation concerns. He highlighted that July jobs data revealed much weaker growth than previously reported, warning that employment losses could escalate quickly if conditions worsen. At the same time, Powell stressed that tariffs from President Trump are visibly pushing prices higher and could trigger more lasting inflation, underscoring the Fed's need to balance both sides of its dual mandate. He also outlined adjustments to the Fed's policy framework, rolling back the 2020 approach of tolerating above-target inflation and clarifying that preemptive tightening could still be warranted if labor market strength poses risks to price stability.

The Greenback was last seen trading at 97.716.

Previous Week Levels					This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
Currencies	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.1691	1.1581	1.1742	1.1715	1.1660	1.1830	1.1783
GBP	1.3543	1.3387	1.3565	1.3522	1.3420	1.3650	1.3535
JPY	147.05	146.54	148.77	146.93	145.75	148.00	145.50
CHF	0.8046	0.7998	0.8103	0.8013	0.7910	0.8080	0.7927

United Kingdom

S&P Global UK Composite PMI

The UK S&P Global Composite PMI rose to 53 in August 2025 from 51.5, the fastest private-sector expansion in a year and above expectations. Growth was driven by the services sector, which climbed to a one-year high of 53.6, offsetting a deeper contraction in manufacturing (47.3). Strong service activity boosted new business volumes to their highest since October 2024, though factories faced the sharpest drop in new orders since April amid rising costs and global trade protectionism. Input inflation hit its highest since May, with firms citing higher National Insurance and labor costs. Business expectations for the year ahead also improved.

Consumer Inflation

UK consumer price inflation rose to 3.8% YoY in July, up from 3.6% in June and the fastest pace since January 2024, according to the Office for National Statistics. The increase, driven by higher food, transport, and hospitality costs, slightly exceeded the 3.7% consensus forecast and matched the Bank of England's projection. Services inflation, a key gauge of underlying pressures, rose to 5%, above the Bank's 4.9% forecast. Food and non-alcoholic beverages advanced 4.9%, the strongest since February 2024, whilst airfares surged 30.2% MoM, the sharpest increase in 24 years. The July print adds pressure on the BoE, which cut rates to 4% earlier this month, as policymakers weigh sticky inflation against a cooling labour market. Swap market pricing implies an approximately 50% probability of another rate cut by year-end.

The GBP/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.3522.

Europe

HCOB Eurozone PMI

The HCOB Eurozone Services PMI slipped to 50.7 in August 2025 from 51 in July, signaling a third straight month of growth but at a slower pace. New orders rose modestly and firms continued hiring, while inflation pressures strengthened, with both input and output prices accelerating. Meanwhile, the HCOB Eurozone Manufacturing PMI rose to 50.5 in August 2025 from 49.8, marking its first expansion since April 2022 and the strongest level in 38 months, surpassing expectations. Output grew at the fastest pace in over three years, and new orders rose for the first time since 2022. However, employment continued to decline and firms accelerated cutbacks in purchasing. Input costs increased for the first time in five months, while inventories of inputs and finished goods dropped sharply. Supplier delays worsened, reaching their longest since late 2022. Despite the rebound in production and demand, business confidence weakened.

German Economy

Germany's economy shrank by 0.3% q/q in Q2 2025, a sharper downturn than the initial estimate of -0.1% and reversing the 0.3% growth of the previous quarter. The contraction, the steepest since Q2 2024, was driven by weaker fixed capital formation

(-1.4%), as investment in construction, machinery, equipment, and vehicles fell. Net trade weighed on growth, with exports slipping due to rising U.S. tariffs while imports rose. Private consumption nearly stalled (+0.1%), though government spending rebounded (+0.8%) and inventories supported growth. Output declined across manufacturing, construction, trade, transport, hospitality, and financial services. Year-on-year, GDP grew 0.2%, slightly below Q1's 0.3%, but marking a second straight quarter of annual growth.

The EUR/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.1715.

Asia-Pacific

RBNZ Cuts Rates

The Reserve Bank of New Zealand cut its Official Cash Rate by 25 bps to 3% in August 2025, the lowest since August 2022, with a 4-2 majority. Inflation rose to 2.7% in Q2 and is expected to hit 3% in Q3 on higher administered prices and food costs, though still within the 1-3% target band. GDP contracted 0.7% in Q1, with early signs of another decline in Q2 before a likely rebound in Q3. Policymakers also highlighted risks from global trade tensions, warning that higher U.S. tariffs could strain New Zealand's exporters despite resilient volumes.

The NZD/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 0.5867.

Japan Inflation

Japan's exports fell 2.6% YoY in July 2025, the sharpest drop since 2021 and worse than forecasts. Shipments to the U.S. plunged 11.4% on weaker cars, auto parts, and chips, while exports to China, the EU, and ASEAN also declined. The fall followed U.S. tariffs of 25% on Japanese autos, later reduced to 15% under a July deal tied to Japan's USD 550 billion U.S. investment pledge. Still, the auto sector remains under pressure as firms cut prices to offset costs, a move analysts warn could shift the burden to U.S. consumers and weaken Japan's market share.

Japan Inflation

Japan's annual inflation eased to 3.1% in July 2025, down from 3.3% and the lowest since November 2024. The slowdown was led by the first decline in electricity prices since April 2024 (-0.7%) and flat gas prices, while household items and recreation also saw softer increases. Inflation held steady for housing, healthcare, and miscellaneous goods but rose for clothing, transport, and communications. Food inflation accelerated to 7.6%, the highest since February, driven by a 90.7% surge in rice prices despite government intervention. Core inflation matched the headline at 3.1%, a 5-month low, and on a monthly basis CPI rose 0.1%, unchanged from June.

The USD/JPY currency pair was last seen trading at 146.93.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar
USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30545

‘Scam of the century’

President Trump blames renewables for soaring energy bills

WASHINGTON, Aug 24, (AP): With electricity prices rising at more than twice the rate of inflation, President Donald Trump has lashed out at renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power, blaming them for skyrocketing energy costs.

Trump called wind and solar power “THE SCAM OF THE CENTURY!” in a social media post and vowed not to approve wind or “farmer destroying Solar” projects. “The days of stupidity are over in the USA!!!” he wrote on his Truth Social site.

Energy analysts say renewable sources have little to do with recent price hikes, which are based on increased demand, aging infrastructure and increasingly extreme weather events such as wildfires that are exacerbated by climate change.

The rapid growth of cloud computing and artificial intelligence has fueled demand for energy-hungry data centers that need power to run servers, storage systems, networking equipment and cooling systems. Increased use of electric vehicles also has boosted demand, even as the Trump administration and congressional Republicans move to restrict tax credits and other incentives for EV purchases approved under the Biden administration.

Natural gas prices, meanwhile, are rising sharply amid increased exports to Europe and other international customers. More than 40% of U.S. electricity is generated by natural gas.

Trump promised during the 2024 campaign to lower Americans’ electric bills by 50%. Democrats have been quick to blame him for the price hikes, citing actions to hamstring clean energy in the sprawling tax-and-spending cut bill approved last month, as well as regulations since then to further restrict wind and solar power.

“Now more than ever, we need more energy, not less, to meet our increased energy demand and power our grid. Instead of increasing our energy supply Donald Trump is taking a sledgehammer to the clean energy sector, killing jobs and projects,” said New Mexico Sen. Martin Heinrich, the top Democrat on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

The GOP bill will cost thousands of jobs and impose higher energy costs nationwide, Heinrich and other critics said.

A report from Energy Innovation, a non-partisan think tank, found the GOP tax law will increase the average family’s energy bill by \$130



annually by 2030. “By quickly phasing out technology-neutral clean energy tax credits and adding complex material sourcing requirements,” the tax law will “significantly hamper the development of domestic electricity generation capacity,” the report said.

Renewable advocates were more blunt.

“The real scam is blaming solar for fossil fuel price spikes,” the Solar Energy Industries Association said in response to Trump’s post. “Farmers, families, and businesses choose solar to save money, preserve land, and escape high costs of the old, dirty fuels being forced on them by this administration,” the group added.

As technology improves, wind and solar offer some of the cheapest and fastest ways to provide electric power. More than 90% of new energy capacity that came online in the U.S. in 2024 was clean energy, said Jason Grumet, CEO of the American Clean Power Association, another industry group.

States with the highest share of clean energy production have seen

prices decline in the past year, according to data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, while prices have gone up in states with the least renewable energy use.

“By slowing clean energy deployment, the Trump administration is directly fueling cost increases,” Grumet said

“Blocking cheap, clean energy while doubling down on outdated fossil fuels makes no economic or environmental sense,” added Ted Kelly, director of U.S. clean energy for the Environmental Defense Fund, a nonprofit advocacy group.

Energy Secretary Chris Wright blamed rising prices on “momentum” from Biden-era policies that backed renewable power over fossil fuel sources such as oil, coal and natural gas.

“That momentum is pushing prices up right now. And who’s going to get blamed for it? We’re going to get blamed because we’re in office,” Wright told POLITICO during a visit to Iowa last week. About 60 percent of the state’s electricity comes from wind.

Not all the pushback comes from Democrats.

Iowa Sen. Chuck Grassley, a Republican who backs wind power, has placed a hold on three Treasury nominees to ensure wind and solar have “an appropriate glidepath for the orderly phase-out of the tax credits” approved in the 2022 climate law under former President Joe Biden.

Grassley said he was encouraged by new Treasury guidance that limits tax credits for wind and solar projects but does not eliminate them. The guidance “seems to offer a viable path forward for the wind and solar industries to continue to meet increased energy demand,” Grassley said in a statement.

John Quigley, senior fellow at the Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania, said the Republican tax law will increase U.S. power bills by slowing construction of solar, wind, and battery projects and could eliminate as many as 45,000 jobs by 2030.

Trump administration polices that emphasize fossil fuels are “an extremely backward force in this conversation,” Quigley said. “Besides ceding the clean energy future to other nations, we are paying for fossil foolishness with more than money - with our health and with our safety. And our children will pay an even higher price.”

Americans split over ban

President Trump calls TikTok security concerns ‘overrated’

WASHINGTON, Aug 24, (AP): President Donald Trump is calling national security and privacy concerns related to TikTok and its Chinese parent company “highly overrated” and said Friday he’ll keep extending the deadline for the popular video-sharing platform until there’s a buyer.

Congress approved a U.S. ban on TikTok unless its parent company, ByteDance, sold its controlling stake. But Trump has so far extended the deadline three times during his second term - with the next one coming up on Sept. 17.

“We’re gonna watch the security concerns,” Trump told reporters, but added, “We have buyers, American-buyers,” and “until the complexity of things work out, we just extend a little bit longer.”

The first extension was through an executive order on Jan. 20, his first day in office, after the platform went dark briefly when a national ban - approved by Congress and upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court - took effect. The second was in April, when White House officials believed they were nearing a deal to spin off TikTok into a new company with U.S. ownership that fell apart after China backed out following Trump’s tariff announcement.

His comments follow the White House starting a TikTok account this week.

“I used TikTok in the campaign,” Trump said.

“I’m a fan of TikTok,” he said. “My kids like TikTok. Young people love TikTok. If we could keep it going.”

As the extensions continue, it appears less and less likely that TikTok will be banned in the U.S. any time soon. The decision to keep TikTok alive through an executive order has received some scrutiny, but the administration has not faced a legal challenge in court - unlike many of Trump’s other executive orders.

Americans are even more closely divided on what to do about TikTok than they were two years ago.

A recent Pew Research Center survey found that about one-third of Americans said they supported a TikTok ban, down from 50% in March 2023. Roughly one-third said they would oppose a ban, and a similar percentage said they weren’t sure.

Among those who said they supported banning the social media platform, about 8 in 10 cited concerns over users’ data security being at risk as a major factor in their decision, according to the report.

Migrant workforce boosts GDP by 6%

Lagarde credits migrant labor for restraining inflation

JACKSON HOLE, Aug 24, (AP): A jump in the share of foreign-born workers after the pandemic helped Europe bring inflation down without sharply slower growth, European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde said Saturday.

A key factor “has been the rise in both the number and participation rate of foreign workers,” Lagarde said in a speech in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, at a Federal Reserve economic symposium. “In Germany, for example, GDP would be around 6% lower than in 2019 without the contribution of foreign workers.”

Spain’s strong post-pandemic economic growth “also owes much to the contribution of foreign labor,” she said.

Lagarde’s comments echoed a common view among economists that an influx of foreign workers helped companies expand their output and meet a spike in demand after the pandemic that followed stimulus benefits. The increased supply helped bring down inflation in Europe and the United States. Yet the rise in immigration also sparked a political backlash in both economies.

“Migration could, in principle, play a crucial role in easing” labor shortages as native populations age, Lagarde said. But “political economy pressures may increas-

ingly limit inflows.”

Lagarde also said that a drop in inflation-adjusted wages, greater hoarding of workers by companies, and an influx of elderly people into the labor force also contributed to steady economic growth even as the ECB lifted interest rates.

Historically, Lagarde emphasized, higher borrowing costs have dragged down economic growth, often causing recessions and leading to higher unemployment. Yet that didn’t happen as the ECB raised its key rate in 2022 and 2023.

While foreign born workers accounted for just 9% of the EU’s labor force in 2022, they have made up half of the bloc’s labor force growth in the past three years, Lagarde said.

More elderly people also joined the workforce, Lagarde noted. Without that increase, the unemployment rate in the 20 countries that use the euro currency would be elevated - 6.6%, rather than the current rate of 6.3%, she said.

Kazuo Ueda, governor of the Bank of Japan, spoke on the same panel at Jackson Hole and noted a similar trend in Japan since the pandemic. While the foreign-born make up just 3% of the workforce, they have made up half of recent workforce growth.

The Conversation

Rapid AI growth raises concerns over water and energy use

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

By Peyton McCauley
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

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



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.

Supplies

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



In this Tuesday, Oct. 5, 2021 photo, The Dalles Mayor Richard Mays looks at the view of his town and the Columbia River from his hilltop home in The Dalles, Oregon. Mays helped negotiate a proposal by Google to build new data centers in the town. The data centers require a lot of water to cool their servers, and would use groundwater and surface water, but not any water from the Columbia River. (AP)

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.

Valuable

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 companywide 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.

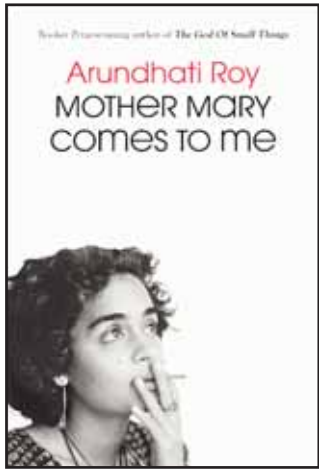
The Google data center using the least that year was in Pflugerville, Texas, which consumed 10,000 gallons (38,000 liters) - about as much as one Texas home would use in two months. That data center is air-cooled, not water-cooled, and consumes significantly less water than the 1.5 million gallons (5.7 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)

Books



This image released by Grand Central Publishing shows 'Softly, As I Leave You: Life After Elvis' by Priscilla Beaulieu Presley, with Mary Jane Ross. (AP)



This cover image released by Scribner shows 'Mother Mary Comes to Me' by Arundhati Roy. (AP)

Literary spotlight

Top reads this fall: From mysteries to memoirs

NEW YORK, Aug. 24, (AP) — Fall books mean more than literary fiction. The top releases this season range from a fairy tale newly told to memoirs about a famous writer's indomitable mother and life after marriage to a famous rock star. Some books were a decade or more in the making, while former Vice President Kamala Harris' "107 Days" was finished in a matter of months.

Here are 10 new books to look for: **"Hansel and Gretel," Stephen King**

You may think you know the Grimms' fairy tale about two children lost in the woods. But a new edition this fall promises a fresh and modern take: the words are by Stephen King and the illustrations from the archives of the late Maurice Sendak, who had worked on a 1990s opera adaptation. Warns King in the book's introduction: "You will say that I have taken liberties with the story told by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm - I have, and I don't apologize." (Sept. 2)

"Mother Mary Comes to Me," Arundhati Roy

Arundhati Roy's memoir offers anguished tribute to her longtime tormentor and heroine: her late mother, Mary Roy, the educator and activist who founded a renowned high school in India and otherwise rarely missed a chance to disparage but still inspire her famous daughter. "I had constructed myself around her," the author writes. "I had grown into the peculiar shape that I am to accommodate her. I had never wanted to defeat her, never wanted to win. I had always wanted her to go out like a queen." (Sept. 2)

"The Wilderness," Angela Flournoy

Angela Flournoy's acclaimed debut, "The Turner House," was set around an aging family home in Detroit. In "The Wilderness," she traces the cross-country lives of five Black women from youth to middle age. The author also offers a mini-tour of airports, from the underwhelming sites of landing at Charles de Gaulle in Paris to the view of pyramids in Cairo. A universal truth, she writes: "If the surrounding city has a decent Black population, then a good number of them will be working at the airport." (Sept. 16)

"107 Days," Kamala Harris

Publisher Simon & Schuster is promising a compelling campaign memoir from former Vice President Kamala Harris that addresses "everything we would want her to address." That presumably includes Harris' thoughts on the mental and physical condition of President Joe Biden, whose decision to withdraw his candidacy led to Harris' historic, frantic and unsuccessful run against Republican Donald Trump. Harris has called the book, written with the assistance of Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Geraldine Brooks, the result of looking back "with candor and reflection." (Sept. 23)

"The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny," Kiran Desai

Kiran Desai's first novel in nearly 20 years, since her Booker Prize-winning "The Inheritance of Loss," is on the Booker longlist and is also a story of contrasting lives: a successful novelist returning to her native India and a New York-based journalist - a copy editor for, of all places, The Associated Press. (Desai has not yet named a real-life counterpart as inspiration.) Separated by geography, they are connected by

the will of their families, who would very much like to arrange a marriage. (Sept. 23)

"Softly, As I Leave You," Priscilla Presley

Priscilla Presley has been so defined by her years with Elvis that the 2023 biopic "Priscilla" ends with their breakup in 1973. But readers of "Softly, As I Leave You" will learn that she forged a long and successful career on her own. She was Bobby Ewing's ex-fiancee, Jenna Wade, in "Dallas" and the love interest for Leslie Nielsen in the "Naked Gun" spoofs. (Presley appears briefly in the current remake.) She even revealed a knack for marketing. When Elvis' Graceland estate was in disrepair in the years following his 1977 death, she opened it to the public and helped make the property among the world's most popular tourist destinations. Currently in a legal battle with a former business partner, Presley also writes of enduring other tragedies besides the death of her ex-husband, notably the loss of daughter Lisa Marie Presley two years ago. (Sept. 23)

"We Love You, Bunny," Mona Awad

Six years ago, Canadian author Mona Awad's bestselling "Bunny" was praised by Margaret Atwood, among others, for its blend of horror and academic satire set around a clique of creative writing students who call each other "Bunny." In her follow-up novel, onetime outsider Samantha Heather Mackey is herself a bestselling author and the bunnies have a few things to say about her material. "So funny that you described me as a maniacal hair braider," one of them tells her. "I laughed until I cried blood." (Sept. 23)

"The Impossible Fortune," Richard Osman

Richard Osman is an all-around success story, an author, producer and personality who has been a fixture for years in British television. He now enjoys critical acclaim and millions of sales as the creator of the "Thursday Murder Club" mystery novels, in which four pensioners in a retirement community take on cases new and old. The fifth in the series, "The Impossible Fortune," blends wedding plans and a sudden disappearance that has Osman's sleuths in search of answers. (Sept. 30)

"Shadow Ticket," Thomas Pynchon

Thomas Pynchon's latest novel is his first in more than a decade. Now 88, the author most famous for the epic "Gravity's Rainbow" has rarely settled for a simple storyline. Like his comic novel "Inherent Vice," there's a detective at the center of the narrative, one Hicks McTaggart, who will "find himself also entangled with Nazis, Soviet agents, British counterespies, swing musicians, practitioners of the paranormal, outlaw motorcyclists, and the troubles that come with each of them." (Oct. 7)

"Unfettered," John Fetterman

Few Washington legislators are more recognizable than Sen. John Fetterman, the 6-foot-8-inch, hoodie-wearing Pennsylvania Democrat whose physical and mental health struggles and his battles with both Republicans and his own party have kept him in the news since he ran for the Senate in 2022. His publisher, Crown, is calling "Unfettered" a "raw and visceral" and "unapologetic account of his unconventional life." (Nov. 11)

Bishop balances heart and suspense in a riveting novel

'High Season,' a twisty thriller about teen girl's murder

NEW YORK, Aug. 24, (AP) — Katie Bishop finds heart and poignancy at the center of her artfully crafted thriller, "High Season," setting it apart from other by-the-numbers beach reads.

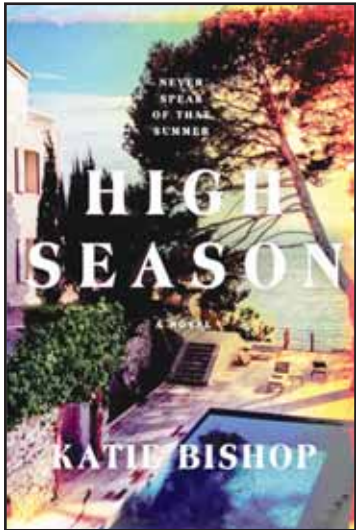
At the center of the story is Nina Drayton, who, 20 years ago at age 5, was the sole witness to the murder of her sister, Tamara, by Josie Jackson, the daughter of their family's summer housekeeper and her childhood babysitter. Nina was brought up to believe that her account of that wine-soaked night at her mother's French villa was the reason Josie was put away and justice served. After the case faces renewed interest from a true crime influencer, Nina begins to suspect that her story was faulty. At the same time, Josie returns to the scene of the crime searching for answers.

"High Season" has many moving parts — two timelines, five viewpoints in total — and it also manages to serve as an exploration of our true crime obsession. Bishop acknowledges the double-

edged sword of armchair detecting: the interest brings attention to forgotten cases but also makes it impossible for anyone to move on from it under renewed scrutiny. The promise of justice is thinner than the promise of entertainment and gossip about a cast of suspects and victims, most of whom will never meet.

The POV shifts feel natural rather than jarring, jagged pieces of a story. Bishop knows when it makes sense to see the world through one character, and then, in the next chapter, add a piece of the puzzle from a different character. It serves as a reminder that everyone has their own story of what they believed happened the night of the murder and their reasons for hiding their suspicions for 20 years.

The most poignant parts of the novel are told by Tamara herself — Bishop could have easily made her victim another "poor little rich girl" by just having other people's memories and judgements of her serve as her narrative. By giving Tamara her part of the story and



This cover image released by St. Martin's Press shows 'High Season' by Katie Bishop. (AP)

making her a fleshed-out character, we feel the grief that comes with her death and the hole it's made for so many people.

The novel also does a good job exploring how the glittering glam-

or of the Drayton family is out of reach for the working-class teenage girls in town, and the lengths they will go to try to fit in (or not) with the shiny elite. Josie's teenage best friend, Hannah, has a crucial arc about the dangers of trying to shape yourself into someone else's world at any cost. The treatment Hannah receives at the hands of Blake, Nina's older brother, is chilling and an accurate depiction of how some men treat women they feel are beneath them.

The weak part of the novel is the climax of the truth coming out. It felt like an artificial set-up for a story that otherwise flowed along on the merits of Bishop's lyrical writing and the tense atmosphere she created. What might have been cathartic felt too much like spectacle and deprived the reader of the emotion and suspense of the rest of the book.

That being said, "High Season" was a memorable read, reminiscent of "Dare Me" by Megan Abbott and Gillian Flynn's "Sharp Objects."

Music

Singer releases her first album since 2019

Ciara ignites her music passion with 'CiCi'

NEW YORK, Aug. 24, (AP) — Ciara delivered a new bundle of joy on Friday, but it's not the fifth child her husband publicly flirts with her about.

"It's time. Honestly, I've been working on this album for almost five years," said the R&B-pop superstar. "I put a lot of blood, sweat, and tears, as they would say, into this project ... I literally gave birth to two babies while I was making this project, too. So, a lot has happened."

Expanding her 2023 seven-track EP "CiCi," it's the Grammy winner's first album since 2019's "Beauty Marks," her first as an independent artist.

"I was still actively putting out music on the project. So, it's not like I was five years chillin'," said the "Level Up" artist. "If I ever stop loving the process and experience, then I'll stop. But I have so much passion for it and I just feel so fortunate that 21 years later, from my first album 'Goodies' to now, that I still have the same excitement I had as a little girl."

Her eighth studio album, "CiCi" includes songs from the EP such as "How We Roll," her 2023 Chris Brown collaboration which reached No. 1 on Billboard's R&B digital song sales charts, "Forever" with Lil Baby and the sensual bop, "Low Key." But the 14-track full-length record, with writing and production from Theron Thomas and J.R. Rotem, separates itself with appearances from Tyga, BossMan DLow and Busta Rhymes. Latto also joins her on "This Right Here," an anticipated reunion with Jazze Pha who executive produced her 2004 debut, hitting No. 3 on the Billboard 200.

One of the preeminent stage performers in her class and lauded for her dancing, Ciara owns smashes like "Goodies" which topped the Billboard 100, "Oh" featuring Ludacris, "Body Party," and "Promise." Four albums reached the Billboard 200 top 10, including 2006's "Ciara: The Evolution" which hit No. 1.

In an era where music is often released rapidly, Ciara's leisurely pace has been questioned by fans and critics, wondering if she's traded her love for music for a perceived socialite lifestyle with her Super Bowl-winning husband, Russell Wilson.

"I feel like I don't have to explain anything to anybody," said



Ciara poses for a portrait on Monday, Aug 18, in New York. (AP)

the "Ride" singer, who's recently released collaborations with several Asian artists. "Not every year has been about music. And sometimes, it's been about me just growing as a human. Sometimes, it's been about me finding my way

obviously as a mom, and then I have family now and my husband, being there for him. These are all real things."

It's a perception she aims at on "Run It Up" with BossMan Dlow, singing, "No matter how

many points I put up on the board, you know they gon' hate / I'm in a league of my own, I'm a wife and a mom / ... You ain't gotta worry, you know that we straight."

"I go from the stage to the classroom. I go from the classroom to the football field to support my husband. Then, I got on my schedule we're gonna go school shopping tomorrow," said the 39-year-old who wrote on every song. "That's how my life is, but I would not have it any other way."

Other standout tracks include the previously released slow jam "Ecstasy" which she later remixed with Normani and Teyana Taylor, and the feel good "Drop Your Love," sampling "Love Come Down" from Evelyn "Champagne" King. She continued her two-step groove on "This Right Here," recreating the nostalgic magic with Pha and resurfacing his memorable "Ciaraa!" ad-lib.

"It's always been love with Jazze and I ... there was behind-the-scenes type of stuff that was beyond he and I," referring to the producer who crafted her megahit "1,2 Step" with Missy Elliott. "People want the classic him. They want me to be me, too, in that moment. And so, I feel like we accomplished that."

Becoming one of the first celebrities to gain Benin citizenship as part of a recent law by the small West African nation granting rights to descendants of enslaved people, Ciara hopes to shed light on the country, as well as the continent which has exploded globally in the music market thanks to Afrobeats.

She's also expanding her Why Not You Foundation, the nonprofit founded with Wilson in 2014 to help disadvantaged youth with educational and personal development resources. With Why Not You centers already in Atlanta and Pittsburgh, they plan to expand in the New York-New Jersey area. Wilson signed with the New York Giants during the offseason.

"Success to me is yes, putting out music. Being the best artist I can be, hopefully being known as one of the best to ever do it ... But it's not solely in that," she said. "People lose themselves because they didn't live. I don't want to be that girl - I'm not going to be that girl."

Variety

LOS ANGELES: The World War II (WWII) film "Dongji Rescue" was officially released in a number of major cities across North America on Friday.

The highly-anticipated film is based on a true story that took place in October 1942, when the Lisbon Maru, a cargo ship requisitioned by the Japanese army to transport more than 1,800 British prisoners of war (POWs) from Hong Kong to Japan, was torpedoed by a US submarine off the Zhoushan Islands in China's Zhejiang Province. Local fishermen from Dongji Island risked their lives to rescue more than 300 of the POWs.

Released by Well Go USA Entertainment in Mandarin with English subtitles, the film is being shown in about 70 theaters across dozens of North American cities, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Chicago, New York, Boston, Toronto and Vancouver.

"'Dongji Rescue' is a powerful and deeply moving story of courage, humanity and sacrifice," Doris Pfardrescher, CEO of Well Go USA Entertainment, told Xinhua. "We are honored to bring this remarkable chapter of history to North American audiences, and we believe viewers will be inspired

by the bravery and compassion shown by the Dongji fishermen in the face of unimaginable danger."

Guillermo Emmanuel Gonzalez, an 82-year-old viewer from Los Angeles who attended a preview screening Thursday night, said the film was a reminder of China's significant but sometimes overlooked contributions during World War II.

Noting that the film reminded him of the Doolittle Raiders — American pilots rescued by Chinese civilians after bombing Japan in 1942, Gonzalez said: "This film helps Western audiences better understand China's role in World War II." (Xinhua)

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ROME: Italian police divers have cleaned one of the biggest underwater attractions of the Mediterranean, using pressurized water hoses to remove crustaceans from the "Christ of the Abyss" statue that was placed on the seabed off Italy's northern coast in 1954.

The 2.5-meter (8-foot) tall bronze statue, depicting Christ with his hands raised in blessing, was made using the melted-down medals of Italy's fallen soldiers, canons and ships and was designed as a memorial to those who died at sea. It is appreciated here as a potent symbol of sacrifice in World War II, and similar statues are found off Key Largo, Florida and

in Grenada.

The statue is located about 300 meters (yards) off the beach between the resort towns of Portofino and Camogli, on Italy's northern Ligurian coast, at a depth of around 18 meters (59 feet).

The archaeological office of Italy's Culture Ministry says that, because of its proximity to the coast and relatively shallow depth, the "Christ of the Abyss" site is the most frequented dive spot in the Mediterranean. The site, located in the bay of San Fruttuoso, also draws kayakers and paddleboarders since the statue can be seen from the surface.

Every year, divers carefully water-blast the statue to remove bacteria and corrosive crustaceans that have accumulated. This year, the cleaning took place Aug. 19 and involved Italian police, coast guard and four other forces.

The pressurized cleaning process uses seawater itself and causes no damage to the bronze or the marine ecosystem as the microorganisms are dislodged and released back into the sea, said Alessandra Cabella, art historian from the Ligurian archaeology superintendent's office. (AP)

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LOS ANGELES: Brent Hinds, the former singer-guitarist for the Grammy-winning heavy metal band Mastodon, has died

in a motorcycle accident in Atlanta, the band and authorities said. He was 51.

Hinds was killed while riding a Harley-Davidson motorcycle late Wednesday night when the driver of a BMW SUV failed to yield while making a turn, according to Atlanta police. Hinds was described as "unresponsive" at the scene.

"We are heartbroken, shocked and still trying to process the loss of this creative force with whom we've shared so many triumphs, milestones, and the creation of music that has touched the hearts of so many," the band said on social media.

Mastodon had three albums rise into the Top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart and two that topped the Rock Album chart - "Emperor of Sand" in 2017 and "Once More 'round the Sun" in 2014.

Hinds co-founded Mastodon in 2000 with bassist Troy Sanders, guitarist Bill Kelliher and drummer Brann Dailor. Mastodon's third studio album, 2006's "Blood Mountain," was their first to reach the Top 40, peaking at No. 32 on the Billboard 200.

Hinds left the band in March 2025. No reason for the departure was given. The band said they had "mutually decided to part ways," but comments made by Hinds on Instagram indicated a rocky relationship with the members of his former band. (AP)

Medical museum adopts modern ethics

Museum updates policies on human specimens

PHILADELPHIA, Aug 24, (AP): A medical museum in Philadelphia has redrawn its policies on the collection and display of human remains, limiting its acceptance of additional specimens and working to follow “evolving modern medical ethical standards” in how it handles the 6,500 organs, bones and other body parts in its collection.

The College of Physicians of Philadelphia, which owns the Mutter Museum, announced this week it is restricting the taking of photos and videos of human remains, allowing it only with the museum’s permission. Photography by the public will remain prohibited.

The museum “will allow photography as long as it sort of serves an educational purpose,” said Sara Ray, its director of interpretation and engagement. “But education itself is a pretty broad net that we’re working through.”

The great majority of the remains were collected from about 1840 to about 1940, mostly from Philadelphia, largely body parts and organs that were considered to be helpful in medical education and taken during autopsies or surgery. Such collections were not uncommon among medical societies at a time when specimens were critical to understanding how the body is structured and how it works. But most of those museums are long gone.

The Mutter Museum said it is also working to “de-anonymize” its collection by looking into the personal histories of its human remains to figure out who they are, if possible,

and to “do justice” in how it displays them and tells their stories. The goal is to exhibit them in the context of the history of medicine, bodily diversity and the tools and therapies used to treat them.

Museum researchers are using a variety of records to piece together those histories, focusing on where and when the remains were collected, but they are not employing DNA analysis. In some cases, the museum has information about the person that was recorded by the physician who collected the specimen.

“The goal is not finding an identity for finding an identity’s sake,” Ray said. “The goal is to find an identity so that we can build a richer biographical profile, through which we can then ask questions about the way that this person navigated the world. And so that’s going to look very different for every single specimen.”

The museum’s new human remains policy says that many were “obtained in unacceptable circumstances including through force or duress” and may have been used for research or in displays that are now considered to be examples of scientific racism.

About 50 of its specimens are thought to be of Native American people. Since April 2024, nine remains have been repatriated to two tribes and one Native Hawaiian group.

The remains will not be lent out to other institutions, and research access to them must be approved by a group consisting of several top museum leaders. Research involving the collection tends to be about the history of medicine, not for purely biological study.

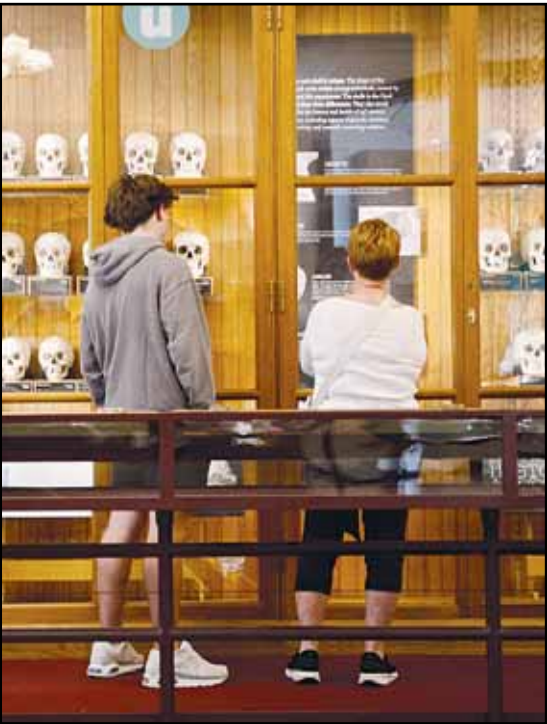
The policy changes follow a two-year review, designed to engage the public in planning for the museum’s future. As a result, hundreds of the museum’s videos regarding items in the collection and on educational topics that were removed from YouTube in January 2023 are being restored to the streaming service after being reorganized, with out-of-date material removed.

The museum plans to “sharply limit” its future acquisition of human remains. It will consider accepting them from living primary donors or through a bequest but may decline such gifts.

Museum visitor Ashley Davis, 47, said Thursday she appreciated the museum’s efforts to educate guests on the difficulties people have endured and the lives they lived.

“I think it’s important to know where these come from. These were human beings,” Davis said.

The museum, which gets about 100,000 visitors annually, began as the collection of surgeon Dr. Thomas Dent Mutter, who in 1859 donated 1,700 objects and \$30,000 to hire a curator and construct a fireproof building. His goal was to improve medical education. The collection now includes more than 35,000 objects with some half-million objects in the associated medical library.



Milo Tivy, 16, and Shari Tivy, 75, look at a display of human skulls at the Mutter Museum on Thursday, Aug. 21, in Philadelphia. (AP)

Dance



Hong Kong Ballet dancers participate in dress rehearsal for ‘The Butterfly Lovers’ at the David H. Koch Theater on Thursday, Aug. 21, in New York. (AP)

Ballet ‘The Butterfly Lovers’ makes overseas debut in New York

Adapted by Hong Kong Ballet, “The Butterfly Lovers” made its overseas debut at the David H. Koch Theater of Lincoln Center in New York City on Friday night, offering a captivating fusion of the East and the West.

Known as “the Chinese Romeo and Juliet,” the timeless love story of Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai is a beloved legend that has inspired countless adaptations in opera, music, film and other art forms.

Artists from Hong Kong made a bold attempt to combine traditional Chinese dance elements with ballet and modern dance, exploring a creative way to interpret the tragic romance.

The production brought together a team of artists from Hong Kong, Macao and the Chinese mainland, including Oscar-winning designer Tim Yip who handled set and costume design.

At the end of the two-hour performance, the audience greeted the creative team with prolonged applause and cheers.

“The ballerinas are amazing. The music is beautiful. And it is a truly wonderful artistic experience,” said Nick from New Jersey.

“It’s fabulous,” said New York University student Tina Thompson, who watched the Chinese ballet for the first time.

“I am deeply moved by the Chinese love story

though I had no idea about it previously. Ballet is universal, and it’s a language that transcends national boundaries,” she said.

Septime Webre, the troupe’s artistic director, said that this electrifying original production “fuses the best of East and West” through reimagining the legendary Chinese folktales. “The beauty of eternal hope is alive and well with The Butterfly Lovers.”

“As an important cultural ambassador for Hong Kong, we share Hong Kong’s stories and dynamism energy on the international stage,” he said.

The ballet is scheduled to be staged four times in New York from Friday to Sunday. (Xinhua)

Kim talks ‘Butterfly’ and breaking barriers

Kim still waiting for a romantic lead

SEOUL, South Korea, Aug 24, (AP): After three decades in Hollywood, Daniel Dae Kim has done spy thrillers, sci-fi epics and medical dramas. But there’s one role that’s eluded the Korean American actor: romantic leading man. “I’m still waiting to play a romantic lead after all these years,” Kim says with a laugh.

His latest project, “Butterfly,” which features a star-studded cast including top Korean actors Kim Tae-hee and Park Hae-soo (“Squid Game”), follows a former US intelligence operative in South Korea whose past catches up with him. It premiered on Amazon Prime in the US and elsewhere earlier this month, but makes its Korean debuted Friday.

In a recent interview with The Associated Press in Seoul, South Korea, Kim revealed one of his biggest regrets, reflected on cultural lessons from the Korea-US co-production, and opened up about what it’s really like being the bridge between two cultures while pursuing his mission to tell stories “that haven’t been told yet.” The interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: You served as both star and executive producer on “Butterfly.” How do those roles differ for you?

Kim: As an EP, I’m a job creator. I am a person responsible for a lot of people, and I will fight so much harder for others than I often fight for myself. When I feel like one of the cast, or one of the crew, or one of the writers is not being taken care of, I’m not afraid to talk to anybody and have a hard conversation.

AP: How did cultural differences between Korean and American crews translate into the production?

Kim: Every day, there was something that needed to be translated literally through language but also working styles. In Korea, because it’s a more Confucian society, the hierarchy of departments is very clear. We had to learn to talk to the head of the department who would then talk to the staff, as opposed to if you have an issue with one of the staff, you go directly to the staff. This kind of thing was new to the Americans.

AP: You’ve talked about choices and regrets in your work. Have you experienced that personally?

Kim: I think in 2007 I got a DUI when I was work-



Daniel Dae Kim, a cast member of ‘Butterfly’ waves to the media upon his arrival for a press conference in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday, Aug. 21. (AP)

ing on “Lost,” and I regret that night every day of my life. At the time, I felt so much shame, so much guilt, so much regret. I felt terrible to my parents, because that’s not the way I think they wanted me to be raised. I think with the right perspective, these things, these mistakes that you made can actually be helpful for your life because they can guide you in certain ways.

AP: Are you worried about backlashes against diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives potentially taking place in Hollywood?

Kim: We’re already seeing it. If you look at what happened with Paramount and CBS News, we’re seeing a chilling effect on free speech and journalism and DEI. “DEI” is a bad word these days, but to me, DEI’s not a bad. The idea of inclusion is not something that’s a political trend. It’s my life. It’s what I’ve lived every decade I’ve been in this business.

AP: Do you ever get tired of being that bridge between cultures?

Kim: I’m human, so everyone feels on certain days like, “Oh, this is too tough,” or on another day, “I can’t wait to do this.” But one of the reasons I think I act and produce is because I feel like there are a lot of stories to be told that haven’t been told yet, and one of those stories is a Korean American story.

AP: The criticism you faced on “Lost” for your

Korean pronunciation seems particularly harsh, looking back. How has Korea’s acceptance of Korean Americans evolved?

Kim: I got so much criticism when I did “Lost” that I had to learn how to not take it so personally because it hurt a lot at the time. When I came to Korea when I was 18, cab drivers would give me such a hard time because I couldn’t speak fluent Korean. And they were like, “You’re Korean, your face is Korean, why don’t you speak Korean?” They had never thought about an immigrant experience from another country. But now Korea is so used to that kind of thing that people are much more understanding.

AP: How intentional have you been in choosing roles to expand beyond audience expectations?

Kim: I have a lot of sympathy for actors who take stereotypical roles when they’re starting out because you need some way to break into the business. It’s much easier once you’re more successful and more established because you have more financial stability. It’s something that, if you’re not a person of color, or someone who’s a minority in the United States, you don’t have to think about. You don’t think about what this role means for the rest of a nation or an ethnicity. You just do what you’re drawn to, and that’s very liberating. I am lucky enough now where I can also make those same choices. But I don’t ever escape the fact that whatever I do will be watched and seen by so many people and judged through their own lens and filters.

AP: After all these years, what role do you still hope to play?

Kim: I’m still waiting to play a romantic lead after all these years. I’ve never gotten the opportunity and it’s one of those interesting things because I look the way I do as an Asian American and Asian men were never considered handsome or sexy. That’s changing now though. I’m friends with Jimmy O. Yang and, a few years ago, he got to play a romantic lead in a rom-com. And I said to Jimmy like, “Who would have thought you, Jimmy, would have been the one to be the romantic lead?” But I was so happy for him because it meant that the way we were looking at Asian men was different.

Summer camp for adults

Chautauqua, a haven for lifelong learners

MOUNT GRETNA, Pa., Aug 24, (AP): It takes a 54-page pamphlet to list all the classes, concerts, outdoor recreation and other self-improvement and entertainment going on at the Pennsylvania Chautauqua in Mount Gretna this summer.

The area springs to life every June, July and August, when a year-round population of about 1,000 more than doubles and thousands more crowd in for big events. The picturesque front porches that define the town are abuzz with energetic cottagers who punctuate their days with cooking lessons, nature walks, yoga, professorial lectures, music and plays.

In short, it’s kind of a summer camp for the sort of people who want to fit in a lecture on the Marquis de Lafayette between a bird watching walk and a bluegrass duo performance on a random July day.

“Some people don’t last, but most of the people who understand it, love it,” said Bonnie Harvey, who has lived full-time in Mount Gretna since she and her husband, Dave, sold a bed-and-breakfast inn in a nearby town. “If you’re bored, it’s your own fault.”

Summertime get-togethers known as Chautauquas were practically a craze more than a century ago. A program for Christian Sunday school teachers along Lake Chautauqua in New York soon became a movement, energized by early alcohol prohibitionists, book club reading circles and a demand for scientific and literary awareness. Eventually they brought education, entertainment and a dose of religion to communities across the Northeast and Great Lakes, into Canada and beyond.

What they all had in common, said Jon Schmitz, an archivist and historian at the original Chautauqua Institution in Chautauqua, New York, was “the good use of leisure time.”

Traveling “tent” Chautauquas soon developed, and by one account the programs reached millions of people before the movement peaked in 1907 and largely died out as priorities changed during the Great Depression.

Although the great majority of the Chautauquas are long gone, Mount Gretna got a second wind in the 1970s with the establishment of a successful art show and a highly regarded chamber music

and jazz concert series. Now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it’s been thriving ever since.

These days, Mount Gretna can seem to have as many quirks as it does people. Described as “Culture Gulch” by a newspaper decades ago, the mountainous, wooded terrain about 84 miles (135 kilometers) west of Philadelphia includes some 200 privately owned cottages, most of them maintained to look just as they did in the early 1900s. But it isn’t some private club - while some of the cottages are kept within families for generations, others are bought and sold, and a small percentage are available for rent under restrictive local regulations.

“When most people call and say, ‘I’m interested in buying a house,’ one of the first things I say is, ‘How patient are you?’ Sometimes it can take a week, sometimes it can take years to find the right one,” said real estate agent Michelle Shay, who lives in Mount Gretna. “Some of them are 100-year-old cottages built on tree stumps. You have to be really aware of what you’re buying.”

The imposing 1909 Hall of Philosophy building is where many of the lectures and classes are held - and where Mount Gretna’s old jail is on the second floor, with wooden bars. Cottages carry quaint names such as Lazy Dog, As You Like It, Uneeda Rest, the Vicarage and Whole New World. Benches are scattered about, inviting conversations. There’s no mail delivery in some parts of town, so the post office serves double duty as a sort of community hub. The ice cream shop, in operation since the 1890s, does brisk business all summer.

“The community is really great, there’s always something going on,” said Reed Fretz, a college student who grew up in Mount Gretna and was renting out canoes on its Lake Conewago. “What you want out of it, you can get out of it.”

The feel of a summer retreat is fostered by restrictions about operating lawn mowers and other power equipment, and strict regulations about tree trimming. But with cottages cheek-by-jowl, getting away from it all doesn’t necessarily mean getting away from each other. Parking can be a challenge and privacy elusive. Volunteerism is rampant.



Corgis race during an international event Corgi Race Vilnius 2025 in Vilnius, Lithuania, Saturday, Aug. 23. (AP)

Corgis dash to glory in Vilnius race

Cute and adorable Welsh corgis, widely known for their association with the British royal family, are in fact a breed of passionate racers.

That’s at least according to the 120 teams from around Europe taking part in the Corgi Race Vilnius, in Lithuania’s capital, which drew an international bunch of furballs and their owners from countries including Poland, Latvia, Germany, Austria and Italy.

Thousands of Lithuanians gathered in the capital’s largest park on Saturday to watch the events - a solo sprint, a contest for the “mightiest voice,” costume challenges, and group racing.

The event culminated Sunday with the so-called World Corgi Meetup, where dogs in Lithuania were connected via a live broad-

cast with their peers in the United States, Ireland and Poland.

“This is so much fun and great emotion for the entire family, something bright that many people are craving for these days,” said retired teacher Janina Stoniene, who attended the race with her three grandchildren. The children said they admired the costume challenge as dogs were dressed in eye-catching outfits like Batman, a princess or an airplane.

A corgi named Amigo, sporting a factory-themed costume complete with two tiny chimneys and “Fur Factory” lettering, was named the proud winner of that contest. Another called Mango, whose owners are from Lithuania, was the champion of the solo race. (AP)

Experts urge women to weigh risks and benefits of hormone therapy

What to know about hormone therapy during menopause

NEW YORK, Aug 24, (AP): Menopause can usher in a host of disruptive symptoms like hot flashes, night sweats and sleep problems. Hormone therapy promises relief.

But many women wonder about taking it. That's because the treatment, subject of a recent expert panel convened by the Food and Drug Administration, has long been shrouded in uncertainty.

It was once used routinely. But in 2002, research testing one type was stopped early because of concerns about increased risks of breast cancer and blood clots. Concerns lingered even though later studies showed the benefits of today's hormone therapies outweigh the risks for many women.

"There is still a lot of confusion and a lot of fear," said Grayson Leverenz, a 50-year-old from Durham, North Carolina, who hesitated to take it but is glad she did.

Others increasingly are also giving hormone therapy a second look. But experts continue to disagree about how to present the treatment's pros and cons. The FDA-assembled panel stressed the benefits and suggested health warnings be removed from at least some versions - prompting dozens of experts to call for more input before making any changes.

Doctors say hormone therapy is a great option for many, but not all, menopausal women - and it's important to understand the nuanced reality of these treatments before deciding what's best.

It treats symptoms that can arise when menstruation winds down and ends, causing levels of estrogen and progesterone to drop very low.



A low-dose estrogen skin patch is seen on Tuesday, Oct. 2, 2012. (AP)

One type is low-dose vaginal estrogen therapy. Because it's applied into the vagina, very little circulates in the blood and the risks are far lower. Doctors say it's a good option for women whose biggest complaint is vaginal dryness.

Whole-body therapy includes pills, patches, sprays, gels or a vaginal ring that deliver doses of hormones into the bloodstream at levels high enough to have significant effects on symptoms like hot flashes. Such systemic hormones include estrogens and progestogens.

Jennifer Zwink, a nurse in Castle Rock, Colorado, began

using an estrogen patch more than a year ago and also has an IUD, which gives her progesterone. The treatment has relieved her hot flashes, improved her sleep and eased her joint pain and bloating.

"It's not like a 100% magic wand," she said. "But it definitely has made a significant difference."

The Menopause Society says hormone therapy can lower the risk of cardiovascular disease if started within 10 years of reaching menopause. It may also reduce the risk of Type 2 diabetes and maintain bone density for longer.

"They might have a drop in their bone density at age 60" instead of at age 50, said Dr. MargEva Morris Cole, an OB-GYN with Duke University.

When Leverenz was first prescribed hormone therapy last year, she kept worrying about the risks she'd heard about - then finally decided: "I can't live like this anymore."

With a combination of three medications, her anxiety lifted, her sleep improved, her joint pain and hot flashes went away.

"I just feel like myself again," she said.

Doctors say many patients hesitate to try hormones, and they try to reassure them.

Women can use estrogen therapy for seven years - and estrogen-progestogen therapy for three to five years - before breast cancer risk goes up, according to the Menopause Society.

The group says both estrogen therapy and estrogen-progestogen therapy increase the risk of stroke, which goes away soon after stopping hormones. The risk of blood clots

risks if you take hormones by mouth, but may be lower if you use a patch, gel or spray.

"A lot of these risks are small," said Dr. Nanette Santoro, an OB-GYN at the University of Colorado. "And they have to be weighed against the benefit of symptom relief."

Age, medical history and how long women stay on the hormones are also considerations. Many women take them for around five years, and those who've had a stroke or certain other conditions may be advised against using them at all.

Doctors are divided over whether there should be changes in "black box" health warnings on some hormone treatments. All estrogen drugs still carry boxed warnings about the higher rates of stroke, blood clots and cognitive problems among women taking the medications.

Most of the physicians at the recent expert panel meeting convened by the FDA prescribe the hormones or are involved with a pharmaceutical industry campaign opposing the warning label. A letter signed by 76 doctors and researchers argues that "removing label warnings without adequate scientific assessment puts patients at risk," and asked the agency to hold an advisory committee meeting with a public hearing before making any changes.

In the meantime, doctors urge people to be wary of misinformation, like false claims on social media posts that hormones will prevent dementia and ensure a healthy old age.

"We can't say that you are going to live a longer, healthier life because you took hormones," Duke's Cole said. "I don't want the pendulum to go so far that people feel that it is promising health for the next 30 to 40 years."

Self-made 'green' labels mislead shoppers

How to make 'climate-friendly' and green choices when shopping online

NEW YORK, Aug 24, (AP): One way to be climate-friendly: Shop sustainably. But figuring out which products count as "sustainable" can be hard, especially when buying online.

As ordering with a computer or phone becomes more ubiquitous, the number of online products labeled sustainable is also increasing. Yet there is no single seal of approval across e-commerce platforms that verifies whether something is climate-friendly, partly because there are multiple ways to define sustainability.

Third-party nonprofit organizations study manufacturers and sellers' practices and offer certifications that are displayed online. Government programs such as the Agriculture Department's organic certification or Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star efficiency standard are also often listed. Large e-commerce websites may highlight the certifications with special icons, hyperlinks to certification programs or written descriptions.

The mixture can invite homework from buyers. Elwyn Grainger-Jones, who leads a nonprofit that certifies product sustainability, said there also isn't a single clearinghouse that tracks which third-party certifications are the most credible.

"Therein lies an issue and a challenge," said Grainger-Jones, CEO of Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute. "What we haven't seen so far is a third-party step in and be the information portal on what a good certification is."

And while shopping online might come with more packaging, it doesn't always come with more emissions. A person shopping online may even emit less than if they went to the store in person, according to a study published in Environmental Science and Technology. But there are a lot of variables, including which e-commerce site they use, the shipping speed they select and how close they live to a brick-and-mortar alternative.

There might not be one surefire way to tell sustainable products from unsustainable ones, but certification experts shared tips on what to look for. Many apply to in-person purchases, too, so you can keep them in mind for the super-market or furniture store.

There are multiple measures of sustainability, and sometimes positive attributes can be offset by negative ones. Third-party certification is meant to show that an independent group

studied these factors. Some focus on one issue, while others look holistically at how different factors fit together.

Manufacturing an item might have low emissions but use lots of water. A company might reduce plastic, but if its products don't last long, they can still wind up in the landfill. Other sustainability concerns include energy efficiency, how far the item has traveled and how resources were extracted to make it.

Certification labeling also varies. Sometimes it's printed on the product, sometimes it's listed on the manufacturer's website and sometimes the certifying body lists the products that have earned its approval. Large retail websites, in turn, often list certifications in a product description.

Third-party verification is a core avenue for determining whether a manufacturer's sustainability claims are legitimate.

"Ideally you want to look for some certifying bodies because they've removed some of that up-front labor that as a consumer you otherwise might have to do," said Clementina Consens of B Lab, which certifies companies that meet environmental and social standards.

Grainger-Jones said some companies create their own self-certifications that look convincing but don't mean much.

"You can go and buy a self-declared certificate for a couple of thousand dollars," he said.

If a company is serious about sustainability, it should have its practices assessed and make that information easy for customers to find, Consens said. She said she looks to see whether a company has completed an environmental impact assessment, whether it publicizes its findings or whether there is any tangible data on the company's greenhouse gas emissions, water or energy use.

Large e-commerce websites such as Amazon, Walmart and Target have set emissions benchmarks and other climate-related targets for their suppliers and list their own companywide sustainability goals. Walmart, for example, has released extensive information on its Project Gigaton, including a list of participating suppliers, definitions of its recognition tiers and science-based requirements for suppliers' goals. Target publishes its climate goals, and has provided updates on where the company has surpassed expectations, and where it has fallen short. It also displays icons and hyperlinks next to products that meet sustainability goals.

'The level of hunger is heartbreaking'

Gaza doctors cite protruding ribs, bony limbs as signs of malnutrition

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip, Aug 24, (AP): Not long after Texas surgeon Mohammed Adeel Khaleel arrived at a Gaza City hospital in early August, a 17-year-old was brought in with gunshot wounds to both legs and one hand, sustained when he went to collect food at an aid site.

In the emergency room, Khaleel said he noted the ribs protruding from the teen's emaciated torso, an indication of severe malnutrition. When doctors at Al-Ahli Hospital stabilized the patient, he raised his heavily bandaged hand and pointed to his empty mouth, Khaleel said.

"The level of hunger is really what's heartbreaking. You know, we saw malnutrition before, back in November, already starting to happen. But now the level is just, it's beyond imagination," Khaleel, a spinal surgeon on his third volunteer stint in Gaza, said in an interview.

On Friday, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, or IPC, the leading authority on global hunger crises, said for the first time that parts of Gaza are in famine and warned that it is spreading. For months, UN agencies, aid groups and experts had warned that Israel's blockade and ongoing offensive were pushing the territory to the brink.

In the 24 hours following the famine announcement, eight people in Gaza died of malnutrition-related causes, bringing the overall toll of such deaths during the war to 281, according Gaza's Health Ministry,



Islam Qudeih holds her shirtless, severely malnourished 2-year-old daughter, Shamm, at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip, Saturday, Aug. 9, 2025. Doctors said Shamm may have a genetic disorder that affects muscle and bone development, but there is no way to test for it in Gaza. (AP)

which is part of the Hamas-run government and staffed by medical professionals. A US medical nonprofit working in Gaza says one in six children under 5 is affected by acute malnutrition.

Israel rejected the famine announcement, calling it an "outright lie" and pointing to its recent efforts to allow in more food after it eased a complete 2½ month blockade in May. It has accused Hamas of siphoning off aid - allegations disputed by the United Nations, which says Israeli restrictions

and a breakdown of law and order make it extremely difficult to deliver food to the most vulnerable.

Khaleel, who spoke to The Associated Press ahead of the announcement, said the evidence of deprivation was already clear.

"Just the degree of weight loss, post-operative complications and starvation that we're seeing. That wouldn't surprise me at all if it was called famine," said Khaleel, who traveled to Gaza as an independent volunteer via the World Health Organization.



A 37-year-old HIV-positive mother of three, who requested anonymity, looks out her window in Johannesburg, South Africa, Monday, June 23, 2025. (AP)

US aid cuts leave the vulnerable without HIV drugs

JOHANNESBURG, Aug 24, (AP): On a warm evening in Johannesburg, the news spread like wildfire among sex workers: Within 24 hours, several nonprofit clinics providing free HIV services would be closing as President Donald Trump announced the United States was slashing foreign aid.

Some South Africans living with, or at risk of, HIV secured supplies of life-saving drugs just in time. Others did not.

Half a year later, the country with more people living with HIV than any other is struggling to treat its most vulnerable. Over 63,000 people were being treated in the 12 clinics across the nation that shut down. Up to 220,000 people have faced disruption to their daily HIV medication.

South Africa's government has vowed it won't let the US withdrawal of about \$427 million in support collapse its HIV

program, the largest in the world.

Sex workers, among the most vulnerable South Africans as their work is illegal, and transgender people spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation from families or communities. They described a new world of difficulty in obtaining HIV medication or the preventive medicine for people at risk of HIV.

One HIV-positive sex worker and mother of three said she was off medication for almost four months after being turned away from public hospitals, which the government's health department says should not be happening.

"The only thing that I could think of was my kids, and that I am going to die, and how am I going to explain to my kids that I am sick because of the line of work that I chose?" she said. The

37-year-old said she finally obtained a month's supply of medication in June from a mobile clinic that was introduced after the funding cuts. She didn't know what she would do after that.

Another HIV-positive sex worker said she had resorted to illegally buying medication on the black market, where the pills have nearly doubled in price.

The U.S. has since issued a limited waiver allowing the resumption of certain life-saving HIV services globally, but the dismantling of much of U.S. foreign aid has created chaos. And for many people affected, harm is already done.

Overall, experts warn of hundreds of thousands of new infections in the next few years in South Africa, and tens of thousands of additional deaths, if the cuts in aid aren't restored or covered by other means.

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Blaney wins dramatic NASCAR finale at Daytona

Bowman advances, Reddick survives scare

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla., Aug 24, (AP): Ryan Blaney won a four-wide race across the Daytona International Speedway finish line Saturday night in NASCAR’s regular-season finale - a victory that denied a long-shot driver a spot in the playoffs and gave Alex Bowman postseason life.

Blaney was 13th with two laps to go, then muscled his Team Penske Ford to the front and surged slightly ahead as he led the pack to the checkered flag. He beat Daniel Suarez by 0.031 seconds, Justin



Ryan Blaney holds the championship trophy as he celebrates in Victory Lane after winning a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla. (AP)

Haley by 0.036 seconds, and Cole Custer by 0.049 seconds.

Erik Jones was fifth and Chris Buescher sixth. Any of the drivers behind Blaney would have been first-time winners this season and claimed the final spot in the 16-driver playoff field.

But Blaney - a former series champion already locked into the field - denied them the Cinderella moment. His victory assured Bowman, who crashed early in the race and had to watch for more than three hours on TV to learn his fate, would race for the championship this season.

The first 19 cars across the finish line were all within a half-second of Blaney, who wound up second in the regular-season standings. Daytona 500 winner William Byron had already wrapped up the regular-season title.

“What a wild couple of last laps,” said Blaney, who waited until the end to aggressively move through traffic. “It’s definitely not as traditional a way as we like to run them; we like to lead laps and things like that. We just couldn’t really get there until the last second.”

Suarez, who is being replaced at Trackhouse Racing at the end of the season, was disappointed not to make the playoffs.

“All in all, a good car. Just not enough and a little too late,” Suarez said.

Haley, who is likely to be replaced at Spire Motorsports at the end of the year, was also frustrated. Haley and Spire’s only Cup Series win came in this race in 2019, when it was shortened by rain while Haley was the leader.

“It hurts, especially with the year the 7 car has had. We obviously had a rough season,” Haley said. “You’re counting them down and just trying to play everything out. It stings, but still a good night.”

Buescher said coming up short of the playoffs would force him to “just be mad about it for a while.

“Not trying to pout, just I’m proud of



Ryan Blaney (12) crosses the finish line to win a NASCAR Cup Series auto race ahead of at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla. (AP)

this team,” he continued. “It was a great night. We certainly had a shot and had the speed again, so I want to be excited about that, and I am, but man, it’s just another one of those we could win this race, had the speed, had the handling, and no champagne to celebrate.”

The victory was on brand for Team Penske, winner of the last three Cup Series championships. Joey Logano won in 2023, Blaney in 2024, and Logano again last year.

The team has won those titles by overcoming summer slumps and then turning it up when the playoffs begin. Blaney’s win snapped an 11-race losing streak for Penske and Ford.

Penske, who was in victory lane to celebrate with the No. 12 team, has all three of his drivers in the playoff field.

Tyler Reddick crashed early and still clinched a spot in the playoffs.

How?

Just nine laps later, Bowman wrecked at Daytona and, with Bowman out of the race, it automatically locked Reddick into the 16-driver field.

Reddick and Bowman both started the race trying to claim the final two spots in the playoffs. Reddick, last year’s regular-season champion, held a 29-point cushion over Bowman. But when he wrecked 18 laps into the race,

he suddenly became in danger of missing out on racing for the championship just nine months after he made it to the title-deciding finale.

His worries went away on Lap 27 when Bowman was collected in a multi-car crash that ended the Hendrick Motorsports drivers’ race. Bowman can still claim the final spot in the playoffs if there is not a first-time winner Saturday night.

“There’s just nothing you can do, welcome to superspeedway racing,” Bowman said about the crash. “We feel like it was out of our control, and it is what it is. I am going to sit in front of a TV and watch. Unfortunately,

we are on the sidelines watching, and we’re going to find out here in a couple of hours.”

Reddick was pleased to make the playoffs, but frustrated that it has been so difficult.

“Really disappointing for the experience I have to find myself in that position. As a driver, you never want to make a mistake like that that early,” he said. “I hate that it came to that, but yeah, we at least made it.”

Hours before the race began, Team Penske noted the death of Karl Kainhofer, the first employee Penske hired when he launched the motorsports juggernaut in 1966.

Sun holds off Sky

Wilson has 19th double-double as Aces extend winning streak

WASHINGTON, Aug 24, (AP): A’ja Wilson had 36 points and 13 rebounds for her 19th double-double of the season and the Las Vegas Aces extended their winning streak to 10 games with a 91-81 victory over the Washington Mystics on Saturday.

Dana Evans added 21 points in 23 minutes off the bench for the Aces (24-14) and Jackie Young had 10.

Rookie Kiki Iriafen had 21 points and a career-high 15 rebounds for her 14th double-double, one off the franchise record for the Mystics (16-21). Shakira Austin added 18 points and Sonia Citron 13.

The Mystics bolted to an early 15-point lead and led 26-19 after one quarter. The difference was going 9 for 12 at the foul line as both teams had one 3-pointer and eight field goals.

Wilson had 11 points in the second quarter when the Aces outscored the Mystics by a dozen to take a 44-39 lead at the half. The Mystics made two field goals, but upped their free throws to 16 of 19 while Las Vegas was 5 for 5.

It was 68-61 after three quarters, when Wilson scored another 10 points. Las Vegas led by as many as 18 in the fourth quarter.

The Aces were 10 of 20 from 3-point range - Evans was 5 of 6 - and shot 52% overall (35 of 65) with 27 assists, eight each by Young and Chelsea Gray.

With its winning streak, Las Vegas has surged into third place, a half-game behind Atlanta for the second seed. The Aces play at Chicago on Monday and Atlanta on Wednesday.



Wilson

and reserve Saniya Rivers 13 for the Sun (9-27), who won just their third road game. Charles had 10 rebounds and is the WNBA career leader in double-doubles.

Kia Nurse led the comeback for Chicago (9-27) with 19 points. She didn’t score until hitting two 3-pointers in the last minute of the first half and scored 10 in the fourth quarter. Kamilla Cardoso added 18 points, Ariel Adkins had 12 and Angel Reese 11 with 11 rebounds, giving her 19 double-doubles for the season, matching Las Vegas’ A’ja Wilson for the league lead.

Sky coach Tyler Marsh was ejected two minutes into the second quarter for confronting a referee about a no-call. Chicago trailed 33-20 at the time.

Mabrey had 12 points in the first quarter as the Sun took a 28-13 lead. Connecticut shot 11 of 18 (61%) with three 3s, while Chicago was 6 of 18 (33%), going without a 3-pointer and shooting 1 of 7 from the foul line.

The Sky ended up 9 of 19 from beyond the arc, and went 15 for 26 from the foul line, with 17 turnovers. The Sun scored 26 points off turnovers.

Dream 78, Liberty 62

In College Park, Allisha Gray scored 19 points, Brionna Jones added 17 and the Atlanta Dream dominated the short-handed New York Liberty to set a franchise record with their 24th win of the season.

The Dream started the day with a one-game lead over the Liberty for the second seed in the playoffs and never gave the defending WNBA champions a chance to pull even.

Atlanta took charge early, opening a 12-4 lead and making it 24-14 after one quarter. The lead reached 26 late in the third quarter before New York went on a 15-0 run, but the Liberty got no closer than 11.

Naz Hillmon had 11 points for Atlanta (24-13), which has won 9 of 11 games and tied the season series at 2-2, the home team winning each time.

Kennedy Burke scored 13 points for New York (22-15), which had only eight players available. Breanna Stewart is still out with a bruised knee and Sabrina Ionescu, who missed the game with a foot issue, is day to day. Jonquel Jones added 11 points and Emma Meeseman had 10.

Atlanta won the rebounding advantage by nine and had 21 second-chance points, compared to 7 for New York. The Dream also turned 13 Liberty turnovers into 18 points. Atlanta had just five giveaways.

SAN DIEGO, Aug 24, (AP): CJ dos Santos finished with two saves and expansion side San Diego FC became the first club to clinch a spot in the postseason by playing the Portland Timbers to a scoreless draw.

Dos Santos notched a save in each half for San Diego (16-7-5) in earning his ninth clean sheet of the season.

James Pantemis had one save and it came in the first half of his fourth shutout in 13 starts for the Timbers (10-9-8).

San Diego has already set a record for a first-year club with six consecutive wins on the road and is within four points of the record 57 points accumulated by Los Angeles FC in its 2018 expansion season.

The Western Conference front-runners need one more victory to tie St. Louis City’s record of 17 for an expansion team.

Portland falls to 6-7-1 when playing an expansion team for the first time.

Thomas Müller scored on a penalty kick in the 14th minute of second-half stoppage time to rally the Vancouver Whitecaps to a 3-2 victory over St. Louis City.

Müller, making his first start and second appearance for Vancouver (14-6-7) since coming over from Germany’s Bayern Munich, took the PK after Mathias Laborda was fouled by Mykhi Joyner.

St. Louis City jumped out to a 1-0 lead in the 14th minute when Eduard Löwen used a pass from Conrad Wallem to score his fourth goal of the season. Wallem’s helper was his third in his first season in the league.

Vancouver tied it at halftime when Brian White scored on a penalty kick in the fourth minute of stoppage time. White notched his 14th goal after Chris Durkin’s foul on Tristan Blackmon led to the PK. White has eight goals in six career matches against St. Louis City, including a hat trick in a win at BC Place last season.

Harbor Miller and Elijah Wynder scored their first career goals in MLS. Gabriel Pec also scored a goal, and the LA Galaxy beat the Colorado Rapids 3-0 on Saturday night to snap a four-game winless streak.

JT Marcinkowski made his first MLS appearance since 2023 and had a save for LA (4-16-7). The 28-year-old, who signed with the Galaxy in January after seven seasons with San Jose, missed the 2024 season while recovering from knee surgery.

Robin Lod and Joaquín Pereyra



Nashville SC midfielder Andy Najar, left, kicks the ball past Orlando City forward Tyrese Spicer, right, during the first half of an MLS soccer match in Nashville, Tenn. (AP)

each scored a goal to help Minnesota United beat Real Salt Lake 3-1.

Dayne St. Clair had five saves for Minnesota (14-6-8).

Robin Lod tapped a first-touch shot from the left side of the area into the side-net to give Minnesota a 2-1 lead in the 36th minute.

Salt Lake (9-14-4) has lost three consecutive games.

Minnesota took a 1-0 lead on Brayan Vera’s own goal in the sixth minute but Victor Olatunji scored his first career goal in his second MLS appearance to make it 1-1 in the 15th.

Cristian Arango and Preston Judd each scored a goal on Saturday night to help the San Jose Earthquakes beat Houston 2-0 and extend the Dynamo’s winless streak to six games.

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DeJuan Jones, on the counter-attack, played a low entry pass from the right side to the near post where Judd tapped a back-heel pass to Arango for sliding finish from point-blank range that gave San Jose (9-11-8) a 1-0 lead in the 28th minute.

Judd re-directed a shot by Ian Harkes into the net to make it 2-0 in the 64th.

Kai Wagner and Milan Iloski each had a goal and an assists, Tai Baribo also scored a goal and the Philadelphia Union beat Chicago 4-0 on Saturday night to snap the Fire’s five-game unbeaten streak.



The Union (16-6-6) leads all of MLS with 54 points and moved past Cincinnati (52) into first in the Eastern Conference.

Andrew Rick had two saves Philadelphia (16-6-6). The 19-year-old has five shut outs this season.

Prince Owusu had an assist in the first half before scoring on a penalty kick in the second to help CF Montreal beat Austin FC 3-2.

Leo Campana and Ignatius Gagnago scored first-half goals and the New England Revolution held on for a 2-1 victory over the Columbus

Crew on Saturday night.

New England (8-12-7) grabbed a 1-0 lead in the 25th minute when Campana used assists from Luca Langoni and Carles Gil to score his sixth goal of the season. Langoni’s assist was his second and Gil collected his 10th.

Son Heung-Min scored his first goal to help Los Angeles FC earn a 1-1 draw with FC Dallas on Saturday night.

Heung-Min scored unassisted for his first goal six minutes into his third MLS appearance to give LAFC (11-6-8) the lead.

Dallas (7-11-9) pulled even in the 13th minute when Logan Farrington used an assist from Patrickson Delgado - his third - to score his career-high fifth goal. Farrington had four goals in 29 appearances as a rookie last season.

Baltasar Rodríguez scored his first career goal in MLS for Inter Miami in a 1-1 tie with D.C. United on Saturday night.

D.C. (4-15-9), which is winless in 11 consecutive games, was eliminated from playoff contention.

Rodríguez, a 22-year-old who made is seventh appearance in MLS, made it 1-1 in the 64th minute. Rodrigo De Paul’s arcing corner kick slipped untouched through the area and skipped twice before Rodríguez bent a first-touch shot from outside the area into the side-net.

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Norway ski jumpers accept 3-month ban for manipulated suits

OBERHOFEN, Switzerland, Aug 24, (AP): Two Olympic gold medalists have accepted a three-month ban after a scandal over tampering with ski jump suits for Norway men’s team at this year’s world championships.

The International Ski and Snowboard Federation (FIS) said that Norwegians Marius Lindvik and Johann André Forfang were “willing to accept” the sanctions proposed by the federation’s ethics

committee.

FIS said Lindvik and Forfang, who were provisionally suspended in March, “were not charged with actual knowledge of the manipulations,” but that they “should have checked and asked questions about the night-time adjustments.”

The length of the sanction - “ from which the period of the provisional suspension already served shall be deducted” - opens the way for both men to compete

in the Winter Olympics to be held in northern Italy in February.

Norway’s ski jump team came under scrutiny by sports authorities at their home Nordic world championships over manipulated suits, with the apparent intent to make athletes fly further thanks to the suits’ extra aerodynamic resistance.

Lindvik and Forfang denied wrongdoing. Admissions of guilt were made in March by head coach Magnus Brevik

and equipment manager Adrian Liveltén, who said suits were altered only before the men’s large hill event.

In August, the federation opened an ethics inquiry into the star ski jumpers, two coaches and a member of the service staff of Norway’s men’s ski jumping team.

The manipulation was to increase the size of suits pre-approved and microchipped by FIS, and was captured on secretly filmed footage. The alterations could be confirmed

only by tearing apart the seams of the crotch area on the Norwegian ski suits.

That discovery led to formal protests from the Austria, Slovenia and Poland teams.

Lindvik has been expected to defend his Olympic title next year in the men’s large hill event at the 2026 Milan-Cortina Olympics. Forfang took team gold on the large hill and normal hill individual silver at the 2018 Olympics held in South Korea.

Pujara retires from all forms of cricket

Khan to lead spin-heavy Afghanistan at Asia Cup

KABUL, Afghanistan, Aug 24, (AP): Rashid Khan will lead a spin-heavy Afghanistan at the next month's Asia Cup with uncapped mystery spinner AM Ghazanfar also named in the 17-member Twenty20 squad. Khan was named captain and is joined by Noor Ahmad, Mujeeb Ur Rahman and Mohammad Nabi as the other seasoned spinners for the Sept. 9-28 tournament in the United Arab Emirates, where pitches are expected to help slow bowlers at Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

Afghanistan hasn't played a T20 since beating Zimbabwe in December last year. Afghanistan will tune-up for the Asia Cup by playing a triangular series which begins at Sharjah from



Afghanistan's captain Rashid Khan throws the ball to a teammate during the men's T20 World Cup semi-final cricket match between Afghanistan and South Africa at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Tarouba, Trinidad and Tobago. (AP)

Aug. 29 and also features UAE and Pakistan.

Squad: Rashid Khan (captain), Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Ibrahim Zadran, Darwish Rasooli, Sediqullah Atal, Azmatullah Omarzai, Karim Janat, Mohammad Nabi, Gulbadin Naib, Sharafuddin Ashraf, Mohammad Ishaq, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, AM Ghazanfar, Noor Ahmad, Fareed Ahmad, Naveen Ul Haq, Fazalhaq Farooqi

Reserves: Wafiullah Tarakhil, Nangeyalia Kharote, Abdullah Ahmadzai

India star batter Cheteshwar Pujara has retired from all forms of cricket on Sunday after representing his country in 103 test matches.

"Wearing the Indian jersey, singing the anthem, and trying my best each time I stepped on the field -- it's impossible to put into words what it truly meant," Pujara said on X.

"But as they say, all good things must come to an end, and with immense gratitude I have decided to retire from all forms of Indian cricket."

The 37-year-old Pujara scored 7,195 runs in 103 test matches at an impressive average of 43.60, featuring 19 centuries and 35 half centuries.

Pujara hasn't played a test match since competing against Australia at the World Test Championship final in 2023. He made his first class debut for Saurashtra in late 2005 and also played for them in the last Ranji Trophy season.

In his brief white-ball career, Pujara played five one-day internationals during 2013-14, but cemented his place in the test side while mostly batting at No. 3 after Rahul Dravid quit international cricket.

Aubameyang stars, OM routs Paris FC amid team turmoil

MARSEILLE, France, Aug 24, (AP): Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang scored twice as Marseille ended a week of turmoil with a 5-2 win over promoted Paris FC in the French league.

Marseille could even afford a missed penalty from Mason Greenwood late on.

But the victory wasn't a given amid the unusual buildup to the game. Marseille coach Roberto De Zerbi said Friday that teammates Adrien Rabiot and Jonathan Rowe had brawled as if in a pub fight after the team's season-opening loss at Rennes last weekend.

Both players have been put on the club's transfer list.

Greenwood opened the scoring Saturday with a penalty before the Aubameyang show started with a spectacular finish in the 24th minute.

Ilan Kebbal pulled one back four minutes later with a brilliant strike inside the far post and he played in Moses Simon to equalize early in the second half with a perfectly placed through ball.

Aubameyang restored Marseille's lead after a gift from the Paris defense, Pierre-Emile Højbjerg made it 4-2 in the 81st, and impressive substitute Robinio Vaz completed the scoring in stoppage time after Greenwood missed his second opportunity from the spot.

The penalty was awarded for a foul on Vaz.

Lyon eased to a 3-0 victory over Metz for its first home win of the season following its successful appeal against relegation last month.

The seven-time French champion was demoted to the second tier because of ongoing financial irregularities and debts estimated at 175 million euros (\$203 million), but it appealed.

The club's new president, Michele Kang, watched as first-half goals from Malik Fofana and Corentin Tolisso were followed in the 83rd minute by Adam Karabec's first goal since his arrival from Sparta Prague.

There was a brief holdup in the second half as an announcement and a message on the large screen warned against offensive chants.

It's the second win from two games for Lyon, which opened with a 1-0 win over Lens last week.

Also Saturday, Nice enjoyed a 3-1 win over Auxerre, which had goalkeeper Donovan Léon sent off before the break for bringing down Isak Jansson.

Defending champion Paris Saint-Germain defeated Angers 1-0.

Surprise appearance by Serena

Maria and Bryan brothers enter tennis hall of fame



Maria Sharapova of Russia holds the trophy after winning the women's final match against Sara Errani of Italy at the French Open tennis tournament in Roland Garros stadium in Paris, June 9, 2012. (AP)

NEWPORT, R.I., Aug 24, (AP): Serena Williams made a surprise - and early - appearance at the International Tennis Hall of Fame, emerging from behind the stage to introduce "former rival, former fan and forever friend" Maria Sharapova for her induction on Saturday night.

Sharapova was joined in the Class of 2025 by dominating doubles team Mike and Bob Bryan. The twin brothers finished their speech with one of their trademark chest bumps.

Hall of Famers Martina Navratilova, Jim Courier, Stan Smith and Andy Roddick were among those in the crowd, wearing their blue Hall of Fame blazers. Sharapova and the Bryan brothers also received a cast tennis racket that is the hall's newest offering to inductees.

Williams, a 23-time Grand Slam champion who will be eligible for her own enshrinement in 2027, drew gasps

and shrieks from the crowd at the Newport shrine.

"There are only a few players in my career who challenged me to be the very best, every single time we stepped out on the court," Williams said. "Maria Sharapova was one of them. Whenever I saw her name next to mine in the draw, I made sure I practiced harder."

And the feeling was mutual.

"It's a gift to have someone who motivates you to reach those heights. And I'll forever be grateful for bringing out the best in me," Sharapova said in her acceptance speech. "We both knew no other way than to fight our hearts out. ... We both hated to lose more than anything on this earth, and we both knew that the other was the biggest obstacle between ourselves and the trophy."

The first Russian woman ever to reach No. 1 in the rankings and one of 10 women to complete the career Grand Slam.

De Bruyne dazzles for Napoli as Cremonese stuns Milan

Roma start's strong under Gasperini

MILAN, Aug 24, (AP): Napoli's former Premier League players lit up Serie A on the opening day of the new season .

Kevin De Bruyne netted in his debut and Scott McTominay scored the opener as Antonio Conte's team kicked off its Serie A title defense with a comfortable 2-0 win at Serie B champion Sassuolo.

Massimiliano Allegri's return to AC Milan got off to a dismal start as the Rossoneri lost 2-1 at home to newly promoted Cremonese. Gian Piero Gasperini's first match in charge of Roma ended in a 1-0 victory over Bologna.

McTominay joined Napoli from Manchester United last year in a move that was so successful he ended up being named Serie A player of the year.

And the 28-year-old picked up where he left off last season by scoring Napoli's first goal of the new campaign in the 17th minute, peeling away from his marker to head Matteo Politano's cross from the right into the top near corner.

McTominay also sent a fierce effort crashing off the crossbar in first-half stoppage time, while Politano hit the post before Napoli doubled its lead in somewhat strange circumstances.



Napoli's Lorenzo Lucca, right, fights for the ball with Sassuolo's Filippo Romagna during the Italian Serie A soccer match between Sassuolo and Napoli at the Mapei Stadium Città del Tricolore in Reggio Emilia, Italy, Saturday. (AP)

De Bruyne whipped in a free kick from wide on the left - practically on the touchline - and it went over everyone in the area before bouncing on the ground and going into the far bottom corner.

The 34-year-old De Bruyne, a two-time Premier League player of the season, joined Napoli in June on a free transfer after 10 years at Manchester City.

Sassuolo ended the match with

10 men after midfielder Ismaël Koné was sent off following a second yellow card, with 11 minutes remaining.

Cremonese marked its return to the Italian top flight with a first ever victory over Milan at San Siro thanks to an early contender for goal of the season from Federico Bonazzoli.

The 28-year-old Bonazzoli, who started his career at Inter Milan, scored what was to prove the winner in the 61st minute with an acrobatic, overhead kick into the bottom corner.

Strahinja Pavlovic had headed in the equalizer in first-half stoppage time to cancel out Federico Baschiroto's 28th-minute opener.

Allegri, who left Milan in 2014, rejoined the Rossoneri at the end of May to replace the fired Sergio Conceicao.

Wesley scored in his Serie A debut to give Gasperini a strong start to his Roma career.

The Brazil defender, who joined from Flamengo in July, brought down a long ball over the top and cut inside where he appeared to be intercepted by Jhon Lucumi but the Bologna defender only succeeded in prodding the ball back into the path of Wesley, who fired across into the bottom left corner.

Bologna lost both Ciro Immobile and Nicoló Casale to injuries in the first half.

Elsewhere, Genoa drew 0-0 at home to Lecce.

Argentina posts its first home win over NZ

South Africa survives late drama, edges Australia to keep alive title hopes

CAPE TOWN, South Africa, Aug 24, (AP): South Africa edged Australia 30-22 and kept alive its hopes of retaining the Rugby Championship crown on Saturday.

Consecutive defeats to the Wallabies in the republic - not seen since 1963 - would have sunk the title hopes and surprisingly vulnerable confidence of the world champion Springboks.

But flyhalf Handre Pollard's unerring accuracy off the tee and the Bomb Squad of replacements proved the difference. Pollard, one of nine changes after South Africa's 38-22 loss at Ellis Park a week ago, slotted all of his six goalkicks.

In contrast, Wallabies flyhalf James O'Connor missed his last three goalkicks in the last 12 minutes; a conversion attempt to Brandon Paenga-Amosa's try that brought Australia to 23-22 and two penalties.

O'Connor was apparently playing on an injured ankle and Australia had no more reserve backs.

The teams scored three tries each as Australia, again, was incredibly resilient and rallied for the second straight weekend from a deep hole.

South Africa led 22-0 at Ellis Park before succumbing. It led 20-7 late in the first half at Cape Town Stadium but the Wallabies comeback stalled at 23-22 down with 12



Argentina's Los Pumas players celebrate winning a rugby championship match against New Zealand's All Blacks in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Saturday, Aug. 23, 2025. (AP)

minutes to go.

Eben Etzebeth came off the bench for his 135th test to scrape the ball on the try-line with six minutes left to make it 30-22.

But even more late drama - Sacha Feinberg-Mngomezulu's high tackle, Aphelele Fassi's yellow card and O'Connor's missed goalkicks - left the result in suspense to the end.

The Pumas broke out of a 13-13 halftime deadlock to score 16 second half points and to beat the All Blacks 29-23 in the second Rugby Championship test, for its first win over New Zealand in Argentina.

Santiago Carreras kicked three second penalties, including a long-range effort which gave Argentina a nine-point margin with seven minutes to play. Scrumhalf Gonzalo Garcia scored his first test try in the 59th minute as the Pumas took the match away from New Zealand for

an historic home victory.

The All Blacks scored a try through hooker Samisoni Taukei'a to cut Argentina's lead to six points at 26-20 before Carreras made their lead secure with his third penalty of the match. Damian McKenzie kicked a late goal to allow the All Blacks to claim a bonus point and retain top spot on the Rugby Championship standings after two rounds.

New Zealand won the first test last weekend 41-24 and now all four teams in the Rugby Championship have one win and one loss after South Africa's win over Australia earlier Saturday.

Argentina dominated the All Blacks both in territory and possession, kept the ball in hand for long periods and conclusively won the aerial battle.

The All Blacks' back play was disorganized and their discipline poor. They had three yellow cards, finishing the first half with 13 men and the match with 14.

The All Blacks only got on top of the Pumas in a five minute period in the first half when they scored tries through Billy Pollard and Fletcher Newell to lead 13-6. Otherwise they were outplayed and questions must now be raised over coaching and selections.

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NEWS



Everton's James Garner celebrates after scoring during the Premier League soccer match between Everton and Brighton in Liverpool, England. (AP)

Sports

Kuwait Special Olympics equestrian team competes in UAE regional event



The equestrian team.

AL AIN, UAE, Aug 24: Kuwait's Special Olympics equestrian team, representing Al-Tomoooh Sports Club, is taking part in the Regional Equestrian Competition for the Special Olympics Middle East and North Africa, hosted by Special Olympics UAE in cooperation with the Regional Special Olympics. The tournament runs in Al Ain from today through August 28 with athletes from 11 Arab nations competing.

Head of the Kuwaiti delegation and Secretary-General of Al-Tomoooh Club, Sediqa Al-Ansari, confirmed that the riders are well prepared after an intensive three-month training program. She emphasized the team's determination to showcase their skills and build on Kuwait's record of achievements in equestrian sports.

"Our riders have an impressive history of success," said Al-Ansari. "Basma Al-Bosaili won three silver medals at the World Games in Berlin, while Abdullah Al-Ali captured

two gold medals at the Special Olympics National Games in Egypt. I am confident they will continue to shine and proudly raise Kuwait's flag."

Al-Ansari noted that equestrian sports have been a growing focus in Kuwait, recognized for their role in developing the physical, psychological, and social skills of athletes with intellectual disabilities.

She extended her appreciation to the athletes, coaches, parents, the Public Authority for Sport, Special Olympics Kuwait, Al-Tomoooh Club, and the Kuwait Equestrian Academy for their support. She also thanked Special Olympics UAE and the Regional Special Olympics for hosting the event.

The Kuwaiti delegation includes riders Abdullah Al-Ali, Basma Al-Bosaili, and Maryam Dhiab, accompanied by Coach Sarah Bouhamdi and trainer Mohammed Al-Kandari, under the leadership of Al-Ansari.

Al-Shammari clinches gold at Asian Junior Judo Champ'ship

'I am proud to raise Kuwait's flag'

AMMAN, Jordan , Aug 24: Kuwait's national judo athlete Abdulwahab Al-Shammari won the gold medal in the under-50 kilogram category at the recently concluded Asian Open Championship for juniors.

Al-Shammari advanced past competitors from Saudi Arabia and Syria in the preliminary rounds before defeating an Iranian opponent in the final, securing gold for Kuwait. The Kuwaiti team finished the championship with a total of eight medals, including four golds and four bronzes.

This victory adds to Al-Shammari's growing list of achievements. He previously earned second place at the Arab Junior Championship in Jordan in April and won the West Asia Championship in the 42-kilogram category. He has also consistently ranked among the top athletes in domestic competitions.

Al-Shammari is now preparing to compete with Kuwait's national team at the upcoming World Championship in Bulgaria, where top judo teams from around the globe will participate.

"I am proud to raise Kuwait's flag at Arab and Asian championships," Al-Shammari said. "My greatest ambition is to win gold at the World Championship."



Al-Shammari celebrates with his certificate after the awarding ceremony.

10 clubs set for handball championship

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY , Aug 24: The Arab Handball Federation has confirmed the participation of 10 clubs in the 40th Arab Championship for League and Cup-winning teams, scheduled to take place in Kuwait from September 12 to 22. Participating clubs include hosts Kuwait Club, Kazma, Al-Salibkhat, Egypt's National Bank, Iraq's Al-Hashd Al-Riyadi, Al-Tali'a, Al-Nawaeer, Syria's Al-Shabab, Al-

Ahli, and Qatar SC.

Kuwaiti teams are ramping up preparations with overseas training camps. Kuwait Club and Al-Salibkhat, are training in Bosnia, while Kazma in Izmit, Turkey. Clubs have also bolstered their rosters with foreign players. Kuwait Club added Montenegrin Vladan Lipovina and Portuguese Victor Ituriza, joining current Qatari professional Francis Marzo, under Algerian coach Said Hijazi.

Al-Safeer strengthened its squad by signing Slovenian Lapaine Ganus to join Tunisian duo Anwar Ben Abdullah and Mohamed Farad, with Serbian coach Bozo at the helm. Al-Salibkhat, coached by Kuwaiti Walid Salmeeen, brought in French-Algerian Nouri Ben Halima and Portuguese Gonzalo Ribeiro, while seeking a third foreign player.

Kuwait Club, winners of the last two editions, defeated Egypt's Zamalek in the 2023 final in Dammam and overcame Al-Salmiya in last year's final in Kuwait. The club aims for a three-peat, leveraging thorough preparation and home-court advantage to continue its dominance in the Arab handball scene.



Players preparing for the championship in Kuwait.

Forest owner abused in Palace draw

Everton opens new stadium with win

LONDON, Aug 24, (AP): Everton began life in its new waterfront home at Bramley-Moore Dock with a 2-0 win over Brighton on Sunday as Jack Grealish showed glimpses of the player who once was the poster-boy of English soccer.

Grealish, who is on loan from Manchester City in a bid to resurrect his career, dribbled into the area and crossed for fellow winger Iliman Ndiaye to volley home the first goal of a new era for Everton following the team's emotional departure from Goodison Park, its long-time home. That offered some symmetry, with Ndiaye also scoring the last goal at Goodison.

By providing a layoff for James Garner to drive home Everton's second goal from outside the area, Grealish grabbed a second assist of the game - as many as the England forward managed in total across the past two Premier League seasons at City.

Everton goalkeeper Jordan Pickford saved a penalty from Danny Welbeck to the delight of the home fans among the 51,759 inside their new stadium that was built in the hope of taking an underachieving club in recent years to a new level. Not for the first time, Pickford was seen checking his water bottle ahead of a penalty kick because he keeps the name of potential opposition penalty-takers on the drinking vessel and where they might hit their attempt.

It was Everton's first win of the season, after a 1-0 loss at Leeds in the opening round.

Crystal Palace fans weren't afraid to make their feelings known about Nottingham Forest during the teams' 1-1 draw at Selhurst Park.

Palace, the FA Cup winner last season, was demoted from the Europa League to the Conference League last month for breaching UEFA rules on club ownership, in a saga the club believes was influenced by Forest and owner Evangelos Marinakis, who benefitted by being promoted to the Europa League at Palace's expense.

A spicy pre-match banner took a pop at Marinakis, as did some abusive chants from Palace's notoriously boisterous supporters that also targeted UEFA.

Ismaïla Sarr gave Palace a 37th-minute lead before Callum Hudson-Odoi equalized in the 57th for Forest, whose manager Nuno Espirito Santo was in the dugout for the match despite concerns about his job amid rising tensions with Marinakis over the summer.

Mallorca scores late in draw with Celta Vigo

Barca roars back as Atletico drops more points



Lamine Yamal (left) of Barcelona vies with Pablo Martinez of Levante during the Laliga football match between Barcelona and Levante in Valencia, Spain. (Xinhua)

BARCELONA, Spain, Aug 24, (AP): Barcelona fought back from a two-goal deficit to win 3-2 at Levante with a late own-goal by the hosts in the Spanish league on Saturday.

Defending champion Barcelona needed Pedri González and Ferran Torres to score early in the second half to equalize after the newly promoted Levante had rolled to a surprise two-goal lead at halftime.

Lamine Yamal then helped to produce the winning goal when he curled a cross into the six-yard box and Levante's Unai Elgezabal headed into his own net.

Levante striker Iván Romero earlier struck from a counterattack in the 15th minute that started with a ball lost by Yamal. José Luis Morales made it 2-0 in first-half injury time by converting a penalty after a video review called a handball by Alejandro Balde when he blocked Morales' shot.

But Pedri started the fightback in the 49th when he received Yamal's pass well outside the area, picked his spot in the corner of the net and blasted in a shot from long range.

Ferran, who had hit the woodwork in the first half, leveled in the 52nd when he fended off his marker and volleyed in Raphinha's corner kick.

Barcelona then pressed for the decider that Yamal helped find just after the 90 minutes were up.

Barcelona coach Hansi Flick praised Pedri for his goal, saying "it changed

the match."

"The first goal we scored helped us a lot to get our confidence in the box, but until the end it was not easy for us to get the three points."

Barcelona won its opener at nine-man Mallorca 3-0 last weekend.

Newcomer Marcus Rashford made his first league start for Barcelona since his loan move from Manchester United as a left-side forward for Flick.

He was replaced by Dani Olmo at half-time, after the biggest threats had come from Pedri's passes in the middle and Yamal's incursions down the right.

"I think Marcus had some situations in the first half where he showed how good he is and how he can help us, and that is how we have to continue," Flick said.

Barcelona's Robert Lewandowski played his first minutes of the season as a late substitute after recovering

from a muscle injury.

Atletico Madrid stumbled for a second straight game to start the season after squandering its lead in a 1-1 draw with promoted Elche.

Diego Simeone's club revamped its already deep squad this summer with its sights set on challenging Barcelona and Real Madrid for the title. But this is not the start the Argentine coach wanted with his team having just one point so far. Mallorca also scored late in a 1-1 draw with Celta Vigo.

Just like its 2-1 loss at Espanyol the previous weekend, Atletico's defense was uncharacteristically unable to protect a lead against Elche even with the backing of its home supporters.

Alexander Sorloth, who started alongside Julian Alvarez up front for Atletico, scored a fine eighth-minute opener when he ran onto a pass by defender David Hancko and looped an angled strike home.

Sorloth had a chance to make it a double moments later, but Elche goalkeeper Matías Ditturo blocked his shot from inside the box.

Elche then stunned the Metropolitano with a quick passing buildup that culminated with an assist from German Valera for striker Rafa Mir to beat Jan Oblak in the 15th.

Giuliano Simeone erred with a shot that could have put Atletico back in front before halftime but instead hit the far post.



Barcelona's Ferran Torres reacts after scoring during the La Liga soccer match between Levante and Barcelona in Valencia, Spain. (AP)