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HH the PM chairs a meeting to discuss ways to generate revenue for the state through recycling disposable tires.
PM Diwan photo

From waste to wealth PM pushes green revenue plan through tire recycling

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired at Bayan Palace on Wednesday a meeting to discuss ways to generate revenue for the state through recycling disposable tires.

Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel, Minister of State of Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdulateef Al-Meshari, and Minister of Oil Tareq Al-Roumi attended the proceedings.

The meeting discussed mechanisms to use disposable tires through environmental friendly methods, recycling them to generate revenue for the state.

His Highness the Prime Minister called for speeding up the necessary procedures to achieve such goals through utilizing innovative industrial methods that ensure the environmental safety.

The meeting also saw the participation of head of the Prime Minister Diwan Abdulaziz Al-Dakheel, head of the department of Fatwa and Legislation Salah Al-Majed, senior Kuwait Municipality officials, the Environment Public Authority (EPA) and Public Authority for Industry (PAI).



HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

The scholars of Baghdad told Al-Rashid, ‘No one can tell you that you are among the people of Paradise.’

He said to his entourage, “I want a divine jurist from outside Baghdad.”

Al-Layth ibn Sa’ad, whose knowledge surpassed that of Imam Malik.

I want to be alone with the Commander of the Faithful, with the Qur’an in his hand.

Wait outside to see how this matter will be resolved.

Place your hand, Commander of the Faithful, on the Book of Allah and swear.

Have you ever cried out of fear of Allah, and do you truly fear Him?

Your wife Zubaydah is not divorced. “Those who fear their Lord will have two gardens.”

Can you not find rest in your life knowing that Allah is its mastermind?

What has been decreed for you will be yours, even if you do not desire it.

Kuwait leaps into smart security

Interior Ministry taps tech to enhance public services

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27, (KUNA): Acting Interior Ministry Undersecretary Major General Ali Al-Adwani said the Information Systems General Department will soon offer more advanced security technology services to improve security work and to better serve the public.

In a press statement after the inspection visit at the department that consists of several technical divisions, the ministry disclosed that Al-Adwani was briefed on the workflow at the department.

During the visit, Al-Adwani praised the commitment and high efficiency in accomplishing tasks. He stressed the need for the department to continue improving its performance, and ensuring accuracy and speed in providing services.

Al-Adwani was also briefed on the electronic systems and smart services launched by the department. These systems aim to ease procedures and simplify security and administrative services for the public through the unified government application for electronic services (Sahel) or the website of the ministry.

He also assessed the most vital current and future projects that aim to develop the technical infrastructure of the ministry, and enhance integration between its sectors to keep pace with the latest international standards in the field of security technology and electronic services.

The statement added that Head of the Human Resources and Technical Support Sector Brigadier General Anwar Al-Yatama and Director General of the department Brigadier General Ahmed Al-Majid accompanied Al-Adwani throughout his visit.

In other news, the Ministry of Interior announced Wednesday that the General Directorate of Coast Guard has dispatched three female officers to join the Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth, United Kingdom, as part of ongoing efforts to empower women and strengthen operational efficiency.

In a statement, the Ministry affirmed its continued efforts to develop and qualify its personnel in line with international standards, enhancing capabilities across security and military sectors.

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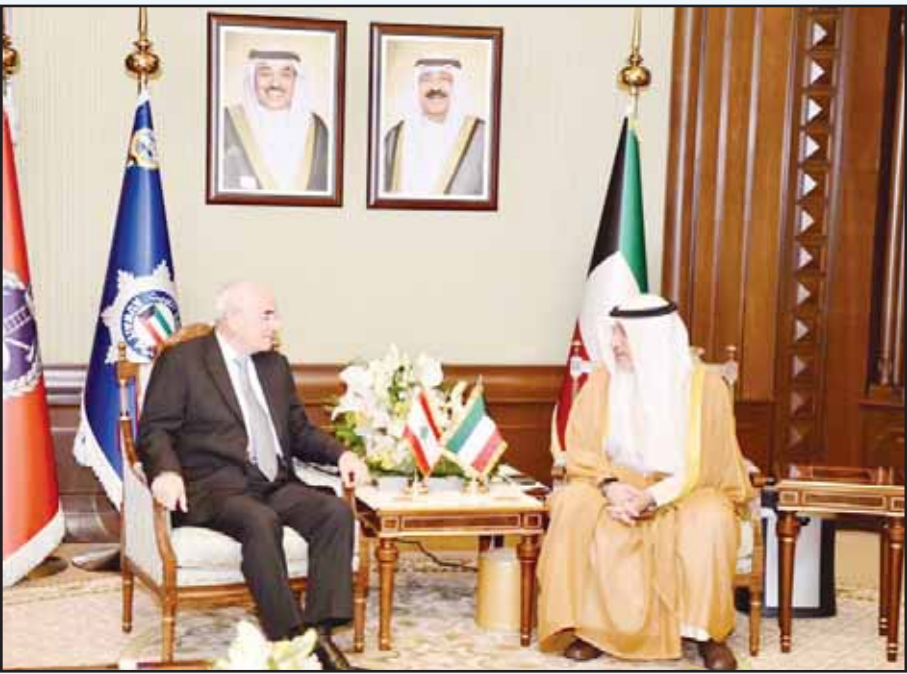
Kuwait-Lebanon talks focus on regional stability

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27, (KUNA): The First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah held talks on Wednesday with the visiting Lebanese Defense Minister Michel Menassah on means of activating mutual cooperation as a means to bolster regional security and stability.

The meeting was declared by the Ministry of Interior after Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef received the Lebanese minister and his accompanying delegation, currently on a mission to the State of Kuwait.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef hailed depth of the brotherly relations between the two countries and noticeable development in various sectors, stressing on the necessity of enhancing coordination and expertise exchange at the military and security levels.

Minister Menassah’s visit to Kuwait comes in line with the joint keenness on boosting the mutual cooperation between the two countries in security and military fields.



Ministry of Interior photo
First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah receives visiting Lebanese Defense Minister Michel Menassah.

Six arrested, including Kuwaiti and Egyptian nationals

Kuwait shuts down brazen visa scam network

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: The Residency Affairs Investigation General Department at the Interior Ministry announced the arrest of a large visa trading network issuing licenses to fake companies and recruiting workers for a fee, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Three Kuwaitis, three Egyptians, and employees of the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) were found to be involved in the network.

In a press statement, the ministry disclosed that the network used the licenses of 28 companies

to recruit 382 workers for sums ranging from KD800 to KD1,000 per worker. It added that investigations revealed that bribes were paid to certain employees at PAM – ranging between KD200 and KD250 per worker -- to enter their data into

the system and manipulate the manpower needs estimates.

The ministry stated that extensive investigations led to the arrest of the main suspects in the network as follows:

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Minister of Justice announces Penal Code ‘reform’ initiative

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait issued a decision on the formation of a specialized committee to review and develop the Kuwaiti Penal Code.

This is part of a comprehensive plan to develop the judicial system and update criminal legislation to keep pace with legal and social changes and enhance the effectiveness of the justice system.



Al-Sumait

According to the decision, the committee is chaired by Saud Al-Sanea of the Court of Appeals, with Attorney General Counselor Mishaal Al-Ghanam as Vice Chairman.

The committee members include Judge Ahmed Al-Sadra, Judge Mishari Al-Mutairi, Director of Commercial Affairs Prosecution Ibrahim Al-Munai, Deputy Director of Public Funds Prosecution Mishari Al-Mishari, and Mohammed Al-Haddad as Rapporteur.

The committee is responsible for reviewing the provisions of the Kuwaiti Penal Code and comparing them with modern legislation in comparative systems to prepare a comprehensive draft law with an explanatory memorandum that reflects a contemporary legislative philosophy.

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No edits, no shadows

Indian Embassy enforces new passport photo rules

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: The Indian Embassy in Kuwait announced that the relevant authorities will only accept photographs, which meet the standards of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), for passport applications starting September.

The embassy pointed out that as per the ICAO guidelines, the photo must be

in color, 630 x 810 pixels in size, must show the full face from the front, occupying around 80 to 85 percent of the area of the photo, against a white background that is free of shadows or reflections, the eyes must be open and clear without any light effects or ‘red eye’, and the mouth must neither be open nor tilted.

It also prohibits photo editing using computer software, adding that head coverings are not permitted except for religious reasons.



KUNA photo
Ministry of Health launches Kuwait National Health Survey awareness campaign at the Avenues Mall.

MoH rolls out Kuwait National Health Survey drive

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27, (KUNA): The Ministry of Health Wednesday launched the first awareness campaign at the Avenues Mall to inform the public on Kuwait National Health Survey and necessity to Kuwait’s vision for sustainable development and ensuring the health of future generations.

The project is part of the state’s development plan and aims to randomly surveying 12,000 individuals from 8,000 families across all sectors of society including nationals and residents.

The survey objectives include measuring the health status and health trends of the population, evaluating the quality and efficiency of health services, supporting health planning based on accurate data, and enhancing disease monitoring and analyzing health risk factors.

Participation will proceed with a notification sent via the “Sahel” application to selected households, with the option to choose the time and place of the survey.

Continued on Page 5



Kuwait Airways and Impulse sign strategic agreement to support the national carrier's digital transformation



KFH wins 9 global awards in human resources for 2025

Prayer Timings

Fajr 04:00 Asr 15:24
Sunrise .. 05:22 Maghrib .. 18:16
Zohr 11:50 Isha 19:36

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Hot and relatively humid especially over coastal areas with light to moderate northwesterly wind changing to southeasterly wind, with speeds of 10-38 km/h.

By Night: Hot to rather hot

Weather

and relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind changing to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-32 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	47	35
Kuwait Airport	47	36

Abdaly	48	30
Bubyan	39	26
Jahra	48	33
Salmiyah	44	34
Ahmadi	42	32
Nuwaisib	46	32
Wafra	47	33
Salmly	45	25



HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince



HH the Prime Minister

Kuwait Amir congratulates Moldova Prez. on Nat'l Day

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to the President of the Republic of Moldova, Maia Sandu, on her country's national day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished the President of Moldova good health and well-being, and further progress and prosperity for Moldova and its people.

Crown Prince

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratu-

lations to the President of the Republic of Moldova, Maia Sandu, on her country's national day.

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Prime Minister

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Other Voices

The Khawaja Syndrome

By Nasser Al-Hajeri

In the Arab world, the phrase "Khawaja Syndrome" is often used to describe a mindset where people believe that anything foreign, especially Western, is automatically better than what is local. It is not about products or brands but about how societies measure culture, education, and expertise.

The roots of this syndrome go back to colonial times when foreign powers represented authority, wealth, and modernity. Over time, many began to associate Western ways with progress while seeing their own traditions as less valuable. This attitude has quietly carried forward into the present, shaping how people view themselves and others.

One clear example is in the workplace. In many organizations, the opinion of a foreigner is given more importance than that of a local professional even when both are equally qualified. Foreign consultants are often trusted more and their recommendations followed more closely, while local experts may be overlooked. This attitude is sometimes reflected in cultural institutions as well. A cultural center, for example, should be the first to celebrate and trust the knowledge and creativity of its own people, yet too often it leans towards outside voices as if they carry more weight. When

this happens, the purpose of such a center is weakened, because real cultural progress must start from within.

The same mentality is visible in cultural life. People who adopt Western habits, accents, or styles are sometimes treated as more modern or sophisticated. Meanwhile, those who proudly hold on to their traditions, language, or local way of life may be seen as less advanced. This reflects a distorted standard where the measure of progress is linked to how foreign one appears rather than to actual substance or value.

The danger of this mindset is that it weakens self-confidence. It discourages societies from trusting their own thinkers, professionals, and cultural heritage. While openness to other cultures is a strength, blind admiration can lead to dependency and a lack of belief in one's own abilities. Ironically, many foreigners admire the richness of Arab culture and expertise, while some locals continue to underestimate themselves.

Escaping the Khawaja Syndrome does not mean shutting the door to the outside world. On the contrary, learning from others and exchanging ideas is vital for progress. But this must happen from a place of self-respect where local knowledge and traditions are valued alongside what comes from abroad.

At its heart, the Khawaja Syndrome is a question of identity and confidence. Real progress begins when societies believe in their own worth, respect their culture, and give proper value to their own expertise. Only then can engagement with the world be equal and balanced.

MoE steams ahead to get schools ready for new yr

'Balagh' app speeds up complaints response time

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: As part of its extensive preparations for the new school year, the Ministry of Education continues its efforts to ensure the readiness of schools in various educational districts.

This is being done through the implementation of comprehensive plans aimed at providing a safe and a comfortable school environment for students, faculty and administrators. It is in line with the commitment of the ministry to use modern digital systems to ensure work efficiency and expedite task completion.

Eng. Abdullah Al-Jaafar, a ministry official, affirmed that the 'Balagh' app is one of the latest systems adopted by the ministry. He said the app enables electronic monitoring of maintenance in schools and educational facilities by submitting

reports according to the timetable based on the type of maintenance. He affirmed this saves time and effort, and speeds up response times.

He added the Hawally Educational District has 113 schools, along with their affiliated government buildings.

He revealed the Maintenance Department has dealt with most of the reports submitted through the 'Balagh' application, and that the remainder will be completed before the new school year.

He said the technical teams in charge of maintenance works include specialized engineers who are doing their best to complete priority tasks related to the start of the school year.

He disclosed that the work schedule is divided into three main sections: civil works, including decorations, floors and restrooms, electrical

works, which focus on replacing lighting in classrooms, corridors and halls such as theaters and gyms, and mechanical works, which include air conditioning and water cooler maintenance.

He emphasized the importance of 'Balagh' app in organizing coordination between school administrations and the Engineering Affairs Department, in line with the government's action plan towards gradual digital transformation and eliminating paperwork. He stressed that this guarantees maintenance efficiency, as well as more accurate and effective future planning.

Meanwhile, Safiya Abul, an electrical engineer, underscored the significance of effective communication between school administrations and the Maintenance Department through 'Balagh'.

He said the specialized technical team follows up reports and inspects technical, electrical or mechanical faults in cooperation with supervising engineers in various disciplines. He added the team then repairs the fault and replaces lighting or ceilings, if necessary, ensuring a comfortable school environment for students and teachers.



Eng Al-Jaafar

Citizenship of countless citizens revoked: panel

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27, (KUNA): The Supreme Committee for Kuwaiti Citizenship held a meeting on Wednesday, chaired by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah.

A Committee statement said Kuwaiti citizenship was revoked from a number of individuals due to holding dual citizenship and obtaining it through false statements and fraud.

Backing Lebanon Army main issue in talks: DM

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27, (KUNA): Lebanese Defense Minister Michel Menassa said on Wednesday that supporting the Lebanese Army was the focal topic of his discussions with the Kuwaiti leaders over the past days.

In an interview with KUNA upon conclusion of his visit to Kuwait, Menassa affirmed that the Lebanese Army needs substantial support to implement UN Resolution 1701 that stipulates restricting arms possession in the state hands.

Asked whether the Lebanese State is able to implement the UN resolution, the minister affirmed that the army would carry out the mission, indicating that cabinet had tasked the military to chart out an executive plan for collecting weapons in the south and other regions.

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun, who had recently visited Kuwait, would visit more Arab, Gulf and European states to rally sufficient support for executing the plan and support the army, minister Menassa told KUNA.

On the relations with Kuwait, he recalled the Gulf country's backing for Lebanon during crises and wars, affirming that it had come forward first to help Lebanon amid difficulties.

"This good relationship will always remain a matter of attention for leaders of both countries and that it is what we have sensed during the visit," he added.

In reciprocation, Lebanon had backed Kuwait in the face of the flagrant Iraqi aggression in 1990. "The Kuwaiti brothers have not forgotten this stand," he affirmed.

On his discussions with the Kuwaiti officials, minister Menassa said the talks were positive and constructive and the Kuwaiti leadership expressed readiness to support Lebanon, its government and army.

He indicated efforts to tighten internal security in Lebanon and lure more tourists, adding that the reconstruction file was not discussed during his presence in Kuwait. "Currently we are seeking to enforce security and stability" in Lebanon, he continued.

Menassa expressed deep gratitude to Their Highnesses the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah for their warm hospitality.

Teams due in schools

Extermination of rats, insects on anvil: MoH

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: The Ministry of Health has launched its annual comprehensive environmental sanitation and pest and rodent control campaign in public schools.

The campaign, which will continue until mid-September, is being coordinated with the Ministry of Education. It is part of preparations for the new school year, aimed at promoting public health and protecting the school environment from infectious elements.

In a press statement, Head of the Insect and Rodent Control Department at the ministry Dr. Fatima Al-Darwaish revealed that the campaign has so far treated 375 out of 915 schools nationwide, including 112 schools in the Capital, 58 in Hawally, 35 in Farwaniya, 61 in Mubarak Al-Kabeer, 44 in Ahmadi and 65 in Jahra.

She said the goal of the campaign is to provide a healthy and safe school environment for students and educational staff by applying safe pest control methods that take into account public health and environmental protection.

She affirmed that the environmental sanitation campaigns are continuing in all areas of Kuwait with the aim of addressing any defect that might make the environment suitable for the spread of diseases or the proliferation of pests.

She added the ministry receives citizens' complaints related to the presence of rodents or pests through hotline number 151 round the clock.



Dr. Al-Darwaish

Call to enhance bilateral trade: Dr Khater

Kuwait-Chad ties on track to achieve new heights: envoy

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: Relations between Chad and Kuwait span decades and have grown stronger over time, starting with the independence of the two countries and have continued steadily, free of crises and obstacles.

Today, these relations are heading towards broader horizons of co-operation in political, economic and cultural fields, supported by a shared desire to strengthen partnerships and develop investments.

Ambassador of the Republic of Chad to the State of Kuwait Dr. Taher Al-Nazif Khater told the newspaper that relations between the two countries date back to the early days of their independence and have continued steadily throughout the years, without crises or obstacles.

He affirmed that the leaderships of both countries are working continuously to develop the relationship, indicating that bilateral relations have witnessed mutual visits at different levels -- a testament to the strength and stability of the relationship.

He pointed out that the areas of cooperation between Chad and Kuwait are diverse, including political, industrial, economic, cultural, security, health and infrastructure, affirming that both sides are willing to exchange high-level visits in the near future.

On the economic potential of his country, Khater stated that Chad possesses more than 140 million heads of livestock and exports large quantities to neighboring countries, in addition to Egypt, which recently started importing slaughtered meat from the country. He added the agricultural exports of his country include sesame, gum arabic and cotton.

He also disclosed that his country has more than 30 million hectares of arable land, making it a promising investment destination in the agricultural and livestock sectors.

Regarding the economic aspect, the ambassador indicated that the volume of trade exchange between Chad and Kuwait remains limited despite the strong relations between the two countries. He stressed that his country boasts of vast livestock wealth and assorted agricultural products like sesame, gum arabic, cotton, vegetables and fruits, all of which can be exported to the Kuwaiti market.

He confirmed that a number of Kuwaiti businesspersons have expressed interest in



Dr. Taher Al-Nazif Khater

investing in these sectors, indicating that the current phase requires the establishment of a legal framework and bilateral agreements to facilitate trade and promote joint investments.

He praised the crucial role that Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) plays, considering it has been active in Chad since the 1970s and has implemented numerous projects in

the fields of infrastructure, agriculture, health and education, citing as an example the recent laying of the foundation stone for the construction of the largest cancer hospital in the capital -- N'Djamena. He looks forward to more contributions from the Fund in future development projects.

In the educational and cultural fields, Khater revealed that there are around 30 Chadian students enrolled at Kuwait University, Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), and the Religious Institute, calling for more cultural and artistic exchange between the two countries.

He said an agreement is under consideration, indicating it includes the recruitment of Chadian workers whose number currently ranges from 1,200 to 1,300 -- a number he described as small compared to the size of the Kuwaiti market. He emphasized that the embassy is closely following up labor issues, and that problems are often resolved amicably in coordination with the relevant authorities.

On the prospects for the relationship of the two countries in the next 10 years, he disclosed that Chad is currently implementing a comprehensive plan aimed at developing various sectors. He said his country will organize an economic conference in Abu Dhabi in November to showcase its major investment projects, hoping for the active participation of Kuwaiti companies in this event.

He pointed out that Kuwait was one of the first Gulf countries to establish its presence in Chad in the 1960s through KFAED, as well as the charitable and humanitarian organizations. He believes that these strong ties provide a promising future for relations between the two countries to move toward broader partnerships.

He concluded by extending a sincere invitation to Kuwaiti investors to visit his country and explore the available opportunities, affirming the availability of legal, financial, procedural and visa facilities for investors and visitors.

'Kuwait open to cooperate with Armenia on AI & cybersecurity'

ANKARA, Aug 27, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait is open to cooperate with Armenia on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and cybersecurity, as well as technological industries, thanks to its promising future plans and potential, said Kuwaiti Ambassador to Armenia Mohammad Al-Oraifan on Tuesday.

Al-Oraifan made the statement to KUNA after meeting with Armenian Minister of High-Tech Industry Mkhtar Hayrapetyan, adding they discussed means of boosting collaboration in this field, and technological and industrial digitalization.

Last June, Armenia announced the launch of constructing one of AI's largest factories, estimated at USD 500 million, in collaboration with Firebird AI and NVIDIA, he said, noting that the official operation will start next year.

Al-Oraifan said Kuwait is looking forward to enhancing cooperation with friendly countries to keep pace with accelerating global technological progress.



Mohammad Al-Oraifan

The world is steadily moving towards AI-driven integrated digitalization to develop services and cybersecurity for its reliability, he affirmed.



Ahmadi Governorate photo

Governor of Ahmadi Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met with Ambassador of Bangladesh to Kuwait Major General Syed Tareq Hussain.

Kuwait keen to further boost bonds with Bangladesh: Gov.

KUWAIT , AUG 27: Governor of Ahmadi Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met with Ambassador of Bangladesh to Kuwait Major General Syed Tareq Hussain and Political Advisor Zaman Munir in his office at the headquarters of the governorate on Tuesday.

During the meeting, they engaged in cordial conversations, which touched on bilateral relations between the two countries and ways to strengthen ties in all fields.

The Governor welcomed the Ambassador, wishing him success in his duties and in advancing relations between the two countries to broader horizons.

Ambassador Major General Syed Tareq Hussain expressed his happiness and gratitude for the warm welcome, appreciating the great care that the diplomatic mission and citizens of the Republic of Bangladesh receive at both the official and public levels in Kuwait.

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



The scholars of Baghdad told Al-Rashid, ‘No one can tell you that you are among the people of Paradise.’

Harun Al-Rashid (Fifth Abbasid Caliphate), in a fit of rage, declared to his wife Zubaydah, “You are divorced if I am not among the people of Paradise.” He immediately regretted his words due to his profound love for her, and Zubaydah was deeply distressed by the declaration.

The scholars of Baghdad convened to issue a fatwa on the matter, collectively asking, “Who among us would presume to declare you among the people of Paradise?”

In a challenging predicament, Caliph Al-Rashid declared his immediate need for a divine jurist from outside Baghdad. A member of his entourage suggested Al-Layth ibn Sa’ad, describing him as the preeminent jurist of Egypt, whose knowledge surpassed even Imam Malik. Imam al-Shafi’i himself acknowledged Al-Layth’s superior knowledge compared to Malik, attributing the loss of Al-Layth’s extensive wisdom to his companions’ failure to document it.

“Bring him in,” ordered Harun Al-Rashid. Upon his entry, the scholars rose respectfully as the matter was presented. Al-Layth, observing Harun Al-Rashid and then the assembled scholars, declared, “O Commander of the Faithful, I wish to be alone with you, with the Qur’an in your hand.” The crowd then left the gathering, waiting outside to know the resolution of this perplexing issue.

Al-Layth asked the Commander of the Faithful to swear on the Book of Allah that he would speak truthfully.

Harun Al-Rashid took the oath. Al-Layth then clarified that his request was not out of suspicion, as he knew the Commander of the

Lessons Everyone Should Remember

You rest on a plane without knowing its pilot, and you rest on a ship without knowing its captain. Can you not rest in your life knowing that Allah is its controller?

I am amazed by three things: a man who runs after money while money runs away from him, a man who fears for his livelihood while Allah is his provider, and a man who builds palaces while his grave is his home.

What has been decreed for you will be yours even if you do not desire it, and what is not meant for you will not be yours even if you die for it. Think a little. Do not be alarmed by something you do not understand, for there may be great good hidden within it.

There are varying degrees of falling. The least severe is falling from one’s sight, followed by falling from one’s thoughts. The most difficult and significant is falling from one’s heart. While it is true that water may return to its original path, it is no longer suitable for consumption.

Faithful was truthful, but to prevent self-deception.

He then asked Harun Al-Rashid, “By Allah,

have you ever privately remembered Allah, causing your eyes to well up?

“Have you ever wept out of fear of Allah? Do you truly dread facing your Lord on the Day when He asks, ‘To whom belongs the kingdom today?’ and no one answers?”

Harun Al-Rashid replied, “By the One who revealed this Book, this has happened repeatedly, time and again.”

Al-Layth said, “Open the Book of Allah, Surah Ar-Rahman (chapter 55).” So Harun opened it. He said, “Recite Surah Ar-Rahman with contemplation.” Harun read until he reached the verse, “Those who fear their Lord will have two gardens.”

Al-Layth said, “Enough... enough. By Allah, the answer is complete, O Commander of the Faithful. Two gardens, not one. And your wife Zubaydah is not divorced, for Allah says, ‘Those who fear their Lord will have two gardens,’ not one.”

Then he said, “Let the scholars enter now.”

So they entered, and he said to them, “By Allah, I did not send you away out of contempt for you, but I wanted to be alone with the Commander of the Faithful so that his soul would not be distracted.”

All the scholars agreed with the words of Al-Layth ibn Sa’ad in his fatwa. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, “A man who weeps out of fear of Allah will not enter Hellfire.”

He also said, “Two eyes will never be touched by Hellfire: an eye that wept out of fear of Allah and an eye that spent the night guarding the way of Allah.”

■ They say that the separation from some people deserves a prostration of thanks to Almighty Allah, because they left us and distanced themselves, and we distanced ourselves from them.

●●●●

■ Stay away from people who spoil your mood. This is your right, and you are the one who makes the decision.

●●●●

■ Freedom is sleeping at night without thinking about anyone or caring about anyone. In the end, your decision is the strongest, and wisdom matters.

●●●●

■ Be kind to friends, or to people, when you are on your way up, because you will meet some of them on your way down. In this world, days are up and down... Embrace it.

●●●●

■ Sometimes all we have is silence. It is the master of the situation, and it is the wise decision. We must rely on Allah.

●●●●

■ They say—and this is true—injustice is darkness... When will Allah’s wrath come? This is a matter for Him, the Almighty, and an oppressor will be afflicted by someone worse than him.

Ex-con held in fake ‘cop’ act

Army paraphernalia seized

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: In a new security achievement that confirms the effectiveness of field surveillance, the Salmiya Investigations Office at Hawally Governorate Investigations Department arrested a person impersonating police and involved in the robbery of military vehicles and tailor shops.

The Ministry of Interior revealed that detectives spotted the suspect while he was driving a vehicle bearing stolen license plates. He was arrested and identified as Mustafa Farih Munawar, a Kuwaiti with a criminal record, with a stolen vehicle, psychotropic substances and a military uniform in his possession.

According to the ministry, the detectives searched the residence of the suspect after obtaining a search warrant from the Public Prosecution. This resulted in the confiscation of military uniforms, insignias, mili-

tary ID covers, a toy pistol, handcuffs, a security force belt, a detective flasher, live ammunition for M16 rifle, and a large number of other stolen items.

During interrogation, the citizen confessed to robbing three military tailor shops in Raqqa where he stole military uniforms. He is also involved in a series of vehicle and license plate thefts in Salmiya, Andalus and Dahar, and wanted by law for involvement in several similar criminal cases.

□ □ □

Drugs, liquor seized: Jahra police patrols arrested a citizen for the possession of narcotics and a bottle of alcohol on the Sixth Ring Road.

According to a security source, the police officers got suspicious of a vehicle driver, so they signaled for him to stop for a routine check, during which the officers noticed he was in an abnormal condition. This prompted the officers to conduct a thorough search that led to the discovery of an undisclosed quantity of narcotics and a bottle of alcohol.

The citizen and the confiscated items were referred to the concerned authorities.

Kuwaiti woman wakes up to cash fraud after over 10 yrs

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: In a case that resurfaced more than a decade after it occurred, the Ministry of Interior has launched an investigation into a fraud case registered under Misdemeanor No. 79/2025.

The case involves a citizen who claims she was defrauded by a man residing illegally in the country, dating back to December 2014,reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, a Kuwaiti woman, born in 1985, recently filed a report at the People’s Police Station alleging that the suspect took 45,000 dinars from her — both in cash and via bank transfers — under the pretense of investing in a restaurant project.

The agreement reportedly promised profit sharing within six months, but the woman stated she neither received profits nor had

any part of her money returned.

Despite the long delay, the complainant approached authorities only this year, approximately four months before the end of 2025. The reasons behind her decision to come forward after such a long time were not specified.

Detectives from the Hawally area summoned the suspect, who voluntarily appeared and confessed to receiving the money and failing to deliver on the promised returns.

His confession was documented and referred to the Public Prosecution for further legal action. The case remains under investigation as authorities examine the circumstances surrounding the delayed report and the financial fraud committed.

Foul play suspected in run-over kill

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: A 26-year-old citizen died when a young Gulf man allegedly ran over him in Firdous due to a dispute between them, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Security forces have started investigating the Gulf man, who is in his 20s.

A security source disclosed that the Operations Unit in the Interior Ministry received information about a citizen

who was deliberately hit by the car of a Gulf citizen he knew, because of a dispute between them. Security personnel rushed to the scene, where they found out that victim already succumbed to his injuries.

The source confirmed that the suspect was arrested immediately and an investigation into the circumstances leading to the crime is underway.



Mol photo

Cigarette packets were hidden in many parts of the car.

303 hidden in car

Customs foils attempt to smuggle cigarette packs

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: The Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC) – Nuwaiseeb Customs Department foiled an attempt to smuggle 303 packs of cigarettes, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

A customs inspector got suspicious of one of the departing vehicles, so he signaled for the driver to stop. Although the driver denied carrying any prohibited item, a thorough inspection led to the discovery of the cigarettes, which were hidden in various parts of the vehicle, some of which were modified for smuggling purposes.

The vehicle was immediately seized and the suspect was referred to the competent authorities for investigation and other legal measures.

KGAC affirmed this operation is in line with the directives of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef to intensify efforts to combat all forms of smuggling and to strictly enforce the law in order to protect national security and the economy.

How to accommodate increase in weddings?

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: Coinciding with the expected increase in social events, most notably weddings, Municipal Council member Fahad Al-Khunin has submitted a question to the executive branch regarding plans and alternatives for the wedding halls that were removed about six months ago without a clear and announced alternative.

While Al-Khunin pointed out in his question the important services that wedding halls provide to the community, he underscored the importance of supporting the shared vision between Kuwait Municipality and the council to organize these events in accordance with regulatory and aesthetic standards of Kuwait. He asked the Municipality to clarify its plan to accommodate the expected demand for wedding parties next season, while identifying alternative locations or areas designated and equipped for these events.

He also asked the Municipality to explain the conditions, regulations and basic obligations that the Municipality will require service providers (hall owners) to adhere to in order to obtain the necessary licenses and ensure safe and legal organization.

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Kuwait Sports Day all set

Cabinet approves February 7 event

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Cabinet on Tuesday approved a proposal made by Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi to hold Kuwait Sports Day on February 7, 2026.



Cabinet's weekly meeting under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

The approval was given during the Cabinet's customary weekly meeting held at Bayan Palace under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The forthcoming edition of the Kuwait Sports Day 2026 will draw wide-scale and effective participation from Kuwaiti people of all ages in an effort to notch up the aspired goals of this sports event.

At the onset of the weekly meeting, the Cabinet listened to an explanation from the minister of information about the Kuwaiti pavilion at Expo Osaka 2025 in Japan during the period from April 13 to October 13.

The minister elaborated that the Kuwaiti pavilion, which has attracted a large number of visitors, highlights the role of the State of Kuwait in promoting arts, culture and education, and spurring innovation and entrepreneurship, and reflects the country's deep historical role.

The minister underlined the paramount significance of such world exhibitions in building cultural and economic bridges and highlighting Kuwait's genuine image worldwide.

Minister of Social Affairs and Family and Childhood Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaillah made a visual presentation on her ministry's social achievements and development plans.

Ministry lauds digital and field outreach

MoHE marks closing of 'Wajihni' campaign

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: Ministry of Higher Education Undersecretary Lamia Al-Malham said the 'Wajihni' (Guidance) campaign, launched by the ministry, served as a bridge for guidance and counseling, and a source of support for the students in shaping their academic future in a way that serves their ambitions and their country.

Speaking at the closing ceremony for the campaign held under the patronage Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jalal, Al-Malham revealed that 'Wajihni' expanded this year to combine field and digital presence, reaching every home through live meetings and electronic platforms.

She pointed out this success would not have been achieved without the collaboration of everyone, from supporting institutions and entities, to the media and press that delivered its message to



Undersecretary of Higher Education Lamia Al-Mulhim honors participant in the campaign.

the students and parents.

She emphasized that 'Wajihni' is not just a passing event, but rather a renewed national project that the ministry is keen on continuing and developing in fulfillment of the vision of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to build creative Kuwaiti individuals capable of serving their country and achieving its development goals.

She thanked Assistant Undersecretary for the Scholarships, Equivalencies and Cultural Relations Sector Ghaida Madhkur, Media Advisor to the Minister of Higher Education and Head of the Campaign Team Wesal Al-Zamel, and all members of the creative team who worked with one spirit, transforming challenges into successes. She also thanked the men and women of the press and media for their distinguished coverage and effective contributions.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the supporting institutions, participating entities and members of the campaign team were honored.

Orientation set for Sept 8-9

PAAET unveils admission results with over 16K students accepted

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: Director General of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam has approved the admission results in colleges, institutes and special training courses for the first and second semesters of the academic and training year 2025/2026 for the holders of a high school diploma.

Al-Fajjam congratulated the accepted students and wished them continuous success in their academic journey.

Dean of Admissions and Registration Dr. Fawzi Al-Dokhi stated that the accepted students include all those who met the requirements, in accordance with the approved basic admissions plan and the regulations of the authority.

The total number of applicants reached 17,084 -- 10,713 of whom were accepted in the first semester (5,822 males and 4,891 females) and 5,511 in the second semester (3,250 males and 2,261 females) or a total of 16,224 students for both semesters. Around 860 students were rejected for not meeting the admission requirements.

Al-Dokhi explained that the distribution of the accepted students was based on the approved budget and minimum admission rates, in addition to the students' preferences for college, institute and training course or specialization. He said all accepted applicants must confirm their admission immediately upon announcement of the results until the end of working day on Sept 6 by logging into their personal account on the website of PAAET or through the 'Sahel' application. He explained that rejecting admission means final cancellation of the application without transferring the applicant to another course. He added that failure to approve or reject the application within the deadline entails automatic cancellation of the application from the system.

Regarding those accepted into medical specializations at the colleges of Nursing and Health Sciences, Al-Dokhi stressed the need for these students to undergo a medical examination and obtain a 'free from disease' certificate, which should be submitted to the interview committee in their respective colleges within the first week of the start of the school year. He warned that failure to comply with this condition will result in cancellation of admission.

He revealed the medical examination forms can be obtained by scanning the attached QR code or by accessing the website of the authority. He added the concerned employees are available at the Special Courses Building- Girls at the Technology Complex in Shuwaikh, from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm until Thursday.

He stressed that passing the personal interview is a prerequisite for final acceptance. Personal interviews have been scheduled for Sept 15-16, for those accepted into the College of Basic Education (Ardiya) and College of Health Sciences (Shuwaikh). Interviews for the College of Nursing are scheduled for Sept 16 at the headquarters of the college in Shuwaikh.

Regarding the Fire Engineering Technology course, Al-Dokhi explained that the final results will be announced later in coordination with Kuwait Fire Force (KFF). He called on students who received messages confirming the completion of procedures to approve their admission into the alterna-



Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam, Director General of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training



Dr. Fawzi Al-Dokhi, Dean of Admissions and Registration

tive course temporarily. Those accepted will later be able to transfer to the Fire Engineering Technology course, while those not accepted will be given the freedom to choose between continuing in the alternative course or canceling their admission.

On the Physical Education course, he stated that the accepted students must pass a fitness test (body and swimming), which will be conducted in the first week of classes. He stressed that passing the test is a prerequisite for final acceptance into the course.

He announced that this year, for the first time in the history of PAAET, a general orientation for new students will be held on Sept 8-9 at the Exhibition Grounds Hall Five from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, indicating the first day will be for female students and the second day for male students. He revealed this orientation will include introductory booths for all of the colleges and institutes in the authority, along with the Deanship of Admissions and Registration, Deanship of Student Affairs, Deanship of Libraries, and external entities providing student services like student aid.

He pointed out that this orientation is considered a milestone for students who are starting their higher education journey, as it will include the activation of electronic accounts, issuance of university cards, identification of college buildings, and completion of various pre-study procedures. He added that the orientation will not be limited to formal procedures, as it will include awareness workshops, events and introductory activities aimed at preparing students for a successful academic start.



Al-Anba photo
Chairman of the Alumni Association Ibrahim Al-Mulaifi and Omani Ambassador Dr. Saleh Al-Kharousi touring the participating pavilions.

Cultural program expanded

8th Summer Book Fair kicks off

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: The Eighth Summer Book Fair, organized by the Alumni Association, has kicked off at its headquarters with the participation of several cultural institutions and publishing houses, reports Al-Anba daily.

This underscores the association's commitment to continue the fair and its objective of supporting the publishing movement in Kuwait during summer.

Chairman of the association Ibrahim Al-Mulaifi confirmed to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) their commitment to hold this fair periodically to support the local scene with more cultural events. He stressed the importance of strengthening the publishing sector in light of the current challenges, such as the

strong competition between print and electronic publishing, in addition to the massive influence of social media.

Al-Mulaifi revealed that "the first edition of the fair was held in 2016. Today, the eighth edition opens with a longer duration and accompanying activities, with the participation of many entities."

The events include a symposium titled, "Concepts and Language... Reflections on Translations," presented by Dr. Mohammad Al-Payli, Professor of Constitutional Law. Publisher Dali Al-Anzi will also conduct a symposium titled, "The Reality and Future of Publishing Houses in Kuwait," while researcher Nawaf Al-Asfour will present a symposium titled, "Pauses in Kuwaiti Maritime Heritage."

Kuwait mourns passing of veteran diplomat Meteb Saleh Al-Mutotah

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: Former Ambassador Meteb Saleh Al-Mutotah passed away after a distinguished career in the diplomatic field, during which he served as a model of loyalty and national commitment.

He was known for his level-headedness and wisdom. He held vital diplomatic positions representing Kuwait in several capitals, including South Korea, Qatar and Mexico, where he left an indelible mark in strengthening Kuwait's international relations and



The late Ambassador Meteb Saleh Al-Mutotah, a pillar of Kuwaiti diplomacy.

putting the spotlight on its honorable image.

Those who know him unanimously agree that he was an example of dedication and shrewdness in serving his country, which made him one of the shining faces on the path of Kuwaiti diplomacy.

Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers, saddened by this tragedy, offer sincere condolences to the family of the deceased, imploring Almighty Allah to have mercy on his soul and to grant him a place in heaven, and to grant his family patience and solace.



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Other Voices

‘Fatwa, law and dignity in mobile phone’

By Ahmad alsarraf

Over the past few years, the mobile phone has transformed from a simple communication device into a vital tool closely linked to the lives of its owner, especially politicians, the wealthy, businessmen, brokers, intermediaries, and, of course, the criminals and smugglers.

This is due to the financial information it contains, secret account details, a large amount of personal photos, and other information known only to the device owner, which can be accessed by using the face or fingerprint, or a PIN.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the first thing most people think of when danger strikes is to flee...with the phone, not with their money and legitimate assets. But what if the device owner suddenly dies?

The right to access a deceased person’s phone, including the use of his fingerprint or other biometric means, is subject to legal privacy considerations that vary from country to country, but share a common ground.

Before unlocking a phone, it is essential to have a death certificate and proof of the applicant’s rights, such as the next of kin or the executor of the will.

Phone manufacturers have the means to access phone information, but this always requires a court order. Some countries consider unlocking a

phone using the deceased’s fingerprint a normal practice, as the deceased has no privacy.

Based on the secrets that mobile phones now contain, a question was posed to the Fatwa Board at the Ministry of Awqaf regarding the ruling on unlocking a deceased person’s phone by enabling the family or heirs to take the fingerprint or faceprint.

Is this permissible under Islamic law, or is it considered a matter of the deceased’s privacy that cannot be disclosed?

The Fatwa Board stated that it is not permissible for the deceased’s family or others to take the fingerprint or face to unlock the phone, as it is a place of privacy and is likely to contain defects.

Therefore, it is not allowed to view the phone in order to protect it and respect its sanctity. If there is a need to unlock the device, it should be done through the judiciary or the relevant security agency.

As usual, the fatwa is incomplete, lacking precision and comprehensiveness, and is not binding at all.

What is meant by the necessity of obtaining judicial or security authority approval?

What about the possibility of delaying the burial of the deceased pending a court order?

Who will implement and supervise the approval, monitor the process of unlocking the phone, and directly access its contents, with the electronic expertise this may require?

What if one of the heirs deletes items on the phone that are not in their best interest or in violation of the rights of those with

whom the deceased interacted?

What if the deceased’s accounts contain large amounts of money that can be managed immediately via mobile phone and transferred to other accounts, with all the resulting harm to others?

What if the phone’s memory contains personal information, such as a second wife and children?

How will they be dealt with? Who guarantees the right to contact them, with all the psychological and material harm this entails?

The fatwa also granted security agencies the same powers it granted to the judiciary to unlock phones.

This is a frivolity we hoped would not come from a jurisprudential authority, with all due respect to the Ministry of Interior.

Further questions and various risks will then be raised, and there will be a need to take action and regulate such a serious matter, rather than leaving it to a jurisprudential authority.

Thus, we call on the Minister of Justice, in his current efforts to regulate judicial matters, to honorably instruct the relevant authorities to prepare a draft law covering this matter and issue a decree in this regard as soon as possible, given the almost daily need for it.

This will fill a dangerous legal vacuum, and prevent such matters from being left unregulated that could lead to the loss of rights, violation of privacy and harm to innocent people.

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

Private sector central to Kuwaitization plan

Authorities push for jobs and fair wages

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27, (KUNA): The Kuwait Vision 2035 development plan focuses on fostering a dynamic private sector that drives economic growth alongside the public sector, diversifies income sources, and creates quality jobs for Kuwaiti nationals.

Central to this effort is “Kuwaitization,” ensuring the integration of national talent into private sector employment while balancing market needs with national development goals.

On challenges and decisions in this regard, Director of Public Relations and Media at Kuwait’s Public Authority for Manpower, Mohammad Al-Muzaini, told KUNA that the development plan includes legislative measures to increase the proportion of Kuwaiti employees, specialized training programs, and incentives such as higher fees for hiring foreign workers in positions that can be filled locally.

These challenges also include the need for rare or specialized skills, longer private sector working hours, and the attractiveness of public-sector benefits like job security, maternity leave, patient attendance leave, and other benefits.

Al-Muzaini highlighted initiatives to reduce

wage gaps, revise labor support policies, and engage educational institutions to prepare students for private-sector careers through awareness programs, curriculum adjustments, and mandatory internships.

The Public Authority for Manpower has also proposed incentives for private companies to create more opportunities for Kuwaitis and has established a Labor Relations Department to protect employees’ rights, he pointed out.

Muhannad Mohammad Al-Sane, Member of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), stressed the private sector’s historic and ongoing role in Kuwait’s economic growth, including banking, finance, real estate, and services.

Al-Sane noted that Kuwaiti youth are well-positioned to lead and innovate in these sectors.

For his part, Former Finance Ministry advisor Mohammad Ramadan added that while wage disparities are less decisive than job security, enhancing private-sector opportunities, regulating pay scales, and linking foreign labor fees to employment of Kuwaitis can make private employment a more viable and attractive option.

The Expert emphasized that a carefully planned and well-executed Kuwaitization policy can expand job opportunities without compromising private-sector productivity.

Key humanitarian challenges highlighted

KRCS calls for unified Arab relief efforts

RIYADH, Aug 27, (KUNA): Chairman of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Ambassador Khaled Al-Maghamis said on Wednesday that the current challenges require Arab and international humanitarian organizations to bolster cooperation.

Speaking to KUNA during the 49th session of the General Assembly of the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization (ARCO), hosted in Riyadh, Al-Maghamis underlined the importance of unifying efforts in humanitarian response.

He noted that the meeting agenda’s covered key humanitarian issues in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, and the Comoros, in addition to challenges facing societies on the fields, as well as ways to boost capacity in handling recurring emergencies.



KUNA photo
Chairman of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) during the 49th session of the General Assembly of the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization (ARCO).

EPA engages public on sustainability

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: The Environment Public Authority (EPA) conducted a lecture on promoting the concept of community integration in protecting the environment at Al-Kharafi Center for Children with Disabilities, reports Al-Anba

daily.

The lecture highlighted the importance of preserving the environment, the safe use of plastic, how to dispose it properly, recycling and its role in protecting the environment.

This lecture is in line with the commitment of EPA to raise awareness on environmental protection, and promoting the concept of community integration by engaging various segments of society in awareness activities and programs.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait leaps

The Ministry noted that the move; the Directorate’s first of a kind, reflects Kuwait’s commitment to supporting women’s participation in the security field and enhancing the coast guard’s capacity to safeguard maritime borders.

British Defence Attache to Kuwait, Navy Colonel Neil Marriott, paid an official visit to the coast guard headquarters, where he met with Director General Commodore Sheikh Mubarak Al-Youssef Al-Sabah and the newly deployed officers.

He praised the initiative as a testament to the deep-rooted ties and strategic partnership between Kuwait and the United Kingdom.

Kuwait shuts

■ M.S.A. (Kuwaiti): Owner and manager of several companies. He recruited workers and paid bribes in cooperation with a middleman.

■ Y.L. (Egyptian): Manager and representative at the company. He recruited workers and facilitated procedures for them to obtain residency permits in exchange for

money.

■ N.M.A. (Egyptian): Works as a typist in companies. He coordinated with middlemen to pay bribes and manipulate manpower needs estimates.

■ M.S.N. (Egyptian-Palestinian): Intermediary between companies and labor department employees. He communicated data and amounts through bank deposits and cash transfers in exchange for a commission.

■ T.M.D. (Kuwaiti): Supervisor of the Capital Manpower Needs Assessment Department. He increased the manpower needs estimates in exchange for bribes and gave his password to a colleague in the Hawally Labor Department.

■ A.A.R. (Kuwaiti): Acting director of the Hawally Labor Department and supervisor of the Evaluation and Follow-up Department who completed manpower additions using his colleague’s password in exchange for money.

The ministry added that all parties involved were referred to the competent authorities and that Case No. 45/2025 titled, “Residence Investigations Felonies”, has been registered.

It also affirmed the continuation

of its security campaigns to combat human trafficking and visa trading, and to take deterrent legal action against anyone who dares to tamper with the laws of the country.

MoH rolls

Specialized teams from the Ministry of Health will conduct the survey and collect health data using the latest protection technologies to ensure confidentiality of the information.

The benefits of the process include improving the quality of healthcare and enhancing the quality of life in Kuwait and support health planning to provide advanced services that meet the needs of the population.

Minister of

Al-Sumait pointed that that this step is part of an integrated process to develop the judicial system, and balance the protection of rights and freedoms with the deterrence and justice requirements, while strengthening public trust in the law and its institutions.

Centrepont Unveils the Best & Biggest Back-to-School Collection



This year, Centrepont proudly offers over 3,000 Back-to-School options across all categories, including school uniforms, backpacks, lunch boxes, stationery, footwear, sportswear, and accessories. Featuring top international brands such as Adidas, Puma, Skechers, Nike, Jansport, US Polo, Herschel, GAP, UCB, Citron, Lee Cooper, and more, the collection combines style, comfort, and functionality.

Prices are designed to suit every budget, with backpacks starting at 4.3 KD, lunch boxes and water bottles from 1.5 KD, and uniform T-shirts from 1.5 KD, all with selected items offering up to 2 years warranty for peace of mind.

With everything from schoolwear and accessories to footwear, bags, and daily essentials, Centrepont brings together Babyshop, Splash, Lifestyle, and Shoemart under one roof – making it the region’s most trusted Back-to-School destination.

To mark the launch, Centrepont hosted a special Back-to-School event on 20th August at its flagship Avenues store, where families explored the collection firsthand and enjoyed a day filled with fun, fashion, and engaging activities.

Babyshop: More than 2000 options with stylish uniforms, pencil-style lunch boxes, insulated bottles, multi-pocket pen-pouches to everyday school fashion essentials. We’ve got character-led favorites like Kuromi, Spiderman, Stitch, Barbie, Ronaldo, Ferrari, and Naruto — so every child can show off their personality.

Lifestyle: With more than 1,000 Back-to-School

options, Lifestyle features global brands like Jansport, US Polo, Herschel, UCB, GAP, Citron, and more. Combining fashion and function, with sustainable choices, Lifestyle ensures students look great, feel great, and start the year with confidence.

Shoemart: Over 428 options for school shoes, bags, and socks, featuring trusted brands such as Adidas, Puma, Skechers, Nike, Pablosky, Kappa, and Lee Cooper — giving kids the comfort, style, and quality they deserve. Whether it’s running in the playground or walking confidently into class, Shoemart has them covered from head to toe!

Splash: Splash brings a fresh collection for young trendsetters, offering stylish and versatile essentials. Featuring range that includes graphic tees, polos, joggers, denim, and sporty outerwear in fresh tones for him. And chic shirts, pleated skirts, tailored trousers, blazers, and athleisure layers bringing both polish and comfort for her. Completing the collection, utility backpacks, totes, sunglasses, and other accessories provide the perfect finishing touch.

With a strong focus on comfort, versatility, and on-trend details, Splash’s Back-to-School Collection positions itself as the go-to destination for students seeking both fashion and function this semester.

This is the Class of 2025 — ready to learn, lead, and leave a mark. With Centrepont’s all-in-one Back-to-School range, families can prep, pack, and power through the year ahead in absolute style.

• Visit Centrepont stores at Al Rai, The Avenues, Fahheel, Fintas, Hawally, Jahra, Awqaf, Salmiya, Shuwaiikh, and Sulaibikhat — or shop online at centrepontstores.com.

Al-Safa rolls out vital aid

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al-Safa Humanitarian Charity Association Mohammad Al-Shaya announced the implementation of a number of vital projects in the first half of 2025 in various parts of the Kyrgyz Republic, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, Al-Shaya disclosed that the association established 17 water networks and 24 artesian wells in villages and remote areas for the benefit of more than 55,000 people.

He pointed out that “the people urgently need clean drinking water. The poor wait for water for years and endure hardship just to obtain a few drops. However, thanks to Allah first and foremost, and then to the efforts of charitable and generous people, we completed these projects, which contributed to alleviating the suffering of thousands of poor families.”

He stressed that these efforts are part of the humanitarian vision of the association, which prioritizes improving the quality of human life. He explained that providing water networks and wells not only quenches thirst, but also has a direct developmental impact on public health and in preventing diseases caused by water pollution. He added this is in line with Sustainable Development Goal Six (clean water) and Goal Three (good health and well-being).



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Law enforcement surge alienating DC residents: senior officers

Trump’s threat to deploy troops to Chicago sparks fear and defiance in city on edge

CHICAGO, Aug 27, (AP): US President Donald Trump’s threats to deploy National Guard troops to Chicago sent ripples through America’s third-largest city as many residents defended their home against Trump’s escalating rhetoric toward its violent crime, including claims it is a “killing field.”

The threat of federal troops stirred a mix of fear, frustration and defiance for residents as they pointed to historic drops in violent crime. Groups constantly pressing for police reform said sending troops who lack training in de-escalating violence or any knowledge about the nuances of neighborhoods still grappling with violent crime would undo progress made in recent years.

The sentiment was echoed by people going about their day - commuters heading to work, cyclists weaving through traffic, and friends pausing to take photos along Michigan Avenue - who said the presence of troops would only heighten tensions, not ease them.

“It’s a direct affront to the progress our communities have made,” said Bradly Johnson, who leads BUILD Chicago. The anti-violence organiza-

tion focuses its efforts on neighborhoods on the city’s West Side that have seen persistent crime, even as rates overall have fallen.

“It’s not a war zone,” Johnson said. “They’re vibrant resilient communities where young people deserve opportunities and not intimidation.”

On Tuesday, Trump called Chicago a “hell hole” and repeated that Chicagoans are asking “Trump to come in” to reduce crime in the city. The statements echoed comments earlier this month when Trump indicated Chicago may be next for a federal crackdown, claiming Chicago is “a mess” and residents are “screaming for us to come.”

Trump has long singled out Chicago, making it a recurring theme on the campaign trail in both 2016 and 2024. He has drawn controversial comparisons between the city and war zones like Afghanistan, and in 2017, he vowed to “send in the feds” in response to gun violence.

But data paints a more nuanced picture of crime - one that varies dramatically block by block and that has seen recent progress.

Violent crime in Chicago dropped



Illinois Governor JB Pritzker speaks during a news conference at River Point Park on Aug 25, in Chicago. (AP)

significantly in the first half of the year, representing the steepest decline in over a decade, according to city data. Shootings are down 37%, and homicides have dropped by 32%, while total violence crime dropped by

over 22%.

“The empirical data is very clear that the Chicago trend is extremely positive,” said John Roman, who directs the Center on Public Safety and Justice at the University of Chicago.

“... Chicago is doing better than the rest of the country on a lot of really important measures.”

Still, the city’s most ardent defenders acknowledge gun violence still plagues parts of the city in recent years, particularly in warmer months. Chicago saw about 570 homicides in 2024, according to city data. Shooting lethality - the rate at which shooting victims die from being shot - has increased in recent years, as has the number of high-capacity magazines recovered by Chicago police at shooting scenes, according to the University of Chicago Crime Lab.

Crime in Chicago represents persistent, localized challenges, said Kimberley Smith, director of national programs for the University of Chicago Crime Lab. The neighborhoods with the highest homicide rates experience about 68 times more homicides than those with the lowest rates.

As a show of unity against the move, Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker, a potential 2028 presidential contender, convened roughly 100 elected officials, pastors, business leaders and activists at a splashy news conference against

the backdrop of gleaming skyscrapers along the Chicago River.

Also:

WASHINGTON: A pair of senior Washington, DC, police commanders acknowledged Tuesday that the ongoing federal law enforcement surge in the nation’s capital is alienating the population and damaging community relationships that will have to be mended in the future.

“What relationships do we have to repair once this surge is over? I’m prepared to do that. I’m prepared to have those long, tough conversations. But I know it’s going to be tough,” said Sixth District Commander Jaron Hickman. “We are getting some violent people off the streets - but in the long run, at what cost?”

Elsewhere in the city, students started to settle into the start of a new school year, which was shadowed by anxieties over increased immigration enforcement. Volunteers in some neighborhoods helped walk children to school as social media was abuzz with reports of sightings of federal officers.

Spate of hoax calls about active shooters stir fear at college campuses around US

WASHINGTON, Aug 27, (AP): Micaela Morano scrambled for cover behind a green screen in the University of Arkansas broadcast room after she received a campuswide alert about an active shooter.

As officers outside donned bullet proof vests and searched for an intruder, the 21-year-old journalism student called her grandmother, telling her, “As of right now, I’m safe. I love you.”

Monday’s threat turned out to be part of a rash of hoax calls about active shooters on college campuses - some featuring gunshots sounding in the background - that have sent waves of fear among students around the nation as the school year begins.

The calls prompted universities to issue texts to “run, hide, fight.” Students and teachers rushed for cover, often covering in classrooms and under desks for safety. Officers swarmed over campuses, seeking out any threat.

That the threats turned out to be false doesn’t much matter in the moment for terrified students.

“There’s just these few minutes where all you really feel is fear, whether the threat’s there or not,” said Morano, whose childhood active shooter drills taught her to stack chairs blocking the classroom door and to climb into the ceiling as a last resort.

The hoaxes and false alarms have hit at least a dozen college campuses.



Law enforcement officers gather in front of the library on the University of Arkansas campus while responding to reports of a shooting on Aug 25, in Fayetteville, Ark. (AP)

On Monday alone, law enforcement responded to calls claiming active shooters at Arkansas, Northern Arizona University, Iowa State, Kansas State, the University of Colorado-Boulder and the University of New Hampshire. More calls were made Tuesday at the University of Kentucky, West Virginia University and Central Georgia Technical College.

At Villanova University, students were attending Thursday’s Orientation

Mass when law enforcement received multiple calls about a man opening fire on campus with an AR-15 style weapon. Sounds of gunfire could be heard in the background of the calls.

Chairs banged together and bags dropped as students fled, recalled Ryan Scanlon, who was in eighth grade at a neighboring school when the mass shooting occurred at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, in 2018.

Trump administration urges Supreme Court to block foreign aid payments

WASHINGTON, Aug 27, (Xinhua): The Trump administration on Tuesday asked the US Supreme Court to allow it to withhold billions of U.S. dollars in foreign aid, challenging a federal court injunction that forces the government to continue payments.

The US Justice Department filed an emergency appeal, noting that a three-judge panel of the US Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit ruled to overturn the injunction earlier this month.

However, the injunction remains in effect, as the full federal appeals court declined to pause it last week. It ordered the Trump administration to pay nearly 2 billion dollars in outstanding aid to foreign aid contractors worldwide.

In March, the Supreme Court declined to let the administration avoid making these payments. The Trump administration is now pressing for a definitive ruling, arguing that without the justices’ intervention, it would be forced to make payments, which would override executive foreign-policy decisions.

US President Donald Trump imposed a 90-day pause on all foreign aid on Jan. 20, and has since gradually weakened the US Agency for International Development while exploring moving the agency under the



The Federal Emergency Management Agency headquarters is photographed in Washington on May 5. (AP)

State Department.

Also:

NEW YORK: Some employees of the Federal Emergency Management Agency who signed a public letter of dissent earlier this week were put on administrative leave Tuesday evening, according to documents reviewed by The Associated Press.

More than 180 current and former FEMA employees signed the letter sent to the FEMA Review Council and Congress on Monday critiquing

recent cuts to agency staff and programs, and warning that FEMA’s capacity to respond to a major disaster was dangerously diminished.

Thirty-five signed their names while 141 signed anonymously for fear of retribution.

The Associated Press has confirmed that at least two of the signatories received notices Tuesday evening informing them they would be placed on leave indefinitely, with pay and that they must still check in every morning confirming their availability.

US envoy Witkoff says to meet Ukraine representatives in New York this week

WASHINGTON, Aug 27, (Xinhua): US president’s special envoy Steve Witkoff said Tuesday that he will meet with representatives from Ukraine in New York this week as diplomatic efforts continue to seek an end to the Ukraine conflict.

“I’m meeting with the Ukrainians this week. So I will be meeting with them this week in New York,” Witkoff said in an interview with Fox News.

The US envoy said that US and Russian officials remain in regular contact. “We are hopeful that by the end of this year, we actually, and maybe quite a bit sooner, we actually, can find the ingredients to get to that peace deal.”

According to Witkoff, Ukraine is considering Russia’s peace proposal, while Moscow has expressed a desire to resolve the conflict.

He noted that the Ukraine conflict is more complicated than territorial disputes alone, and that final decisions will be made by Kiev, not Washington.

Meanwhile, Slovak Foreign Minister Juraj Blunar urged Ukraine to refrain from attacks on the Dnuzhba oil pipeline, saying that such attacks will harm both Slovakia and Ukraine itself, local media reported on Tuesday.

Blunar made the remarks during phone calls with Ukrainian senior officials, including a Sunday call with his Ukrainian counterpart, Andrii Sybiha, and on Monday with Taras Kachka,



Special Presidential Envoy Steve Witkoff listens as President Donald Trump meets with South Korean President Lee Jae Myung in the Oval Office of the White House, on Aug 25 in Washington. (AP)

Ukraine’s deputy prime minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration, according to the News Agency of the Slovak Republic.

Blunar informed them about a joint letter sent to the European Commission by Slovakia and Hungary, which called on the European Commission to adhere to commitments related to the energy supply security of EU member countries. The minister noted that both Ukrainian officials assured him

of discussions on a constructive approach and thanked Slovakia for the assistance provided since the military conflict broke out between Ukraine and Russia.

On Aug 18, Ukraine confirmed its forces carried out an overnight strike on the Nikolskoe oil pumping station in Russia’s Tambov region. The attack caused a halt in crude oil deliveries through the Dnuzhba pipeline to Slovakia.

Europe

Spain to grant aid for catastrophe zones: The Spanish government on Tuesday declared areas affected by wildfires as catastrophe zones, allowing them to access emergency aid.

Interior Minister **Fernando Grande-Marlaska** said at a press conference broadcast by national television channel RTVE that the measure applies to all regions affected by the 113 wildfires recorded between June 23 and Aug. 25.

“We are facing one of the worst environmental crises in recent years,” said Grande-Marlaska, adding that affected residents can apply for compensation. The aid also covers areas hit by severe flooding at the end of June.

Government aid will include support for households, businesses and local authorities, as well as compensation for farmers whose crops, woodland and livestock were damaged. Additional measures include grants for infrastructure repairs and preferential credit lines.

According to the European Forest Fire Information Service, wildfires in Spain have burned an estimated 418,000 hectares this summer, an area larger than the island of Mallorca. However, Grande-Marlaska said it is too early to give a final assessment of the damage. (Xinhua)



Grande-Marlaska

Concerns mount over journo’s health: Activists have raised concerns about the health of a Belarusian journalist sentenced to 3 1/2 years in prison in the latest closed-door trial targeting the country’s media.

Aleh Suprunyuk, 58, was sentenced on Aug. 8 after being found guilty of participating in an extremist group

for articles he wrote for the Belarusian Association of Journalists, or BAJ. Belarus’ government labeled the organization as “extremist” - a common label used by officials to crack down on dissidents - in March 2023. Details of his trial only became public knowledge on Monday.

The journalist’s conviction is part of an ongoing crackdown on government critics following unprecedented mass protests following Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko’s disputed election on Aug. 9, 2020. Human rights groups say authorities have arrested more than 65,000 people and hundreds of thousands have fled the country for fear of persecution.

Suprunyuk, a prominent editor for the First Region news website and a former chairman of the Brest branch of the BAJ, monitored the persecution of the country’s media workers. (AP)

Suspect charged in Munich car attack: Authorities in Germany announced murder charges Tuesday against an Afghan man accused of killing two people and injuring 44 in a car-ramming in Munich in February that prosecutors say was motivated by a desire to avenge suffering of Muslims.

The man, an Afghan national identified only as Farhad N. in line with German privacy rules, was arrested immediately after the attack during a labor union demonstration. He came to Germany as an asylum seeker and was 24 years old at the time of the attack.

Federal prosecutors said in a statement that on the morning of Feb. 13, the suspect “deliberately drove his car” into the union event in downtown Munich.

The car ramming fatally injured two people, a two-year-old girl and her 37-year-old mother. Forty-four other people suffered life-threatening or serious injuries, prosecutors said.

“The accused committed the act out of excessive religious motivation,” they said in the statement. “He believed he was obliged to attack and kill randomly selected people in Germany in response to the suffering of Muslims in Islamic countries.” (AP)

Another French prime minister could be toppled, more political instability ahead

PARIS, Aug 27, (AP): France’s prime minister has announced a confidence vote next month that likely will lead to the collapse of his centrist government and prompt another period of political instability in the European Union’s second-biggest economy.

François Bayrou said Monday he would seek approval for his unpopular budget plans on Sept. 8 at the National Assembly, France’s lower house of parliament. Opposition parties quickly said they would vote against it.

President Emmanuel Macron, who has vowed to stay in office until the end of his term due in 2027, may soon face the complex task of appointing a new prime minister for the third time in a year. The prime minister focuses mostly on domestic policies, while the president retains substantial powers over foreign policy, European affairs and defense.

Here’s a look at what’s at stake.

Early legislative elections called by Macron in June last year led to a chaotic situation in parliament, divided among three minority blocs that do not have enough seats to govern alone.

Bayrou, 74, has been in office since December.

He unveiled plans last month to cut 44 billion euros (\$51 billion) in spending, after France’s deficit hit 5.8% of gross domestic product last year, way above the official EU target of 3%. The plans includes removing two state holidays.

Bayrou has no option beyond relying on the support - or at



French President Emmanuel Macron, (right), and Prime Minister Francois Bayrou attend a meeting with New Caledonia’s elected officials and state representatives who have concluded a historic agreement allowing the creation of a ‘State of New Caledonia’ within the French Republic, at the Elysee Palace in Paris on July 12. (AP)

least abstention - of adversaries on the left and right to pass the budget bill. That’s why he decided to seek a confidence vote ahead of the debate that is scheduled to start in October.

Americans carrying out influence ops in Greenland

Denmark summons top US diplomat

COPENHAGEN, Denmark, Aug 27, (AP): Denmark’s foreign minister had the top US diplomat in the country summoned for talks after the main national broadcaster reported Wednesday that at least three people with connections to President Donald Trump have been carrying out covert influence operations in Greenland.

Trump has repeatedly said he seeks US jurisdiction over Greenland, a vast, semi-autonomous territory of Denmark. He has not ruled out military force to take control of the mineral-rich, strategically located Arctic island.

Denmark, a NATO ally of the US, and Greenland have said the island is not for sale and condemned reports of the U.S. gathering intelligence there.

Danish public broadcaster DR reported Wednesday that government and security sources which it didn’t name, as well as unidentified sources in Greenland and the U.S., believe that at least three Americans with connections to Trump have been carrying out covert influence operations in the territory.

One of those people allegedly compiled a list of US-friendly Greenlanders, collected names of people opposed to Trump and got locals to point out cases that could be used to cast Denmark in a bad light in American media. Two others have tried to nurture contacts with politicians, businesspeople and locals, according to the report.

An influence operation is an organized effort to shape how people in a society think in order to achieve certain political,



Denmark's Foreign Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen arrives for the NATO summit in The Hague, Netherlands on June 25. (AP)

military or other objectives.

DR said its story was based on information from a total of eight sources, who believe the goal is to weaken relations with Denmark from within Greenlandic society.

DR said it had been unable to clarify whether the Americans were working at their own initiative or on orders from someone else.

Asia

Heavy rain causes flooding in parts of Southeast Asia: Heavy rain caused flooding and landslides Wednesday in parts of Southeast Asia, where at least eight deaths were reported in the aftermath of a tropical storm.

Flooding occurred in several northern and central provinces of Vietnam, seven people died, one was missing and 34 were injured, state media reported.

Nearly 20 centimeters (8 inches) of rain fell overnight in parts of northeast Vietnam and flood warnings remained for some riverside areas.

In Thailand, one person died and another was missing from a landslide Wednesday in part of the northern city of Chiang Mai.

Thailand's Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation said many homes were affected and a few people were injured from flash flooding and landslides in northern provinces.

Thailand's Meteorological Department warned of heavy rain in northern and northeastern regions Wednesday. Residents in foothills and low-lying areas near waterways were warned about possible flash floods and landslides. (AP)

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Australia identifies suspect in fatal shooting of officers: Australian police on Wednesday identified a suspect who shot and killed two police officers and seriously wounded a third as the search for the shooter entered day two in a vast, remote rural area in the country's southeast.

Dezi Freeman, 56, was heavily armed and experienced in wilderness survival skills, Victoria's Chief Commissioner of Police Mike Bush told reporters.

People were urged to stay indoors.

The shooting happened on Tuesday, when 10 armed police officers tried to execute a search warrant at Freeman's property in Porepunkah, a town of just over 1,000 people located 320 kilometers (200 miles) northeast of Melbourne.

Freeman killed a 59-year-old detective and a 35-year-old senior constable, Bush said. Another detective was shot but his wounds are not life threatening. (AP)

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Police board a helicopter at a command area at Feathertop Winery in Porepunkah in Victoria, Australia on Aug 27. (AP)

1 dead, 10 injured in Melbourne school bus crash: A girl has died and 10 others have been injured after a school bus rolled onto its side southwest of Melbourne in the Australian state of Victoria on Wednesday morning.

Victoria Police said in a statement that the school bus had 28 primary and secondary school students on board when it rolled over while turning onto a highway in the small town of Stonehaven, 73 km southwest of Melbourne, at around 8:20 a.m.

on Wednesday.

One girl died at the scene, Victoria Police said, and a boy was airlifted to hospital with serious but non-life-threatening injuries.

Eight other students sustained non-life-threatening injuries and were taken to hospital by ambulance. The 76-year-old male bus driver was also hospitalized with non-life-threatening injuries, but has since been discharged and is assisting police with their inquiries. (Xinhua)

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Family of 4 killed in Philippine road crash: A family of four were killed after their tricycle collided with an oncoming vehicle in Pangasinan province, the Philippines, police said Tuesday.

Police said the crash happened on Monday afternoon along a highway in Infanta town, killing the driver, his wife, and their two young children.

Initial investigation showed the tricycle hit a tree branch on the roadside, causing the driver to lose control and crash into a van coming from the opposite lane. (Xinhua)

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'Bones found at Japanese site human remains': Police said Wednesday that a set of bones recovered at a wartime mine in Japan are human remains, and a Japanese group helping search for the remains said they are certain to belong to about 180 mostly Korean forced laborers who died in an accident in 1942.

Police said their examination of the three bones and a skull found this week by Korean divers at the former site of the Chosei Mine in western Yamaguchi prefecture confirmed they are all human remains.

But police said their analysis could not determine whether the three limb bones and skull belonged to the same person, their age or the timing of the death.

The group, known as Kizamu Kai, said they are certain the remains belong to victims who died at the mine 83 years ago and that the discovery is a major boost in their efforts to recover other remains of the 136 Korean forced laborers and 47 Japanese workers killed in the mine collapse.

"I was waiting for this day," group representative Yoko Inoue said Tuesday after the bones were found. (AP)

Over 200,000 displaced in Pakistan

Flash floods, landslides kill at least 34 people in Indian-controlled Kashmir: officials

NEW DELHI, Aug 27, (Agencies): Intense rains have left at least 34 people dead after lashing parts of Pakistan and India and triggering flash floods and landslides in Indian-controlled Kashmir, officials said Wednesday. Over 200,000 people in Pakistan have been displaced, and the shrine of the founder of the Sikh religion has been submerged.

Forecasters say rain will continue across the region this week. Heavy downpours and flash floods in the Himalayan region have killed nearly 100 people in August.

Part of a mountainside in Indian-controlled Kashmir's Jammu region collapsed onto a popular Hindu pilgrimage route following heavy rains in the Katra area late Tuesday. Devotees had been trekking to reach the hilltop temple, which is one of the most visited shrines in northern India, officials said.

The bodies of most of the pilgrimage victims were recovered from under the debris, according to disaster management official Mohammed Irshad, who said at least 18 other people were injured and transported to hospitals.

Rescue teams scoured the area Wednesday for missing people, and the pilgrimage to the shrine has been suspended, Irshad said.

Authorities in Pakistan's eastern Punjab province on Wednesday called for army assistance in rescue and relief efforts after torrential rains caused major rivers to swell, inundating villages and displacing over 200,000 people, according to Lt. Gen. Inam Haider, chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority.

Army spokesman Lt. Gen. Ahmed Sharif said two soldiers were killed while helping flood victims. He gave no further details.

Floods also submerged the shrine of Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion, which is located near the Indian border in Narowal district.

Rescuers evacuated more than 20,000 people overnight from the outskirts of Lahore, Pakistan's second-largest city, which faced the risk of flooding. Those



A rescue worker helps a family board in a boat to evacuate them from a flooded area in Dhoop Sarhi village in Kasur district, Pakistan on Aug 26 due to the rising water level in Sutlej River, following neighboring India releasing water from overflowing dams. (AP)

evacuated were living along the bed of the Ravi river, said Irfan Ali Kathia, director-general of the Punjab Disaster Management Authority.

Mass evacuations began earlier this week in six districts of Punjab after heavier-than-normal monsoon rains and the release of water from overflowing dams in neighboring India triggered flash floods in low-lying border regions, Kathia said.

Kathia warned floodwaters in the Ravi, Chenab and Sutlej rivers were rising dangerously and many villages were inundated in Kasur, Okara, Bahawalnagar, Bahawalpur, Vehari and Sialkot districts.

India alerted Pakistan about possible cross-border flooding through diplomatic channels rather than the Indus Waters Commission, the permanent mechanism under the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty. New Delhi suspended the commission's work after the April killing of 26 tourists in Indian-controlled Kashmir, though Pakistan insists India cannot unilaterally scrap the treaty.

Rescuers with sniffer dogs continue to search for more than 150 people who have been reported missing this month after flooding killed over 300 residents in three villages in Pakistan's northwestern Buner district.

Floods have killed more than 800 people in Pakistan since late June.

Scientists say climate change is fueling heavier monsoon rains in South Asia, raising fears of a repeat of a 2022 weather disaster that struck a third of Pakistan and killed 1,739 people.

Also:

ISLAMABAD: At least nine terrorists of a banned militant outfit were killed in a joint operation in **Pakistan's** northwest **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa** province, police said on Tuesday.

Police officer Bilal Haider told media that the operation had been conducted for the past three days following intelligence confirming the presence of the terrorists in **Lower Dir District** of the province.

The officer said that all the terrorists were from the banned Tehreek-i-Taleban Pakistan (TTP) and were involved in several acts of terrorism, including attacks on security forces and police.

Father of slain Colombian candidate Miguel Uribe launches presidential bid

BOGOTA, Colombia, Aug 27, (AP): The father of Miguel Uribe, the Colombian presidential candidate fatally shot at a political rally earlier this year, launched a presidential campaign Tuesday in what he called an effort keep his son's legacy alive and build a safer and more prosperous Colombia.

Miguel Uribe Londoño, 72, announced his candidacy with a speech outside the congressional building in the capital where his son became a well-known senator, and spoke behind a podium fitted with the campaign logo used by his deceased son.

"Together we can build a secure Colombia where people will not fear going out into the streets, and where business owners will not have to make extortion payments" to gangs, Uribe Londoño said in Bogota. "A democratic Colombia, where the government does not foment divisions between the rich and the poor, whites or Blacks, or those who are on the left or on the right."

Uribe Londoño was a member of Bogota's city council in the late 80s and a senator for Colombia's Conservative Party in the early 90s. But he had no plans to run for the presidency before his son's death, and was not widely known by the public.

He gained new prominence during his son's nationally televised



Miguel Uribe Londono, father of slain presidential candidate Miguel Uribe Turbay, reads a statement to officially announce his bid for the presidency in Bogota, Colombia on Aug 26. (AP)

funeral, when he delivered a speech decrying what he called the country's descent into "madness" under the administration of left-wing President Gustavo Petro and urging Colombians to vote in next year's elections.

Also:

BOGOTA, Colombia: Colombia's government said Tuesday that 34 of its soldiers fighting rebels in the south have been "kidnapped" by villagers acting under the orders of

a rebel group.

Defense Minister **Pedro Sánchez** said the military would "deploy all of its capabilities" to secure the release of the soldiers held in **Guaviare** province, and offered a \$5,000 reward for information leading to the rebel commanders who planned the incident.

"This is an illegal action," Sánchez told a news conference. "These people are interrupting a military operation against the principal threat in the region."

Police in Haiti regain control of telecom hub seized by gangs

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, Aug 27, (AP): Police in Haiti announced Tuesday that they regained control of a critical telecommunications hub that heavily armed gangs had seized last week, briefly disrupting air traffic and internet connections.

The takeover was a rare success for Haitian authorities and a UN-backed mission led by Kenyan police that have struggled to push back powerful gangs seeking full control of the capital, Port-au-Prince.

The police operation at the Téléco site in the once peaceful community of Kenscoff began before dawn on Monday and lasted about two hours, according to Michel-Ange Louis Jeune, spokesperson for Haiti's National Police.

"This is a strong message that the new police chief sent," he said, referring to André Jonas Vladimir Paraison, who was appointed to the post earlier this month.

Jeune did not take questions during the news conference and did not say how many people, if any, were killed during the operation. He said police found numerous guns, including automatic weapons with scratched-out serial numbers, and more than 1,000 bullets.

"When the population is sleeping, the police are not sleeping. They are working to ensure that people can



Haitian National Police spokesperson Michel-Ange Louis Jeune and Kenyan police spokesperson Jack Ombaka, right, hold a press conference at the police headquarters in Port-au-Prince on Haiti on Aug 26. (AP)

sleep," he said.

Last week, gangs filmed themselves taking over the Téléco site, telling the government it had less than a week to start negotiations. The person in the video did not say what, if anything, the gangs were demanding.

Passenger bus crash in Afghanistan kills 25

KABUL, Aug 27, (Xinhua): At least 25 passengers lost their lives and 27 others sustained injuries when a bus overturned in the west of the Afghan capital Kabul, on Wednesday morning, an official from the Ministry of Interior Affairs reported.

The incident occurred in the Arghandi area, along the highway linking southern Kandahar to Kabul, and was caused by reckless driving, Abdul Mateen Qani, spokesman for the ministry, told Xinhua. Police and emergency services quickly responded, transporting the injured to nearby health centers for treatment, Qani added.

Also:

KABUL: Three children sustained injuries as an unexploded ordnance, which was left over from the past wars, went off in western **Afghanistan's** **Badghis** province on Tuesday, Provincial Police Spokesman **Sediqullah Sediqi** said Wednesday.

The incident occurred in **Qaroto** village of **Balamurghab** district on Tuesday afternoon after the children found a toy-like device and threw it in a fire while playing, but the device exploded badly injuring the kids, the official added.

This is the second incident of its kind since Saturday. In a previous similar incident, which took place in the eastern **Wardak** province on Saturday, a teenage boy lost his life, and four others were injured.

Lat/Am

Venezuela to deploy army vessels to Caribbean: Venezuela will send military vessels to the Caribbean Sea and other waters to combat drug trafficking, the country's defense minister announced Tuesday. The move comes as tensions with the US simmer over the deployment of three warships to the region.

Defense Minister **Vladimir Padrino López** said the vessels will patrol the Gulf of Venezuela as well as the country's "territorial waters" in the Caribbean. In an Instagram reel, Padrino added that about 15,000 members of the armed forces will participate in efforts on land and at sea to fight "the armed, terrorist, drug-trafficking groups operating on the border" with Colombia.

Padrino announced the operation more than a week after the US government announced the deployment of three guided-missile destroyers to the waters off Venezuela to combat threats from Latin American drug cartels. Venezuela's initial response to the deployment was to call on Venezuelans to enlist in a volunteer militia meant to assist the armed forces in the defense of external and domestic attacks.

The move to deploy US destroyers and personnel comes as US President Donald Trump pushes for using the military to thwart cartels he blames for the flow of fentanyl and other illicit drugs into American communities and for perpetuating violence in some US cities. (AP)

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Bolivian court orders release of opp'n leader: A Bolivian judge ordered the release of powerful opposition leader Luis Fernando Camacho Tuesday, ending over two years of pretrial detention for the conservative politician. His impending release is a victory for his supporters, who



Lopez

long criticized his prosecution as politically motivated, and a blow for his detractors who see the judicial pendulum swinging to the right.

Camacho, the governor of Bolivia's easternmost province of Santa Cruz, has served two years and eight months behind bars on charges of sedition tied to his involvement in violent unrest over the disputed 2019 reelection of socialist former President Evo Morales.

The firebrand Christian leader of a powerful Santa Cruz business association, Camacho gained prominence while leading protests against Morales in 2019 that ultimately forced Bolivia's first Indigenous leader to resign under pressure from the military and flee to exile.

The court order for Camacho's release comes after Bolivia's Aug. 17 elections signaled the end of nearly 20 years of left-wing rule under Morales' Movement Toward Socialism, or MAS party. A presidential runoff in October pits centrist Senator Rodrigo Paz against right-wing former President Jorge Quiroga, assuring a rightward tilt in the country's politics. (AP)

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Brazil court orders intense monitoring of ex-prez: Brazil's Supreme Court on Tuesday ordered a round-the-clock monitoring of former president Jair Bolsonaro for fear that he could attempt to flee house arrest ahead of a verdict in his coup attempt trial. Justice Alexandre de Moraes, who is overseeing the case, granted a request from federal prosecutors after warning that Bolsonaro could seek refuge in a foreign embassy. Bolsonaro is currently confined to his residence in national capital Brasilia.

Moraes said the actions by Bolsonaro's son, lawmaker Eduardo Bolsonaro, who is in the United States lobbying against the trial and pressing for an amnesty in Congress, "demonstrate the possibility of Jair Messias Bolsonaro fleeing to evade the application of criminal law."

Final hearings in the case are scheduled for Sept. 2, with Bolsonaro and 35 co-defendants, including former officials and military officers, facing judgment for their roles in the alleged coup attempt following Bolsonaro's defeat in Brazil's 2022 presidential election. (Xinhua)

Kuwaiti oil rises to \$71.67 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by 34 cents to USD 71.67 per barrel on Tuesday, compared to USD 71.33 pb the day before, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation on Wednesday.

On global markets, the prices of Brent Crude and West Texas Intermediate dropped by USD 1.58 and USD 1.55 respectively, settling at USD 67.22 per barrel and USD 63.25 per barrel.

Business

Partnership marks key step in boosting Kuwait's digital economy

Kuwait Airways and Impulse sign strategic agreement to support the national carrier's digital transformation



After signing the agreement.



Al-Fagaan and Abou Amarah are standing between the two companies' officials.

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: In a significant step towards enhancing its digital transformation journey, Kuwait Airways signed a Master Services Agreement (MSA) with Impulse International for Telecommunications, laying the foundation for adopting the latest IT services and applications within Kuwait Airways' digital transformation initiative. The signing ceremony was attended by Kuwait Airways Chairman, Captain Abdulmohsen Al-Fagaan, and Impulse Vice Chairman and CEO, Eng. Izzat Abou Amarah, along with various officials representing both companies.

This strategic agreement defines the operational and commercial framework through which Kuwait Airways will procure, deploy, and manage IT solutions offered by Impulse. By leveraging this streamlined procurement pathway, Kuwait Airways will be able to adopt scalable cloud infrastructure, advanced data and analytics capabilities, and application modernization tools aligned with the best global practices.

Kuwait Airways Chairman, Captain Abdulmohsen Al-Fagaan, stated during the signing ceremony, "Kuwait Airways is pleased to sign this significant agreement with Impulse as we aim to enhance our digital and technological capabilities across all levels. This initiative is part of the national carrier's digital transformation journey, that aligns with Kuwait's Vision 2035."

Al-Fagaan pointed out that the agreement with Impulse ensures the national carrier of the State of Kuwait's ability to adopt the latest cloud computing technologies efficiently, and securely, in line with the company's strategic goals to enhance customer experience and increase operational agility.

Al-Fagaan stated that Impulse is an authorized distributor under the Alliance Framework Agreement (AFA) signed with Google Cloud, making it a key enabler in Kuwait's cloud computing ecosystem. He explained that the

Al-Fagaan: Adopting the latest cloud computing technologies efficiently and securely, to enhance customer experience and increase operational agility

Abou Amarah: We are proud to support the national carrier's vision and contribute to the growth of Kuwait's digital economy

company will provide end-to-end support to Kuwait Airways throughout its cloud journey, starting with solution design and setup, through continuous improvements, to achieving optimization and compliance with standards.

Al-Fagaan concluded his statement by emphasizing on the national carrier's commitment to enhancing its performance to become the preferred carrier for all. He added that Kuwait Airways continuously strives to introduce a wide range of diverse services through modern, advanced technological solutions aimed at delivering a distinguished travel experience to valued customers, through the national carrier, which is characterized by quality, security, and safety.

Impulse, Vice Chairman and CEO, Eng. Izzat Abou Amarah stated, "This agreement with Kuwait Airways highlights our core mission to achieve digital transformation in the State of Kuwait by accelerating cloud services and technology adoption and delivering innovative, future-ready solutions that empower organizations to thrive in a rapidly evolving digital landscape. We are proud to support Kuwait Airways' vision and contribute to

the growth of Kuwait's digital economy."

About Kuwait Airways

Kuwait Airways, the national carrier of the State of Kuwait, established in 1954, operates a modern and diverse fleet comprising the latest type of aircraft from the world's leading manufacturers — Airbus and Boeing. The fleet is equipped with cutting-edge technology and advanced features that align with the best international aviation standards, including state-of-the-art inflight entertainment systems and designed seating specifications to ensure a comfortable travel experience and to suit the needs of the national carrier's customers. Kuwait Airways takes pride in employing some of the region's most skilled and experienced professionals across various technical specializations, reflecting the airline's commitment to operational excellence. In addition, Kuwait Airways strives to attain the highest levels of quality in customer service and to develop the company's operational system in line with the latest improvements in the commercial air transport sector.

About Impulse International

Impulse International Telecommunications was established in 2012 by the National Technology Enterprises Company, which is a fully owned subsidiary of the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA).

Impulse is a strategic investor and technology service provider, with focus on ICT sector including IT network and infrastructure, enterprise automation, cloud computing, telecommunications, and Internet of Things (IoT).

Impulse aims to facilitate the transfer of technology and knowledge to the region, and Kuwait in particular, through its diversified international portfolio and integrated IT solutions.

'Acquisition a strategic milestone in global growth journey'

Menzies Aviation doubles US footprint with completion of \$305 million acquisition of G2

LONDON, Aug 27: Menzies Aviation, an Agility Global company, and the leading service partner to the world's airports and airlines, has completed its acquisition of G2 Secure Staff, an aviation service partner of choice for major airlines across the United States.

The \$305m deal strengthens Menzies position as the world's largest aviation services provider, operating at 350 airports in 65 countries, powered by a team of 65,000 highly trained people. The deal is expected to boost Menzies' Group revenue by 20% to more than \$3.1 billion, based on FY2024 figures.

The acquisition positions Menzies as the leading player by airports served in the U.S. — the world's largest and most dynamic market. The Menzies G2 combination provides operational resilience and adds new, instantly deployable capabilities. G2's expertise in ground services, including passenger assistance and cabin cleaning, complements and enhances Menzies' ground, air cargo and fuel services portfolio.

Menzies current Executive Vice President Americas, John Redmond, will continue to lead the region as he has done for 18 years. G2 senior management will join John's team.

Hassan El-Houry, Executive Chairman, Menzies Aviation said: "Acquiring G2 is a strategic long-term investment and significant milestone in our global growth journey. It is also a direct response to customer demand for Menzies to offer a broader range of services at more airports.

With U.S. passenger volumes expected to surpass one billion by 2040 and rising airport infrastructure investment, this deal positions Menzies at the centre of the country's aviation momentum and underscores our confidence in the resilience of the U.S. economy and U.S. consumer.

After 25 years as a key player in the U.S. market, we are now structurally aligned to support capacity growth, digital transformation, and labour demand. I'm proud of how far we have come as a business and excited to welcome our new G2 colleagues, whose talent and experience will be vital to our shared success."



Hassan El-Houry, Executive Chairman



Philipp Joeinig, Group CEO



G2 and Menzies Aviation join forces.

- Deal expands Menzies' global network and aviation service offering to 350 airports in 65 countries.
- Menzies becomes the largest independent aviation services provider in the U.S.
- Underscores Menzies' long-term commitment and confidence in the U.S. aviation market and economy.

Menzies' U.S. footprint has doubled to over 110 locations, expanding services at more airports, including the world's busiest Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL) and major airline hubs such as Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and Denver International Airport (DEN).

The deal improves Menzies' global connectivity, enabling customers to benefit from Menzies' industry-leading safety and se-

curity standards and operational excellence on arrival and departure at more locations. It will also strengthen Menzies' ability to support airports and airlines with progressing their sustainability goals, such as reducing scope three targets.

Philipp Joeinig, Group CEO, Menzies Aviation said: "This deal isn't just scale for the sake of scale. It's high-volume, high-readiness infrastructure that meets growing airline demand for seam-

less, multi-airport service coverage. It provides an opportunity to raise standards for aviation services across the U.S and globally through the roll out of our industry-leading training, safety, sustainability and technology across all new operations.

With our reach extending into dozens of new local economies, we see the G2 Menzies combination unlocking job creation and upskilling opportunities. G2 has built a successful business, and we're focused on working together to capitalise on our strengths to support our 20,000-strong U.S. team to deliver greater value for our partners."

G2's operations will be re-branded as Menzies Aviation. Integration will begin immediately, deploying Menzies' global standards for training, safety, sustainability and technology across all new operations to ensure a seamless transition for employees, customers and partners.

About Menzies Aviation

Menzies Aviation is the leading service partner to the world's airports and airlines, with operations on six continents, at more than 350 airports in 65-plus countries, serving more than 4.8 million flights a year and handling over 2.4 million tonnes of cargo.

Supported by a team of over 65,000 highly trained people, the company provides complex and time-critical ground services, including passenger, lounge and ramp services; air cargo services, including handling, warehousing and wholesale freight forwarding; and fuel services, including fuel farm management and into-plane fuelling.

Menzies Aviation is recognised across the industry for delivering the safest, most secure and sustainable services tailored to customers' needs and is essential to keeping passengers, aircraft and cargo moving, round the clock, every minute of every day.

Menzies Aviation is headquartered in London, and since its founding in 1833, has become the largest aviation services group in the world by number of countries, airports and aircraft turns.

<http://www.menziesaviation.com>

Boursa Kuwait ends Wednesday divided

All Share Index slips 14 points

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27, (KUNA): Kuwait's stock market closed Wednesday's session on a mixed note, with the All Share Index edging down by 14.33 points (0.17%) to settle at 8,565.39 points.

Overall trading activity saw 489.4 million shares change hands across 24,089 transactions, with a total market value of KD 112.7 million (USD 343.7 million).

The Main Market Index posted gains, climbing 30.07 points (0.38%) to close at 7,908.16 points. This per-

formance came on the back of 269 million shares traded through 13,408 transactions, worth KD 48.6 million (USD 148.2 million).

In contrast, the Premier Market Index fell by 26.12 points (0.28%), ending at 9,152.56 points. Trading volume for this segment amounted to 220.3 million shares across 10,681 transactions, with a total value of KD 64 million (USD 195.2 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index advanced 29.03 points (0.36%) to close at 8,018.79 points, as investors exchanged 192.9 million shares in 8,539 cash transactions, valued at KD 40.8 million (USD 124.4 million).

Event runs Aug 25-30 at Methaq HQ

Kuwait hosts UAE real estate showcase with top developers

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: Methaq Real Estate Company, in cooperation with the Emirati company Arada Real Estate Development, launched its first Emirati real estate event in Kuwait.

The event is being held at the headquarters of the company in Kuwait, with Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to Kuwait Dr. Matar Al Neyadi in attendance, along with a group of prominent investors and developers from various Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

General Manager of Methaq Abdul Raouf Abdullah disclosed that the event is being held for five days -- Aug 25-30, indicating it is a real opportunity to highlight joint investment opportunities in the Gulf real estate market.

Abdullah pointed out that Methaq has partnerships with major real estate development companies in the UAE, stressing that the UAE is one of the most attractive Gulf real estate markets for investors and capital, as it offers promising opportunities for both investment and private real estate.

He said the company has signed partnership agreements with three of the largest real estate development companies in the UAE -- Arada Properties in Sharjah, Aldar Properties in Abu Dhabi and Emaar Properties in Dubai.

He emphasized the importance of the event in introducing citizens and investors to investment opportunities

and major real estate projects in the UAE market, such as the 'Masar' and 'Aljada' projects. He pointed out that the projects on display are considered a real investment opportunity, as they are displayed before the launch -- a good price opportunity for cash holders.

He added the agreement is concluded directly between the seller and buyer, without the intervention of brokers. He confirmed that the company provides investors and citizens with numerous services, from monitoring the sale process between the buyer and the real estate development company, to issuing the title deed and providing all types of real estate consultations.

Regarding the types of projects on display, he revealed that the projects offered are diverse, ranging from investment, residential and commercial. "The best real estate developers are selected to launch projects that align with the needs and desires of investors, with distinctive architectural designs," he affirmed.

Sales Manager at Arada Real Estate Development Company Ahmed Al-Ashry said Arada is participating in the event with the Masar project in the Emirate of Sharjah, on an area of 19 million square feet, and it specializes in providing independent villas and townhouses, offering between 3,500 and 4,000 villas based on the Arab and Islamic style, with a high degree of privacy that suits the Kuwaiti and Gulf citizen in general.

From Brandon Hall Group

KFH wins 9 global awards in human resources for 2025

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Group has won 9 global awards in human resources for 2025 from the renowned Brandon Hall Group, a company specialized in the evaluation and performance assessment of banks, companies and institutions around the world.

This year, KFH Group has successfully bagged the highest number of accolades for the fourth consecutive year both locally and regionally. This milestone affirms the Group's leadership in Human Resources and its sustainable success in applying the highest global standards and modern practices in attracting, managing, and developing human capital. This success also reflects the Group's ability in utilizing capabilities, skills, and talents to deliver high-level productivity and results in a sustainable and professional manner aligned with its strategic objectives.

The 9 awards earned by KFH Group are:

- Best High Potential Development (Gold)
- Best New Hire Onboarding Program (Gold)
- Best Unique or Innovative Learning and Development Program (Gold)
- Best Talent Acquisition Process (Silver)
- Best Learning Experience Platform-LXP Implementation (Silver)
- Best Talent Management Strategy (Silver)
- Best Certification Program (Silver)
- Best Governance Model for Talent Management (Bronze)
- Best Certification Program (KFH – Egypt) (Gold)

This year's edition marked the first participation of KFH-Egypt, which was crowned with winning a prestigious award. This accomplishment underscores the Group's dedication to promoting excellence across various markets.

Brandon Hall's assessment for the winning institutions was based on several criteria, most notably that the implemented programs meet the organization's needs, are unique in terms of design, presentation, and results, and deliver substantial, measurable, in addition to sustainable benefits with a tangible positive impact across the organization.

On this occasion, KFH Acting Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Ahmad Alhammad, stated: "These awards are a recognition of KFH Group's efforts in managing its human capital, the most valuable and distinctive strength, and the cornerstone of the

Group's operations and activities worldwide."

He added that the prestigious achievement reaffirms KFH's leadership in applying best practices that align with the global standards in Human Resources, positively impacting employees' overall performance, and consequently in the institution's reputation, standing, and the quality of services it delivers to customers.

Alhammad further noted that winning the Brandon Hall awards, for the fourth consecutive year, across different categories of the most important Human Resources aspects, underlines the success of KFH Group's vision in the optimal management of its human capital.

"This achievement reflects the Group's advanced and comprehensive approach, starting from recruitment and talent acquisition, followed by qualification and training through innovative and unique programs in collaboration with leading international universities and professional training institutions," he remarked.

"The Group's approach extends to career development, youth empowerment, and leadership building, with a strong focus on employee loyalty, engagement, and recognition programs, while leveraging technology and data analytics to ensure high-quality and accurate performance as well as keeping pace with the rapid transformations in the banking industry," added Alhammad.

Developing competencies

He explained that KFH has successfully designed and delivered a High-Potential Development program to build future leaders in line with its core values of partnership, leadership and accountability, while strengthening employee retention and leadership progression. It includes foundational training, and a core leadership curriculum which focuses on communication, emotional intelligence, negotiation and data analytics. KFH also delivered the Building Leadership Excellence program (BLE) which features an international experience at IE Business School in Madrid, alongside continuous development opportunities through institutions such as the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), and Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies (KIBS).

Learning and development

Alhammad highlighted KFH's scholarship program, a fully funded initiative launched by KFH in 2014. The program allows employees to earn Bachelor's and



Ahmad Alhammad

Alhammad:

■ The awards affirm our leadership and excellence in the acquisition, management and development of the best talents

Master's degrees at accredited universities in Kuwait. "The program covers 100% of academic costs, including tuition and other academic-related expenses" commented Alhammad. "This initiative reflects KFH's belief that investing in employees' knowledge directly enhances the organization's strength, innovation, and competitiveness."

He stated that the program sponsored 79 employees since its inception, with 32 of them currently enrolled in academic programs. Also, of the 79 researchers, 27 employees moved into managerial positions. He went on to say that KFH is implementing an integrated plan to continuously train its employees and enhance their expertise, noting that the Forssah program which contributed to increasing professionalism at work and performance excellence.

Talent acquisition

Alhammad said that the Best Governance Model for Talent Management award recognizes KFH's success in designing a rigorous mechanism to support people-related administrative decisions that account for each employee's journey and achievements. He noted that KFH adopts a leading talent-management strategy and an employee retention program aimed at preserving high-potential junior talent through incentives that increase progressively with years of service.

He affirmed the Bank's continuous strat-



Brandon Hall award

egy of attracting and developing human talents that can drive positive change and keep pace with growth. This is achieved by recruiting top-tier talents, particularly ambitious young Kuwaitis and providing them with specialized, world-class training and celebrating graduates, high achievers, outstanding capabilities, creative initiatives, and innovative ideas.

Onboarding of new hires

Speaking about onboarding new hires, Alhammad pointed out that, in parallel with the completion of the first-ever acquisition project in the banking sector, KFH succeeded in developing and implementing a comprehensive strategy to onboard new colleagues joining from the formerly AUB. He further noted that KFH is characterized by its distinctive work environment with strong internal communication and transparency. Additionally, the Bank spares no effort in providing the latest technologies to develop employees and maximize career growth opportunities. "Human capital at KFH is the cornerstone and the true asset behind its success and for maintaining the Group's global leadership," he noted.

Investing in training

Alhammad said that KFH has the best in-house Oracle-based Learning Experience Platform (LXP), which revolutionizes talent development through a personalized and engaging learning experience. The platform aligns with KFH's organization-

al goals, supports employee growth, and empowers them to achieve their career aspirations while contributing to business success. LXP serves as a key enabler of a culture of continuous learning and innovation. He noted that KFH continues to promote this culture by fostering the employee-led approach through the innovative Oracle Fusion HCM Cloud system. The Bank also delivered a series of programs in collaboration with renowned institutions such as Headspring, IE University, Financial Times, INSEAD, and others.

Accredited programs and certifications

He also mentioned the Wealth Management Practitioner program as one of KFH's flagship initiatives for business growth. Developed in collaboration with Moody's, this specialized certification is designed exclusively for KFH's Private Banking Department. This program equips professionals with advanced technical knowledge and behavioral skills, ensuring they are well-prepared to tackle both local and international markets and deliver exceptional value to high-net-worth clients.

Alhammad reaffirmed that KFH's scholarship program for Kuwaiti employees provides full financial sponsorship and comprehensive career support for high-potential employees to complete their degrees, along with benefits that help them achieve work-life balance.

China-Arab trade hits record

1.72 trillion yuan in Jan-July '25

BEIJING, Aug 27, (Xinhua): Trade between China and members of the Arab League reached 1.72 trillion yuan (about 241.61 billion U.S. dollars) during the first seven months of 2025, setting a record for this period and rising 3.2 percent year on year, official data showed on Tuesday.

According to the General Administration of Customs, bilateral trade has expanded steadily in recent years -- with China remaining this bloc's largest trading partner for several consecutive years.

In July alone, two-way trade reached 245.31 billion yuan, up 6.9 percent year on year. China exported 135.54 billion yuan worth of goods to the bloc last month, while imports totaled 109.77 billion yuan.

Complementary economies and a mutually beneficial trade structure continue to fuel cooperation between the two sides. From January to July, more than 40 percent of China's crude oil imports were sourced from this bloc.

During the same period, China shipped 557.66 billion yuan of machinery and electronic products to the bloc, accounting for nearly 60 percent of its total exports to the bloc.

China is also deepening agricultural collaboration with the bloc, providing support in developing modern farming systems while expanding imports of signature agricultural products, such as Egyptian frozen strawberries, Lebanese chocolate and Algerian wool.

Lebanon, Kuwait explore healthcare cooperation

Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa hosts Lebanese delegation

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: The Chairman and CEO of Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co., Mr. Faisal Ali Al Mutawa, and the Deputy CEO, Mr. Khaled Faisal Al Mutawa, had the honor of welcoming H.E. Michel Menassa, Minister of National Defense of the Republic of Lebanon, and his accompanying delegation, in the presence of Ms. Maya Al Ouzom, Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Lebanon in Kuwait, Colonel Pharmacist Nader Choukair, Head of the Medical Supply Department in the Military Medical Corps, and Lieutenant Colonel Michel Mini, Head of the Office of the Minister of National Defense, during his official visit to the State of Kuwait.

The discussions also touched upon the possibility of cooperation between the Lebanese Ministry of Defense and the private sector in the healthcare field.



Lebanese Defense Minister visits Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Co.

As part of its social responsibility and support for Kuwait's future tech and business leaders

talabat hosts Academy X participants at its headquarters

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: In continued efforts to inspire and support the future generation of leaders in Kuwait, talabat, the leading on-demand online ordering platform in the MENA region, hosted 30 students currently taking part in Academy X. The headquarters visit comes as part of talabat's social responsibility strategy and its ongoing sponsorship of Academy X, Kuwait's largest women's empowerment initiative in the tech and entrepreneurship industry, led by CODED Academy. It further aligns with the company's proactive role in advancing Kuwait's technology industry and digital economy, empowering women and young girls, and contributing to the goals of New Kuwait Vision 2035.

Designed to complement students' Academy X journey, the talabat HQ visit included a number of dynamic workshops and discussions with employees from various departments, providing students with first-hand insight into the fast-evolving technology sector. The visit concluded with a competition that put the students' newly acquired Academy X skills to test, featuring challenges that incorporated use cases of AI tools and other app and web development solutions.



talabat - Academy X Students HQ visit

Commenting on the HQ visit, Bader Al-Ghanim, Vice President and Managing Director of talabat Kuwait, said: "We were delighted to host the ambitious Academy X participants at our Kuwait HQ and share our experiences in building a career in technology. This collaboration with CODED Academy stems from our firm belief in the importance of bridging theoretical knowledge and practical experi-

ence in a hands-on professional setting, which helps students gain valuable insights that inspire their dreams and guide their decisions."

He added that an essential part of supporting youth in STEM involves not only shedding a light on inspiring role models but also actively addressing the systemic barriers they face. By fostering an inclusive environment and promoting mentorship, talabat is committed to



equipping the next generation with the tools and confidence to overcome challenges and capitalize on the growing opportunities within the industry.

On his part, Hashim Behbehani, Co-founder and Chief Operations Officer of CODED, said: "Following the success of the first and second cohorts of Academy X, we look forward to launching the third cohort in September with the

goal of empowering even more young Kuwaiti women to build a generation of female tech leaders. We firmly believe that continued investment in this segment is the key to addressing the national need for female talents in leadership positions through hands-on training focused on tech entrepreneurship."

He added: "We are proud to continue our strategic partnership with talabat for the second year in

a row. Their strong support plays a vital role in empowering national talent while linking training to real opportunities and challenges from within the Kuwaiti market."

He concluded: "We thank talabat for their renewed trust in CODED Academy and for believing in our mission to empower young Kuwaiti women and build a generation of tech leaders ready to shape the future."

Following the notable success of the 2024 edition, Academy X, with the help of talabat and other sponsors, expanded its 2025 edition to host 400 fully-funded participants, ages 14-18, spanning different cohorts. The intensive program introduced students to key skills, including leadership and soft skills, foundations of entrepreneurship, as well as the latest artificial intelligence (AI) tools, app and web development, and user interface and user experience design (UI/UX).

With one more cohort remaining in this year's edition, talabat will continue its sponsorship of the program, ensuring it receives the necessary support to host a bigger number of students and deliver a rounded and up-to-date learning experience that strengthens its impact and role in empowering women in technology.

Pentagon invests \$400 mln to boost domestic magnet production

US ramps up rare-earth production to challenge China’s monopoly

OMAHA, Aug 27, (AP): U.S. production of crucial components in electric vehicles, smartphones and fighter jets is set to expand rapidly in the coming years, as the Trump administration intensifies efforts to build up the critical mineral industry in the United States to work to break the chokehold that China has on the global supply chain.

The federal government is pumping hundreds of millions of dollars into American companies, has made an agreement with one firm to set a minimum price for some U.S.-produced critical minerals, and has launched an investigation into foreign-made supplies.

“This is the Manhattan Project moment for rare earths,” said Joshua Ballard, CEO of USA Rare Earth, which plans next year to start making the rare-earth magnets that appear in many products.

The White House has made it a priority to revive the domestic critical minerals industry, which is proving urgent after Beijing leveraged its near-monopoly on the products to force the U.S. to the negotiating table during a trade war.

President Donald Trump said this week that China “intelligently went and they sort of took a monopoly of the world’s magnets,” but he expressed confidence in securing supplies because the U.S. has “much bigger and better cards.”

“We’re going to have a lot of magnets in a pretty short period of time. In fact, we’ll have so many, we won’t know what to do with them,” he said as he hosted South Korean President Lee Jae Myung.

Industry insiders, analysts and lawmakers have warned for years that America’s dependence on China for critical minerals - a list of 50 minerals that includes 17 sought-after rare-earth elements - is a national vulnerability.

The hard-to-pronounce elements are needed in smartphones, wind turbines and robots as well as missiles, submarines and fighter jets.

“Our national and economic security are now acutely threatened by our reliance upon hostile foreign powers’ mineral production,” an executive order from Trump declared in March.

It was not until Beijing rolled out export restrictions on several rare earths in April - leading to a temporary halt of Ford’s electric vehicle production - that “the problem that for over a decade seemed far away hit close to home,” said Gracelin Baskaran, director of the Critical Minerals Security Program at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Trump said Monday that he could charge 200% tariffs on Chinese goods if Beijing does not export magnets to the U.S. but noted “that’s perhaps behind us.” Instead, he said he could withhold airplane parts to ground China’s American-made Boeing jets.

When asked about the leverage, Guo Jiakun, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman, said Tuesday that Beijing “follows the principle of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and mutually beneficial cooperation” in dealing with the U.S.

“We hope the U.S. will work with us to jointly promote the steady, sound and sustainable development of bilateral ties,” Guo said.

The Pentagon is investing \$400 million in rare-earth producer MP Materials. It gave the U.S. company a \$150 million loan this month, has promised to ensure every magnet made at its massive new plant is bought and set a minimum price for its neodymium and praseodymium products for a decade.

“It looks like we’re going to finally do something to address that issue and



This photo provided by NioCorp shows geologists examining core samples taken from under southeast Nebraska near Elk Creek where NioCorp hopes to build a rare earths mine one day. (AP)

make these projects a reality,” said Mark Smith, CEO of NioCorp, an American company working to raise \$1.2 billion to produce niobium, titanium, scandium and rare earths in Nebraska.

Over four decades, Smith said he’s seen how the U.S. ceded the industry to China, which came to dominate the supply chain by brushing aside environmental concerns, investing in mines worldwide, developing advanced processing technology and setting low prices to squeeze out competition.

Previous efforts by U.S. companies to eke out a viable business proved futile when China flooded the market with low-priced products, chasing away potential investors.

NioCorp recently secured up to \$10 million from the Pentagon, which helped pay for exploratory drilling this summer.

While it is unclear if the government would extend a minimum-price deal to other U.S. companies, Smith said the current support is “unbelievable” compared with the past. A price floor, he said, “just takes away the Chinese modus operandi that they’ve had for forever.”

About 220 miles away from where MP Materials is building a magnet plant in Fort Worth, Texas, Noveon Magnetics runs America’s only factory currently making rare-earth magnets. Located south of Austin, it is ramping up production to make 2,000 tons of magnets a year.

“I certainly hope and think it actually is not what may be the last of the efforts by the U.S. government,” Noveon Magnetics CEO Scott Dunn said of the Pentagon-MP Materials partnership.

Even with all the new production aiming to come online in the next few years, American companies are still nowhere near being able to satisfy North America’s demand for roughly 35,000 tons of magnets a year, analysts at Benchmark Mineral Intelligence estimate. And the demand could double in the next decade.

Ballard, whose USA Rare Earth plans to start making about 600 tons of magnets in Oklahoma next year, said the government can provide incentives to stop American buyers from falling back on cheap Chinese products once they are widely available again.

This year’s big tax and spending cut bill includes \$2 billion for the Pentagon to boost the U.S. stockpile of critical minerals and \$5 billion more through 2029 to invest in those supply chains.

Between 2020 and 2024, the Pentagon said it had awarded more than \$439 million to establish supply chains for domestic rare earths.

Domestic investments aside, Trump has tried to secure access to critical minerals outside of the U.S., including from Greenland and Ukraine. A peace deal the administration helped broker between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda might provide access to critical minerals, but it’s too early to tell if those efforts will succeed.

Derek Scissors, senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, said he’s concerned that Trump could consider it a success if China agrees to guarantee rare-earth supplies in trade talks.

“I don’t think there will be such a deal or, if there is, that it will last,” Scissors said. “But it is a threat to U.S. economic independence.”

David Abraham, a rare-metals expert who wrote the book “The Elements of Power,” said new U.S. mines are years away.

“Everyone agrees the U.S. still has to work out a deal with the Chinese because American companies need more rare earths and specialized magnets than can be produced domestically,” he said.

\$800 de minimis rule ends early

US ends duty-free rule for low-value imports

NEW YORK, Aug 27, (AP): Low-value imports are losing their duty-free status in the United States this week as part of President Donald Trump’s agenda for making the nation less dependent on foreign goods and resetting global trade with tariffs.

An executive order signed last month eliminates a widely used customs exemption for international shipments worth \$800 or less starting Friday, nearly two years earlier than the deadline set in the tax cuts and spending bill approved by Congress.

Although the president previously ended the “de minimis” rule for inexpensive items sent from China and Hong Kong, having to pay import taxes on small parcels from everywhere else likely will be a big change for some small businesses and online shoppers.

Purchases that previously entered the U.S. without needing to clear customs will require vetting and be subject to their origin country’s applicable tariff rate, which can range from 10% to 50%. For the next six months, carriers handling orders sent through the global mail network also can choose a flat duty of \$80 to \$200 per package instead of the value-based rate.

In response, the national postal services of more than a dozen countries said they would temporarily suspend sending some or most U.S.-bound packages due to confusion over processing and payment requirements. Japan and Switzerland on Monday joined Australia, Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, Thailand, the U.K. and New Zealand in saying they would pause shipments.

The Trump administration says the exemption has become a loophole that foreign businesses exploit to evade tariffs and criminals use to get drugs, counterfeit products and other contraband into the U.S. Former President Joe Biden and members of Congress also discussed the issue.

Other countries have similar exemptions, but the threshold is usually lower. For example, 150 euros (\$175) is the value limit in the 20 European Union countries that use the euro as their official currency. The U.K. allows foreign businesses to send parcels worth up to 135 pounds (\$182) without incurring tariff charges.

In the U.S., the “de minimis” - Latin for lacking significance or importance - exemption started in 1938 as a way to save the federal government the time and expense of collecting duties on imported goods with a retail value of \$1 or less. U.S. lawmakers eventually increased the eligibility cutoff to \$5 in 1990, to \$200 in 1993 and to \$800 in 2015, according to the Congressional Research Service.

Since then, the number of shipments claiming de minimis treatment has exploded. A total of 1.36 billion packages with a combined value of \$64.6 billion reached the U.S. last year, compared to 134 million packages sent under the exemption in 2015, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency reported.

About 60% of the 2024 shipments came from China and Hong Kong, according to an analysis logistics firm Flexport prepared based on U.S. government data. Multiple countries and regions accounted for the remainder, including Canada, Mexico, the European Union, India and Vietnam.

Proponents of limiting the exemption argue that it has served as a way for China-founded retail platforms like Temu and Shein to flood the U.S. with low-priced goods. The National Council of Textile Organizations said the move would help close a “backdoor pipeline for cheap, subsidized,

and often illegal, toxic and unethical imports.” But some smaller American companies that rely on imported products and materials benefited from the exemption too.

Kristin Trainor is worried the end of de minimis will also mean the end of Diesel and Lulu’s, her 3-year-old boutique in Avon, Connecticut. Over 70% of the women’s clothes and accessories she stocks comes from small fashion houses in France, Italy and Spain. Trainor places small batch orders each week that fall under the \$800 threshold.

“Our business model is to provide casual chic and unique clothes at affordable prices,” she said. “The added customs and duty charges that will go into effect on Aug. 29 will eliminate that affordability.”

Trainor said she was looking to replace her European vendors with ones based in the U.S. But her bestselling product categories, such as apparel made of Italian linen, come from other countries. She estimates a simple linen sundress that cost \$30 wholesale at the beginning of the year will rise to \$43 next month.

After a corporate career, Trainor opened the store to have more time with her 9-year-old son and her 91-year old father. Raising the boutique’s prices to absorb part of the import charges would help offset higher shipping and logistics costs, but Trainor worries her customers will balk at higher prices.

“I have not made any official announcements to my customers just yet, although they have started to ask if I will stay open as they understand the economic impacts that are occurring,” she said. “At this point, I am leaning more and more towards closing the boutique, sadly.”

Ken Huening started CoverSeal, his business making and selling protective covers for cars, motorcycles, grills and patio furniture, in 2020. The company is based in Los Gatos, California, and the covers are manufactured in Mexico and China. When a customer places an order, it ships from Mexico.

Although a trade agreement that took effect in 2020 has made most goods from Mexico and Canada exempt from country-specific U.S. tariffs, the withdrawal of the de minimis rule applies to all countries.

Huening said he’ll either have to raise prices or end free shipping now that his products will be taxed when they are sent from Mexico to U.S. customers. He’s looked at setting up a U.S. production and logistics network but says domestic sewing facilities and textile manufacturers do not exist for the engineered fabric used in CoverSeal’s products.

“We are often asked why we don’t just establish a U.S. supply chain,” he said. “It is not possible in the short term. By the time the infrastructure is established, many companies and small businesses will be out of business.”

Shannen Knight imports hard-to-find sports goggles and glasses as the owner of A Sight For Sport Eyes, her online store and shop in West Linn, Oregon. She routinely received shipments from the U.K., the Netherlands and Italy that fell under the de minimis dollar cutoff.

Knight estimated that she would need to raise the retail price of the rugby goggles she gets from Italy by 50%. It took the International Rugby Board two years of testing to approve the Italian-made goggles, a specialty item without strong prospects for stateside production, she said.

“There are products that it just makes sense to be made internationally, where there is the stronger demand for them, but there still is some demand for in the U.S.,” Knight said.

US consumer confidence dips in August amid job market worries

Consumers expect higher prices, rising recession fears

WASHINGTON, Aug 27, (AP): Americans’ view of the U.S. economy declined modestly in August as anxiety over a weakening job market grew for the eighth straight month.

The Conference Board said Tuesday that its consumer confidence index ticked down by 1.3 points to 97.4 in August, down from July’s 98.7, but in the same narrow range of the past three months.

The small decline in confidence was in line with the forecasts of most of the economists who were surveyed.

A measure of Americans’ short-term expectations for their income, business conditions and the job market fell by 1.2 points to 74.8, remaining significantly below 80, the marker that can signal a recession ahead.

Consumers’ assessments of their current economic situation also fell modestly, to 131.2 in August from 132.8 in July.

While the unemployment and layoffs remain historically low, there has been noticeable deterioration in the labor market this year and mounting evidence that people are having difficulty finding jobs.

U.S. employers added just 73,000 jobs in July, well short of the 115,000 analysts expected. Worse, revisions to the May and June figures shaved 258,000 jobs off previous estimates and the unemployment rate ticked up to 4.2% from 4.1%.

That report sent financial markets spiraling, spurring President Donald Trump to fire Erika McEntarfer, the head of Bureau of Labor Statistics, which tallies the monthly employment numbers.

Another government report showed that U.S. employers posted 7.4 million job vacancies in June, down from 7.7 million in May. The number of people quitting their jobs - a sign of confidence in their prospects elsewhere - also fell.

More jobs data comes next week when the government releases its August job gains and June job

openings reports.

The Conference Board’s report said that references to high prices and inflation increased again and were often mentioned in tandem with tariffs.

Other government data this month showed that while prices at the consumer level held fairly steady from June to July, U.S. wholesale inflation surged unexpectedly last month. Economists say that’s a sign that Trump’s sweeping taxes on imports are pushing costs up and that higher prices for consumers may be on the way.

The share of consumers expecting a recession over the next year rose in August to the highest level since April, when Trump’s tariff rollout began.

The share of survey respondents who said they intended to buy a car in the near future rose, while those planning to purchase a home remained stable after July’s decline.

Those saying they planned to buy big-ticket items like appliances fell, but there were big variations among product categories. Respondents who said they planned to take a vacation soon, either inside of the U.S. or abroad, also declined.

India faces \$48 bln export hit from new US duties

US imposes steep 50% tariffs on Indian goods

NEW DELHI, Aug 27, (AP): Steep U.S. tariffs on a range of Indian products took effect Wednesday, threatening a serious blow to India’s overseas trade in its largest export market.

President Donald Trump had initially announced a 25% tariff on Indian goods. But earlier this month he signed an executive order imposing an additional 25% tariff due to India’s purchases of Russian oil, bringing the combined tariffs imposed by the U.S. on its ally to 50%.

The Indian government estimates the tariffs will impact \$48.2 billion worth of exports. Officials have warned the new duties could make shipments to the U.S. commercially unviable, triggering job losses and slower economic growth.

India-U.S. trade relations have expanded in recent years but remain vulnerable to disputes over market access and domestic political pressures. India is one of the fastest-growing major global economies and it may face a slowdown as a result.

Estimates by New Delhi-based think tank Global Trade Research Initiative suggest labor-intensive sectors such as textiles, gems and jewelry, leather goods, food and automobiles will be hit hardest.

“The new tariff regime is a strategic shock that threatens to wipe out India’s long-established presence in the U.S., causing unemployment in export-driven hubs and weakening its role in the industrial value chain,” said Ajay Srivastava, the think tank’s founder and a former Indian trade official.

The U.S. has for now exempted some sectors such as pharmaceuticals and electronic goods from additional tariffs, bringing some relief for India as its exposure in these sectors is significant.

Puran Dawar, a leather footwear exporter in northern India’s Agra city, says the industry would take a substantial hit in the near term unless domestic demand strengthens and other overseas markets buy more Indian goods.

“This is an absolute shock,” said Dawar, whose business with the U.S. has grown in recent years. Dawar’s cli-



Workers at a manufacturing unit make leather footwear in Agra, India, Monday, Aug. 25, 2025. (AP)

ents include the major fashion retailer Zara.

Dawar, who is also the regional chairman of the Council for Leather Exports - an export promotion body - said the U.S. should understand that the steep tariffs will hurt its own consumers.

Groups representing exporters warn that new import tariffs could hurt India’s small and medium enterprises that are heavily reliant on the American market.

“It’s a tricky situation. Some product lines will simply become unviable overnight,” said Ajay Sahai, director general of the Federation of Indian Export Organizations.

The tariffs come as the U.S. administration continues to push for greater access to India’s agriculture and dairy sectors.

India and the U.S. have held five rounds of negotiations for a bilateral trade agreement, but have yet to reach a deal. That’s largely because New Delhi has resisted opening these sectors to cheaper American imports, citing concerns that doing so would endanger the jobs of millions of Indians.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has vowed not to yield to the pressure.

“For me, the interests of farmers, small businesses and dairy are top-most. My government will ensure they aren’t impacted,” Modi said at a rally this week in his home state of Gujarat.

Modi said the world was witnessing a “politics of economic selfishness.”

A U.S. delegation canceled plans to visit New Delhi this week for a sixth round of trade talks.

The Indian government has begun

working on reforms to boost local consumption and insulate the economy.

It has moved to change the goods and services tax, or consumption tax, to lower costs for insurance, cars and appliances ahead of the major Hindu festival of Diwali in October.

The government council will meet early next month to decide whether to cut taxes.

The Trade Ministry and Finance Ministry are discussing financial incentives that would include favorable bank loan rates for exporters.

The Trade Ministry is also weighing steps to expand exports to other regions, particularly Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia. Trade negotiations underway with the European Union could gain renewed urgency as India works to reduce its dependence on the U.S. market.



Elijah Wood, (from left), Taylor Paige, and Jacob Tremblay pose for a portrait to promote 'The Toxic Avenger' during Comic-Con International on July 24, 2025, in San Diego. (AP)

Reboot finally arrives

A new 'Toxic Avenger' emerges from ooze

SAN DIEGO, Aug 27, (AP): "The Toxic Avenger" got stuck in the sludge.

Director Macon Blair's reboot of the classic 1980s cult superhero franchise from Troma Entertainment was shot four years ago and had its festival premiere two years ago, but for a long time, no theatrical distributors would bite.

It had bona fide stars, including Peter Dinklage as the tutu-wearing, mop-wielding, chemically-altered title vigilante, and Kevin Bacon and Elijah Wood as a villainous duo. But the buzz was it was just too weirdly violent for theaters.

"I was definitely anxious, but I never felt like it was going to be doomed," said Blair, an actor in films including "Oppenheimer" and "Green Room" who previously directed 2017's "I Don't Feel at Home in This World Anymore."

Now, Toxie, as he's commonly known, has emerged. Production company Legendary Entertainment struck a deal with Cineverse earlier this year to give it an unrated theater run in all its gory glory starting Friday.

Last month at Comic-Con International in San Diego, it was given a packed, rapturous panel in the massive, storied Hall H, as if it were a Marvel movie. The cast and creators sat with The Associated Press for an interview during the convention.

"To think that this is where it would have its sort of blast off moment is not something I ever would have expected," Blair told the AP. "I would have been happy to wait eight years if that's what the result is going to be."

Taylor Paige, who plays a whistleblower who teams with Toxie against Bacon's nuclear-polluter villain, was more blunt in her description of the long wait.

"It's like being constipated for a really long time," said Paige, to big laughs from the rest of the cast. "Because for years you're like, 'When am I gonna go?'"

Comedy

The film is a stew of tones and genres like few others. It's equal parts splatter, warmth and comedy. Its vibes are very indie, but it often feels big and super-heroic.

The film was a shift from Blair's other work as both actor and director.

"The idea of doing something that could be more of like a live-action cartoon was really exciting," he said. "I just kind of wanted it to be very over the top, very ridiculous and, in an affectionate way, very in tune with the vibe of Lloyd's original."

Lloyd is Lloyd Kaufman, creator of the franchise that began with the 1984 film and spawned three sequels, a stage musical, a comic-book series, a video game and an animated TV show.

But Kaufman said not until now did the real "Toxic Avenger" appear. His original never got to be as graphic as he wanted it to be because of the censors of the era.

"Macon talked about eight years, I had to wait 40 years to finally see this," he said. "The original got chopped up, mercilessly."

He knew from the start that Blair had the right sensibility.

"This Toxic Avenger by Mr. Macon is better than the original," Kaufman said. "Seriously, it is, it's a real film. It's not just a cartoony thing."

The film's earnest, family-centered plot features the "Game of Thrones" star Dinklage as Winston Gooze, a sad, down-on-his-luck janitor and single step-dad trying to win the approval of his stepson, played by Jacob Tremblay, who co-starred as a child with Brie Larson in her Oscar turn 2015's "Room."

An accident leaves Gooze mutated into the title hero, who is at-first horrified by the buckets of blood brought on by his supercharged mop, before embracing the righteous violence.

"He's a very kind man and trying to do the right thing," Dinklage said. "He's a stepfather, he's lost his wife, he's gained her son, and Winston has to walk eggshells because of that."

After Toxie's transformation, Dinklage provided only the voice while Luisa Guerreiro performs in a suit that fit the practical-effects style Blair insisted on embracing.

Tremblay was just 14 when the film was shot. He's 18 now for the release.

"Honestly, I mean it feels like it went by really quickly," Tremblay said.

Wood's character Fritz is ashen, hunched over and mostly bald with long strings of hair. He has notes of Danny DeVito's Penguin from "Batman Returns," Riff Raff from "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" and Wormtongue from Wood's own "Lord of the Rings" films. In other words, it may be the least Elijah Wood role's he's ever had.

Blair sent a concept drawing to Wood when he sent the script.

"I immediately fell in love with it and thought, 'Well, if we can achieve anything similar to this physically, it'll be fantastic,'" Wood said. "I don't get the opportunity to, to sort of transform like that often, so to play a character that is so bizarre and has a strange voice and physicality was awesome."

Blair straddled two worlds during postproduction as filming on "Oppenheimer," in which he played lawyer Lloyd Garrison, began.

"I'd shoot that during the days and then in the evenings I would go to the soundstage and do the sound mix into the night," he said. "But at the same time it felt like an embarrassment of riches as far as projects I was getting to do at the time, so I would have let it go forever."

Singer testifies, denies financial gain in second trial

Perry says she seeks 'justice' in \$15M mansion case

LOS ANGELES, Aug 27, (AP): A lawyer asked Katy Perry on Tuesday whether she stood to gain money or anything else from a trial in a long legal fight over a California mansion.

"Justice" was the one-word answer from the singing superstar, former "American Idol" judge and recent astronaut, part of an hour of remote testimony she gave in a Los Angeles courtroom.

In her tense, careful testimony, Perry wouldn't concede directly that she stood to gain money if she won, but did say, "I stand to lose money if it doesn't work in my favor."

She spoke during the second trial in a dispute over a \$15 million mansion in upscale Montecito near Santa Barbara that she and former partner Orlando Bloom bought in 2020.

The seller, 85-year-old Carl Westcott, said he was not mentally competent to make the deal and sued to undo it.

Perry's side - technically the defendant was her business manager, Bernie Gudvi - prevailed in the first trial in 2023. Then Gudvi, representing Perry, countersued over lost rental income brought on by the legal fight and millions in maintenance the house allegedly required. That brought on the current sequel trial.

Westcott's lawyer, Andrew J. Thomas, often tried to steer the conversation toward Bloom. Superior Court Judge Joseph Lipner ruled that the "Pirates of the Caribbean" and "Lord of the Rings" actor does not have to testify because it would be redundant and unnecessary, even though the house is officially owned by a company he set up.

Asked if she had any role in a remodel of the house Bloom oversaw, Perry replied that she acted as "partner and advisor."



Katy Perry arrives at the 11th Breakthrough Prize Ceremony on April 5, 2025, in Los Angeles. (AP)

er."

The couple, who split up in July, have a daughter together whose fifth birthday was Tuesday.

When asked about the nature of their partnership, Perry replied, "We're family for life."

Perry's attorney, Eric Rowen, objected to nearly every question by Thomas as irrelevant, including most of the queries about Bloom, which Lipner kept to a minimum.

Rowen objected especially angrily when Perry was asked if she knew that Westcott had entered a mental institution

earlier in the legal fight, apparently suggesting the question was an attack for the sake of the media present.

"This is, I don't want to say unethical, but this is simply an effort to drive a narrative to parties outside this courtroom," Rowen said. The judge sustained his objection and the question was not allowed.

The judge and lawyers referred to Perry as "Miss Hudson." Her legal name is Kathryn Elizabeth Hudson.

She's currently in the middle of an international tour, and has recently been tied to former Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. It wasn't clear where she was during Tuesday's questioning.

Thomas asked Perry repeatedly whether she had had enough cash on hand to buy the \$15 million mansion outright.

"I could have," she eventually said, "but I wanted to do a mortgage instead."

Perry conceded that in the previous trial, she said she intended to live in the mansion, not to rent it out. But renters including the family of actor Chris Pratt are central to this trial. There was discussion of having Pratt testify, but he was not on the final witness list.

There was one light moment at the end of Perry's testimony when she described some dealings with Westcott and said, "I was pregnant at the time."

She couldn't be heard clearly and Lipner said he had heard, "It was private."

"No, pregnant!" Perry said with a laugh.

Perry's own lawyer declined to cross-examine her and the judge excused her.

Film



Jury president Alexander Payne, (sixth from left), and jury members Zhao Tao, (from left), Fernanda Torres, Mohammad Rasoulof, Cristian Mungiu, Stephane Brize and Maura Delpero pose for photographers at the Jury photo call during the 82nd edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, on Wednesday, Aug. 27. (AP)

Anti-war activists aim to shift Venice spotlight to Gaza

Venice Film Festival kicks off with 'La Grazia'

VENICE, Italy, Aug 27, (AP): The Venice Film Festival is kicking off with the world premiere of Paolo Sorrentino's "La Grazia" on Wednesday.

The 82nd edition of the glamorous international film festival is playing host to many Hollywood stars, including George Clooney, Julia Roberts and Dwayne Johnson, and famed auteurs, from Guillermo del Toro to Kathryn Bigelow, who all have films debuting over the next 10 days. The conflict in Gaza has also already been an ever-present topic both outside the festival's walls, where protesters gathered, and during the news conferences.

The festival, which takes place on the Lido, chose to open with the newest film from one of Italy's most revered working filmmakers. "La Grazia" stars Sorrentino's longtime collaborator Toni Servillo as a fictional Italian president who is paralyzed by indecision near the end of his term, grappling with signing a bill that allows euthanasia and mourning his late wife.

Sorrentino said that he was inspired to write the film by a real case of an Italian president who pardoned a man that had killed his wife, who was suffering from Alzheimer's. The title of the film, can be translated to "the pardon" in English, he said.

"This was a moral dilemma that was interesting to tell," Sorrentino said. "I have thought for years that moral dilemmas are very interesting for storytelling."

Venice Film Festival director Alberto Barbera told The Associated Press that "La Grazia" took them by surprise.

"It's a different Sorrentino from what we are used to," Barbera said. "Far less baroque and formalistic than the previous films he made. It's a very unexpected story."

Sorrentino, best known for his Oscar-winning film "The Great Beauty," made his debut at the Venice Film Festival 24 years ago with the film "One Man Up." He also won the Silver Lion prize in 2021 for "The Hand of God," which went on to be nominated for an Oscar. Many films that premiere at Venice go on to Oscar nominations and wins.

"La Grazia" is one of the 21 films playing in the festival's main competition. Other titles vying for the prestigious Golden Lion prize include del Toro's "Frankenstein," Bigelow's "A House of Dynamite," Yorgos Lanthimos's "Bugonia," Benny Safdie's "The Smashing Machine" and Kaoutour Ben Hania's "The Voice of Hind Rajab."

Winners are decided on by a jury of international filmmakers and actors, including "Sideways" director Alexander Payne and Brazilian actor Fernanda Torres. Payne, who is president of this year's jury, said he arrived to Venice yesterday and was soon seated next to Francis Ford Coppola watching a restoration of a 1920s silent film.

"I thought, 'I'm in heaven,'" Payne said. "This is heaven."

News about the real world has also been top of mind at the festival, where steps away from the main headquarters, anti-war protesters gathered earlier Wednesday to

turn the spotlight to Gaza. A march is also planned for Saturday evening.

Martina Vergnano, an activist with the Social Centers of the Northeast, one of the protest organizers, said hundreds of associations, social centers and film festival participants had signed onto the petition to participate in the protest Saturday. Vergnano spoke in front of the red carpet alongside about a dozen protesters flying Palestinian flags and holding a banner that read: "Free Palestine, Stop the Genocide" with the time and date of Saturday's protest.

There have been calls to disinvite actors like Gal Gadot and Gerard Butler from attending the festival for their views, but Barbera said that the festival does not boycott artists, nor does it make political statements.

Sorrentino, who recently called the situation in Gaza a "genocide" was asked about Mubi, the company that is distributing his film. Mubi, the indie film shop behind last year's "The Substance," has come under scrutiny because of funder Sequoia Capital's ties to the Israeli military. The filmmaker redirected the floor to "somebody from Mubi," who declined to speak. A moderator redirected the conversation back to the film.

Payne also faced questions Wednesday afternoon about the conflict and Hollywood's responsibility to address it.

"I feel a little bit unprepared for that question," Payne said. "I'm here to judge and talk about cinema."

The festival runs through Sept. 6.

ately respond to a request for comment Tuesday.. (AP)

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DHAKA: The "Radiant Stars: Lingjiatan Culture Photo Exhibition from Anhui, China," co-organized by the Chinese Embassy in Bangladesh, the Anhui Museum, and the Bangladesh National Museum, was inaugurated here on Monday, drawing an audience of over 600.

Attendees included Syeda Rizwana Hasan, adviser to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the Ministry of Water Resources of Bangladesh, and Sun Yong, vice governor of China's Anhui Province, together with representatives from Chinese enterprises, overseas Chinese associations in Bangladesh, local friendship organizations, as well as teachers and students.

Through 50 display panels marking the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Bangladesh and 38 sets of jade replicas, the exhibition presents a comprehensive picture of the rich historical heritage and profound cultural significance of the Lingjiatan site.

Sun said that this exhibition serves as a vibrant window into Anhui's splendid culture and a grand feast of China-Bangladesh cultural exchange, providing a valuable opportunity for the peoples of both countries to enhance mutual understanding and friendship. (Xinhua)

Variety

VIENNA: A German court on Tuesday convicted a 16-year-old boy accused of supporting a foiled plot to attack Taylor Swift concerts in Austria last year.

The Syrian national, whom prosecutors have identified only as Mohammad A. in line with German privacy rules, was convicted of preparing a serious act of violence and supporting a terrorist act of violence abroad. The Berlin court gave him a suspended 18-month sentence.

Judges found that the defendant, then aged 14, supported the ideology of the Islamic State group at the time and was in contact via social media with a young man in neighboring Austria who planned to attack a Swift concert in Vienna.

The court said they found that, among other things, the defendant sent his acquaintance a video with bomb-building instructions and organized contact with an IS member.



Swift

Three Swift concerts in Vienna were canceled on Aug. 7, 2024, when the plot was discovered. Austrian authorities made three arrests.

The defendant made a "comprehensive confession" at his trial, which was held behind closed doors because of his age, according to the court. The verdict can be appealed. (AP)

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NEW YORK: Devon Walker is leaving "Saturday Night Live," in the first of what could be several cast departures as the storied program prepares for its 51st season.

"Me and the show did three years together, and sometimes it was really cool," Walker wrote Monday on Instagram. "Sometimes it was toxic as hell. But we did what we made the most of what it was, even amidst all of the dysfunction."

The note in his post was titled: "wait ... did he quit or did he get fired?"

Walker's announcement comes as "SNL" creator Lorne Michaels is saying that he anticipates changes following the show's historic 50th season. No cast members had announced their departure following the season's conclusion. In an interview with Puck that ran last week, Michaels answered "yes" when asked if he expected to "shake things up."

"It'll be announced in a week or so," he said then. Representative for "Saturday Night Live" did not immedi-

Superstars’ love story hits a new chapter

A fairytale ending: Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce are engaged

KANSAS CITY, Mo., Aug 27, (AP): It’s a love story and, baby, she said yes: Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce are engaged, they announced Tuesday.

In a five-photo joint post on Instagram, the superstar singer and football player revealed their engagement, the fairytale culmination of a courtship that for two years has thrilled and fascinated millions around the world, but especially Swifties, the pop star’s enormous and ardent fan base.

“Your English teacher and your gym teacher are getting married,” the caption read, accompanied by an emoji of a dynamite stick.

Kelce was a famous football player when they met - a star tight end for the Kansas City Chiefs and a Super Bowl champion - but Swift’s unique level of fame catapulted him into a different orbit entirely. Their relationship was documented in countless shots of Swift celebrating at Chiefs games and fan videos of Kelce dancing along at Swift’s Eras concert tour as it traveled the globe.

There were those who speculated, with no evidence, that the relationship was not genuine but a cynical ploy for more fame, while some even theorized it was a plot to influence the US elections. In the end, those voices were quieted by a happy couple who simply looked in love - now with an engagement ring rivaling the size of Kelce’s three Super Bowl rings.

It’s unclear when and where the two, both 35, got engaged. Representatives for Swift and Kelce did not immediately respond to The Associated Press’ request for comment on that detail, though Swift publicist Tree Paine confirmed the engagement ring was an old mine brilliant-cut diamond from Kindred Lubeck. Scarcely over an hour later, Kelce was stretching for practice in Kansas City, Missouri.

The Chiefs do not anticipate making Kelce available until next week in Brazil, where they open the season against the Chargers in Sao Paulo.

It’s been just two weeks since Swift - and Kelce - last ignited a media frenzy, with the announcement of her new album, “The Life of a Showgirl.” (It comes out Oct. 3.) Kelce and his brother, former Philadelphia Eagles center Jason Kelce, assisted Swift with the rollout, hosting her on their typically football-oriented podcast, “New Heights.” During the episode, she likened her career to her now-fiance’s, saying their jobs were “to entertain people for three hours in NFL stadiums.”

When Jason Kelce asked his brother and Swift, sitting side-by-side, how they handled the discourse around their relationship, Swift said they just



Kansas City Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce, (right), is congratulated by Taylor Swift as they celebrate the Chiefs victory over the Buffalo Bills in the AFC Championship NFL football game, Jan. 26, 2025, in Kansas City, Mo. (AP)

didn’t.

“We don’t, really. I don’t see a lot of things,” she said. “My name can be in the actual headline, and it’s none of my business.”

The pair started dating during Swift’s landmark Eras tour - though Kelce, despite bearing a friendship bracelet, was thwarted in his first attempt to meet Swift at her concert at Arrowhead Stadium. But by September, Swift was back at the Kansas City stadium, cheering on Kelce next to his mother. Less than two months later, she was changing lyrics onstage: “Karma is the guy on the Chiefs, coming straight home to me,” she sang in Argentina as Kelce beamed from the audience. And come the 2024 Super Bowl, she raced across time zones and was there on the field when he won his third championship.

It’s the first engagement for both Kelce - who once had his own reality dating show, “Catching Kelce” - and Swift, whose past relationships with high-profile celebrities including Joe Alwyn, Jake Gyllenhaal and Harry Styles, have been inspiration for her music.

The news broke in the middle of the Kansas City Chiefs’ media availability, though after head coach Andy Reid had departed. That left Chiefs defensive end Mike Danna to field questions about his teammate’s engagement.

“Man, it’s incredible. I was caught off guard but you know, great for them,” Danna said, a few minutes after the news raced across social media. “That’s a blessing. Any time you find that type of joy, blessing, love - that’s a beautiful thing.”

Like many of the Chiefs, Danna has spent time with Swift and Kelce at a New Year’s party and after most of their home games.

“I’ll think of a good little engagement gift,” Danna said. “Maybe some Pop-Tarts back to her. It won’t be homemade.”

The NFL, which has gained untold numbers of fans since the relationship became public, posted the news on X with their congratulations - then quickly deleted it and reposted it when they realized they tagged the wrong Swift account.

“Two of the most genuine people meet & fall in love. Just so happy for these two,” Brittany Mahomes, the wife of Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes, said on Instagram. Brittany Mahomes and Swift have frequently shared a suite for games at Arrowhead Stadium. Meanwhile the Cleveland Guardians, the baseball team Kelce grew up rooting for, joked online: “Thanks a lot, Taylor Swift. Now no one cares that next year’s schedule is out.”

Kelce and Swift’s relationship featured prominently in the just-released six-part ESPN documentary “The Kingdom,” which chronicles the franchise’s ultimately foiled pursuit of an unprecedented third consecutive Super Bowl title last season. Kelce was joined by his parents, Donna and Ed Kelce, on the red carpet last Sunday for the premiere at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in Kansas City.

“She’s very good for him. I don’t hesitate in saying that,” Ed Kelce said of his future daughter-in-law. “They are two people that truly deserve each other.”

Music



Colombian superstar Shakira performs during her ‘Las Mujeres Ya No Lloran’, or Women Don’t Cry Anymore world tour in Mexico City, Tuesday, Aug. 26. (AP)

Conan Gray and Tate McRae make VMA stage debuts

2025 MTV VMAs set for a game-changing night

LOS ANGELES, Aug 27, (AP): Pop singers Conan Gray and Tate McRae will each make their performance debut on the MTV Video Music Awards stage next month, the VMAs announced Tuesday.

The newcomers are accompanied by more seasoned VMAs performers confirmed for this year’s roster, including Doja Cat, who will give the first ever televised performance of her new single “Jealous Type.” Jelly Roll will also perform and is competing for the first time in four categories. Post Malone, a six-time VMA winner, is also set to take the stage.

The five artists join a slew of stars already confirmed to perform. Here’s everything you need to know about this year’s MTV VMAs.

Gray, McRae, Jelly Roll, Doja Cat and Post Malone join a growing list of confirmed performers for this year’s VMAs.

Rhymes and Martin will both perform, as well as a slew of other artists, including Alex Warren, J Balvin, Sabrina Carpenter and sombr.

Warren, who’s nominated for best new artist, best pop and song of the year, will take the VMA stage for the first time, performing his breakout hit, “Ordinary.” Newcomer sombr, a singer-songwriter and producer, will also be making his award show debut.

Balvin will perform “Zun Zun” with Latin singers Justin Quiles and Lenny Tavárez, and “Noventa” with producer DJ Snake.

Carpenter, who offered a debut performance at the VMAs last year, taking home song of the year, will return to perform “Manchild.”

McRae is also up for four first-time nominations, including song of the year and best pop artist.

The 2025 VMAs will air on Sept. 7 at 8 p.m. Eastern, live from the UBS Arena on New York’s Long Island.

This year’s MTV Video Music Awards is shaking things up,



This photo combinations shows, (from left), Doja Cat, Post Malone, and Tate McRae. (AP)

handing out two new awards to decorated artists in the rap and Latin music genres.

Rapper Busta Rhymes will receive the first ever MTV VMA Rock the Bells Visionary Award and Ricky Martin will be honored with the inaugural Latin Icon Award.

The Rock the Bells Visionary Award celebrates the hip-hop star’s “boundary-breaking cultural impact and an indomitable musical career,” the announcement read. Rhymes, who has taken the VMAs stage various times since his first performance in 1997, will also perform during the ceremony.

Martin, whose long VMAs history began with his first performance in 1999, will also perform, and be honored for a “four-decade career that launched Latin music and culture into the mainstream,”

according to the announcement.

LL Cool J has snagged wins, co-hosted and performed atop the MTV Video Music Awards stage. Now, the Grammy-winning rapper-actor-author is going solo to host the 2025 awards ceremony.

He’s retaking the stage, this time without Nicki Minaj and Jack Harlow, with whom he co-hosted in 2022.

He’s also up for the best hip-hop award for his single “Murdergram Deux” featuring Eminem. The single is part of his most recent album, “THE FORCE,” which released in September and was his first album in 11 years.

LL Cool J is a longtime champion of the VMAs, having won his first Moon Person in 1991. He became the first rapper to receive the Video Vanguard Award, in 1997. He also performed in an all-star tribute to hip-hop’s 50th anniversary in 2023 and a celebration for Def Jam Records’ 40th anniversary last year.

Yes, the show will be broadcast by CBS for the first time, and also simulcast on MTV and available for streaming on Paramount+ in the United States.

Lady Gaga is leading this year’s awards with 12 nominations, including artist of the year. The “Mayhem” singer was nearly tied with Bruno Mars, who has 11 nods. The pair’s duet, “Die with a Smile,” is up for four awards, including song of the year.

Gaga’s plethora of nominations dethrones Taylor Swift, who held the top spot for two years. This time around, Swift received one artist of the year nomination. The two are accompanied by Bad Bunny, Beyoncé, Kendrick Lamar, Morgan Wallen and The Weeknd in that category.

Gaga and Mars are followed by Lamar with 10 nominations, ROSÉ and Carpenter with eight each, Ariana Grande and The Weeknd with seven each and Billie Eilish with six.

Variety

SAN FRANCISCO: A group of book authors has reached a settlement agreement with artificial intelligence company Anthropic after suing the chatbot maker for copyright infringement.

Both sides of the case have “negotiated a proposed class settlement,” according to a federal appeals court filing Tuesday that said the terms will be finalized next week.

Anthropic declined comment Tuesday. A lawyer for the authors, Justin Nelson, said the “historic settlement will benefit all class members.”

In a major test case for the AI industry, a federal judge ruled in June that Anthropic didn’t break the law by training its chatbot Claude on millions of copyrighted books.

But the company was still on the hook and was scheduled go to trial over how it acquired those books by downloading them from online “shadow libraries” of pirated copies.

U.S. District Judge William Alsup of San Francisco said in his June ruling that the AI system’s distilling from thousands of written works to be able to produce its own passages of text qualified as “fair use” under US copyright law because it was “quintessentially transformative.”

“Like any reader aspiring to be a writer, Anthropic’s (AI large language models) trained upon works not to race ahead and replicate or supplant them - but to turn a hard corner and create something different,” Alsup wrote.

A trio of writers - Andrea Bartz, Charles Graeber and Kirk Wallace Johnson - alleged in their lawsuit last year that Anthropic’s practices amounted to “large-scale theft,” and that the San Francisco-based company “seeks to profit from strip-mining the human expression and ingenuity behind each one of those works.” (AP)

BEIJING: China’s national news agency, Xinhua, on Tuesday opened an art exhibition highlighting the Chinese People’s War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression.

The exhibition, opened at the National Financial Information Center in Beijing, features more than 140 photographs, wartime relics, and over 10 works of painting and sculpture.

Liu Jian, vice president of Xinhua News Agency, said that Xinhua will continue to document the tireless endeavors of the Communist Party of China and the Chinese people, and the historic transformations of the great era.

The exhibition is jointly organized by the Xinhua News Agency Art Gallery and some other Xinhua affiliates, with support from the Agricultural Bank of China.

In addition to the main display in Beijing, several satellite exhibitions will be held in Shanghai and Nanjing, among other venues. (Xinhua)

Trump invites students to participate in AI challenge contest

WASHINGTON, Aug 27, (AP): Melania Trump on Tuesday invited students in grades K-12 to participate in a government-sponsored nationwide contest that is designed to encourage them to work together to use artificial intelligence tools to solve community issues.

“As someone who created an AI-powered audio book and championed online safety through the Take It Down Act, I’ve seen firsthand the promise of this powerful technology,” the first lady says in a short video announcing the Presidential AI Challenge. “Now, I pass the torch of innovation to you.”

“Just as America once led the world into the skies, we are poised to lead again,” she continued. “This time, in the age of AI.”

Every student from kindergarten through 12th grade is in-

vited to “unleash their imagination and showcase the spirit of American innovation,” Trump said.

Students who sign up will complete a project using an artificial intelligence method or tool to address a community challenge.

Michael Kratsios, director of the White House science and technology office, said the possibilities for the projects are “endless” but the aim of the challenge is to get students to work together since they will use artificial intelligence in adulthood.

“We want to have America’s youth plugged in and working on and using AI tools,” he said Tuesday during an interview on Fox News Channel’s “Fox and Friends.”

Registration opens Tuesday on the website. An adult mentor or teacher must sponsor a team. Submissions are due by

the end of December. Regional competitions will be held in the spring, followed by a White House event with the national winners, Kratsios said.

The contest was called for in an executive order signed by President Donald Trump on advancing artificial intelligence education for American youth.

The first lady announced in May that audio version of her 2024 memoir, “Melania,” was “narrated entirely using artificial intelligence - in my own voice.”

She also highlighted a negative side to AI when she lobbied Congress to pass legislation imposing penalties for online sexual exploitation using imagery that is real or an AI-generated deepfake. President Trump signed the Take It Down Act into law in May and had the first lady sign it, too.



First lady Melania Trump speaks during an event unveiling a US Postal Service Stamp honoring former first lady Barbara Bush, May 8, 2025, in the East Room of the White House in Washington. (AP)

'Set your AC higher when away to save energy'

Experts reveal the ideal AC strategy for saving energy, money

NEW YORK, Aug. 27, (AP): Having air conditioning at home is a luxury that keeps people comfortable during the hottest months of the year, and it's debated whether the AC should stay blasting or be turned off when people head to work during the day.

Some swear that turning off the AC when they're gone for a few hours is the most energy-efficient, cost-saving method. Others say it's better to leave it running continuously, preventing the system from straining to rapidly cool the house down after the home has gotten warmer throughout the day.

Three experts interviewed by The Associated Press agreed that setting the thermostat a few degrees higher than normal while you're away is generally the best way to balance energy efficiency against comfort and humidity.

While turning an AC unit off for several hours and turning it back on typically saves money and energy compared to continuously running it, that approach can lead to mold problems in humid environments as well as wear and tear that can cause more frequent repairs. The equation can also vary depending on other factors including comfort level, AC unit type and building insulation.

According to the US Department of Energy, adjusting your thermostat by 7-10 degrees Fahrenheit (4-6 degrees Celsius) for eight hours a day can save up to 10% a year on heating and cooling.

Experts say there are a lot of factors to consider when deciding what AC habits save the most energy and money.

"If you're gone for like 15 minutes to go to the grocery store, you don't get any gain" by turning off your AC said Elizabeth Hewitt, professor and urban planning expert at Stony Brook University.

But as a general rule, "if you're going for your work day, say for eight hours or so, you'll almost always save more energy and money by turning things off," she said.

In some climates, however, turning off the AC might not be feasible, so residents can set back their AC a few degrees instead of blasting cold air all day.

In dry places like Arizona, you can let the home warm up more by raising the thermostat a few degrees higher. But in humid climates like Florida, air inside the home can become damp and harder to cool, and turning the AC off for long periods can increase the risk of mold since the system helps control indoor moisture.

Bumping up the thermostat by 1 degree Fahrenheit (0.6 degrees Celsius) yields about a 3% savings in cooling costs, said Patrick Phelan, mechanical engineering professor at Arizona State University.

Phelan also said leaving your AC off for hours and then turning it back on could lead to wear that results in more frequent repairs. That is because it can take AC systems 15 to 30 minutes after they are turned on to perform most efficiently.

How much energy and money you can save depends on the kind of home you live in, said Gregor Henze, an architectural engineering professor at the University of Colorado Boulder.

Homes built with heavy materials like concrete or brick hold in cool air longer, while older, draftier houses heat up faster. In less insulated homes, Henze said, it makes sense to adjust the thermostat even if you're stepping out for just a few hours, because the indoor temperature can rise quickly.

Whether you have a window unit, a smart thermometer or central air could influence your savings.

Window units are generally less efficient because they're installed in an open window, making it difficult to seal out hot air completely, said Hewitt. She added that spraying "cheap foam spray insulation in open windows or areas that are drafty is a really low-hanging fruit that doesn't cost a lot of money and really helps retain the indoor temperature in your home."

Phelan says smart thermostats are a handy tool to remove the mental burden of tinkering with your manual thermostat multiple times a day. Smart thermostats "learn" by monitoring the occupancy with a sensor and raise the temperature when no one is home to conserve energy and lower it when people return.

"If you're going from just an ordinary manual thermostat to installing a smart one like a Nest, then you can expect something like 10% savings," said Phelan.

Air conditioning for residential and commercial buildings in the US consumes about 4-7% of the nation's total energy consumption, according to a study Phelan co-authored. "That is a lot. And that's not counting, say, cooling going to data centers, which is a different category entirely," he said.

Each expert said simple steps like blocking sunlight can go a long way in keeping homes cool.

Henze pointed to "time-honored strategies" such as opening windows at night when it's cooler. In dry climates, that night air doesn't add much moisture, but in humid regions it can bring in dampness the AC will later need to remove.

Hewitt added that closing your blinds can make a difference of several degrees.

Phelan also noted that some blinds are designed to reflect sunlight and said tinted window films are another option.

Experimental drug shows positive results for weight loss

Experts identify new protein target paving way for aggressive blood cancer treatment

SYDNEY, Aug. 27, (Xinhua): Australian researchers have identified a potential new target for treating aggressive blood cancers such as acute myeloid leukemia (AML).

The study, published in Molecular Cell, identified a protein called Cyclin-Dependent Kinase 11 (CDK11) as a critical regulator of gene expression in cancer cells, according to a statement released Tuesday by Australia's Peter MacCallum Cancer Center.

The research revealed that by blocking CDK11, scientists found they could trigger rapid cell death in AML, and an experimental drug targeting CDK11 can effectively kill blood cancer cells in pre-clinical human AML models.

"Cancer cells are masters of hijacking normal gene control," said senior author Ricky Johnstone, professor and executive director of cancer research at the center.

Aggressive blood cancer cells can't survive without CDK11, which "potentially opens up a whole new strategy to treat these hard-to-treat cancers," Johnstone said.

Lead author Jennifer Devlin said cancer cells rely heavily on certain pathways to grow, identifying CDK11 as one such "Achilles heel," and by targeting CDK11, scientists can switch off essential genes for cancer survival without harming normal cells.

This breakthrough brings fresh hope to patients facing aggressive blood cancers with limited treatment options like AML, which affects over 1,000 Australians annually and has a five-year survival rate of just 30 percent, the authors said.

US pharmaceutical company Lilly announced Tuesday that its experimental oral GLP-1 receptor agonist, orforglipron, achieved positive results in a Phase 3 trial targeting adults with overweight and type 2 diabetes.

In the trial, participants receiving the highest dose of orforglipron over 72 weeks lost an average of 22.9 pounds (around 10.3 kilograms), about 10.5 percent of their body weight, a meaningful reduction for a population that typically faces greater challenges in losing weight, the company said in a statement.

The treatment also lowered A1C (amounts of sugar in blood) levels by up to 1.8 percent and improved multiple cardiometabolic risk factors, according to the company.

GLP-1, a natural appetite- and blood sugar-regulating hormone, is the target of diabetes and weight-loss drugs that replicate its effects.

With completion of the trial, the company said it now has the full clinical data required to initiate global regulatory submissions for the drug.

The most common side effects are gastrointestinal-related and generally mild-to-moderate in severity, according to the company.

Simple exercises cut fall risks in elderly

HARBIN, Aug. 27, (Xinhua): A study by China's Harbin Medical University has found that incorporating simplified exercise training and tailored health education into the country's basic public health services can significantly reduce fall risks among rural elderly, tackling the "invisible killer" affecting the senior population.

The study was published online this week in the Journal of the American Medical Association. The findings support the use of a primary health care integrated approach to prevent falls among the elderly in rural China and other low-and middle-income countries.

Though easily neglected, falls have ranked among the leading causes of accidental injuries and deaths in the elderly over the past three decades, said Tian Maoyi, vice dean of the university's School of Public Health and one of the lead researchers of the study, noting that China now boasts a considerable size of population aged 60 and above.

To address this problem, the research team developed a comprehensive intervention project led by village doctors that included simplified exercises targeting lower limb muscle strength and balance, as well as health education videos narrated in local dialects.

In partnership with disease control and prevention centers and medical colleges across multiple provinces, the team conducted a randomized controlled trial involving 2,610 participants aged 60 and above who were at high risk of falling.

Wang Yongchen, head of general medicine at the Second Affiliated Hospital of Harbin Medical University, who was also part of the study, said that the intervention project showed marked effectiveness over an average follow-up period of 358 days.

He added that only 29.7 percent of participants in the intervention group reported at least one fall, substantially lower than the 38.3 percent in the control group. The fall incidence rate also decreased from 1.4 falls per person per year in the control group to 0.8 in the intervention group, while the injury rate dropped from 21.6 to 15.2 percent.

Seizures, mental health impact drug response

FDA-approved bioelectronic device offers new hope for RA sufferers

VALENCIA, Calif., Aug. 27, (AP): Northwell Health and SetPoint Medical have announced that Northwell is the first health system to provide the recent US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved SetPoint System to patients showing their commitment to expand patient access to bioelectronic medicine treatment for rheumatoid arthritis (RA).

The first patient to receive the FDA-approved device was surgically implanted on August 22 at Northwell's North Shore University Hospital. The patient will receive post-surgical follow-up care in the coming weeks, at which time the device will be activated. The FDA approved the SetPoint System on July 30, offering a novel, non-pharmaceutical treatment option for adults living with moderate-to-severe RA who are not adequately managed by—or cannot tolerate—existing advanced RA therapies, such as biological and targeted synthetic disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDs).

"Northwell Health is committed to providing patients with the most scientifically-backed, innovative and effective treatment options available," said Michael J. Dowling, president and CEO of Northwell. "Our collaboration with SetPoint Medical reinforces this commitment by offering a groundbreaking new approach for managing rheumatoid arthritis, a condition that significantly impacts millions of lives."

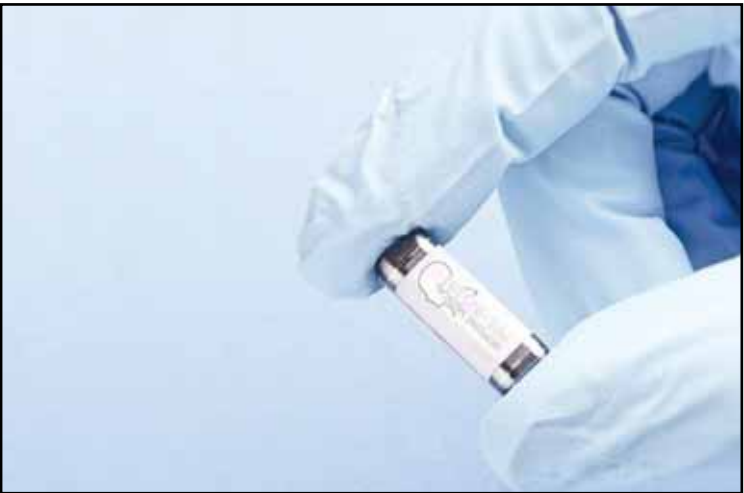
This FDA approval validates nearly three decades of pioneering research led by Kevin J. Tracey, MD, president and CEO of Northwell's Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research and the Karches Family Distinguished Chair in Medical Research, and his team, who have been exploring the intricate links between the brain, immune system, inflammation and the therapeutic potential of modulating these pathways, specifically through the vagus nerve.

Northwell's newly established Center for Bioelectronic Medicine, located at 350 Community Drive in Manhasset, NY, offers patients access to cutting-edge clinical trials and FDA-approved treatments including the SetPoint System. The Center, spearheaded by the Northwell medicine and neurosurgery service lines, underscores its leadership position in the field and allows Northwell to begin offering this novel therapeutic approach to RA patients.

"Bioelectronic medicine represents a profound shift in the future of healthcare, and Northwell is proud to be leading this transformation," said John D'Angelo, CEO-Elect of Northwell. "With a relentless focus on innovation, our team is advancing breakthrough technologies that will redefine how disease is understood, treated, and prevented."

While drugs are often prescribed for the 65 million people worldwide living with epilepsy, many patients are resistant to these drugs, making it paramount for clinicians to identify epileptic risks and triggers because experiencing uncontrolled seizures can lead to injuries, accidents and even death. A new study, published recently in Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) by Northwell Health clinicians and researchers, found that people with newly diagnosed epilepsy who have pre-existing psychological disorders and frequent seizures have a lesser chance of successfully treating their epilepsy within a year.

The study, co-led by Ruben Kuzniecky, MD, a neurologist at Northwell's Lenox Hill Hospital in Manhattan and member of The Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research, stems from the Human Epilepsy Project (HEP), a large-scale, international observational study that followed 448 participants for up to six years with newly diagnosed focal epilepsy.



Northwell is first to implant RA patient with FDA-approved SetPoint System bioelectronic medicine device.



SpaceX's mega rocket Starship makes a test flight from Starbase, Texas, Tuesday, Aug. 26. (AP)

SpaceX's Starship latest launch deploys 8 dummy satellites

NEW YORK, Aug. 27, (AP): SpaceX launched the latest test of its mega rocket Starship on Tuesday night and completed the first-ever deployment of a test payload - eight dummy satellites - into space. After just over an hour coasting through space, Starship splashed down as planned in the Indian Ocean.

Starship blasted off from Starbase, SpaceX's launch site in south Texas, just after 6:30 p.m. It was the 10th test for the world's biggest and most powerful rocket, which SpaceX and NASA hope to use to get astronauts back on the moon.

NASA has ordered two Starships to land astronauts on the moon later this decade, and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk's ultimate goal is Mars.

No crew members were aboard the demo launch. The test also included the successful return of the craft's Super Heavy Booster, which splashed down in the Atlantic after testing a landing-burn engine sequence.

The Starship itself continued to orbit the Earth - passing from daylight in Texas through night and back into daytime again - ahead of the planned splashdown. Before the craft hit the waves, its engines fired, flipping its position so it entered the water upright with the nose cone pointed upward.

The successful demo came after a year of mishaps. Back-to-back tests in January and March ended just minutes after liftoff, raining wreckage into the ocean. The most recent test in May - the ninth try - ended when the spacecraft tumbled out of control and broke apart.

SpaceX later redesigned the Super Heavy booster with larger and stronger fins for greater stability, according to a company post on the social platform X this month.

The first Starship exploded minutes into its inaugural test flight in 2023.

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Thomas breaks WNBA record with 7th triple-double in Mercury victory



Indiana Fever guard Kelsey Mitchell (0) goes to the basket against Seattle Storm forward Nneka Ogumike (3) during the second half of a WNBA basketball game in Indianapolis. (AP)

Fever sweeps Storm, moves into sixth

LOS ANGELES, Aug 27, (AP): **Alysa Thomas had 12 points, 16 rebounds and 15 assists for her WNBA single-season record seventh triple-double, and the Phoenix Mercury beat the Los Angeles Sparks 92-84.**

Thomas secured her 18th career triple-double with 2:50 left in the fourth quarter on a shot in the lane. She broke her own record of six triple-doubles in a season, set in 2023.

Thomas, who had 13 points, 12 rebounds and 16 assists in a win on Friday, also became the first player in WNBA history to post at least 10 points, 15 rebounds and 15 assists in a game.

Phoenix (23-14) moved past New York (23-15) for sole possession of fourth place in the WNBA standings. Satou Sabally had a team-high 19 points and

Kahleah Copper added 18 for Phoenix. Sami Whitcomb made five of her first six 3-pointers and finished with 17 points. DeWanna Bonner added 14 points.

The Mercury went 11 of 25 from 3-point range, with nine makes coming from players off the bench.

Dearica Hamby had 25 points, eight rebounds and five steals for Los Angeles (17-19). Rickea Jackson had 21 points and four 3-pointers, and Kelsey Plum scored 20. Plum reached 700 points on the season - the third time she's done that in her career.

Thomas had just one point at halftime after attempting two field goals, to go with 10 assists and seven rebounds.

Fever 95, Storm 75

In Indianapolis, Aliyah Boston had 27 points and nine rebounds, Odyssey Sims scored 22 points and the Indiana Fever beat the Seattle Storm to finish a sweep of the three-game season series.

Indiana (20-18) moved past Seattle (20-19) and

Golden State (19-18) for sixth in the WNBA standings, with six games remaining in the regular season. The top eight teams make the playoffs.

Kelsey Mitchell scored 21 points and Lexie Hull had nine rebounds to help the Fever double up the Storm 42-21 on the boards.

Caitlin Clark (right groin) did not play for the 16th straight game. Clark has not played or practiced since getting injured July 15. She did, however, participate in Indiana's pregame shootaround Sunday at Minnesota.

Nneka Ogumike scored 12 of her 17 points in the first half for Seattle, which had its three-game winning streak snapped. Brittney Sykes added 12 points, and Skylar Diggins had eight assists.

Mitchell scored 16 points in the first half, Boston had 11 and Sims added 10 to help build a 50-39 lead. The Fever were 6 of 11 from 3-point range in the first half before finishing 6 for 17.

'No World Cup starting assignments or roster spots are assured'

Pulisic back on US roster after skipping Gold Cup

NEW YORK, Aug 27, (AP): Christian Pulisic is back with the U.S. national team following his spat with coach Mauricio Pochettino.

"I think it's behind us, all that happened in summer, and I think now we need to look forward," Pochettino said Tuesday after announcing his 22-man roster for friendlies against South Korea on Sept. 6 at Harrison, New Jersey, and Japan three days later at Columbus, Ohio.

Pulisic, the top American player, offered to play in June friendlies against Turkey and Switzerland ahead of the CONCACAF Gold Cup but didn't want to participate in the tournament, an offer that Pochettino rejected. The 26-year-old played in about 100 club matches during his first two seasons with AC Milan and wanted an extensive break in the summer before the U.S. hosts next year's World Cup, a decision criticized by several former U.S. stars.

Pochettino said he hasn't spoken with Pulisic since the flap because there was no need.

He made some surprising picks for his September roster, saying this is "the last camp to have the possibility for us to see players, new faces," and maintained no World Cup starting assignments or roster spots are assured.

"Player(s) need to feel the threat from your teammate," he said. "They need to defend their place in every single possibility."



AC Milan's Christian Pulisic is in action during a Serie A soccer match between AC Milan and Cremonese, at the San Siro stadium in Milan, Italy. (AP)

"That is my message for everyone that needs to fight," Pochettino added.

He will have just three more training camps on FIFA dates, in October, November and March, before calling players into camp ahead of the World Cup.

Pochettino noted some Americans are not getting regular time with their clubs.

"For different reason(s) our players

struggle to perform and to play if you see the last few weeks or the last few months," he said. "(We) hope that all our players step up and start to show our real quality."

Defender Sergiño Dest could make his first national team appearance in 18 months after recovering from a torn ACL on April 20 last year. Winger Tim Weah also is back after missing the Gold Cup because FIFA gave player priority to the Club World Cup.

Forwards Josh Sargent and Alejandro Zendejas returned after being left off the Gold Cup roster. Sargent scored in Norwich's first four games.

Goalkeepers Jonathan Klinsmann and Roman Celentano are among four players who could make debuts along with defenders Noahkai Banks and Tristan Blackmon. Klinsmann, a son of former coach Jurgen Klinsmann, is joined on the roster by midfielder Sebastian Berhalter, a son of ex-coach Gregg Berhalter.

Blackmon, a 29-year-old Vancouver defender, also was being courted by Canada.

Goalkeepers Matt Turner and Zack Steffen were surprising omissions, left off along with defenders Cameron Carter-Vickers and Joe Scally, midfielders Brenden Aaronson, Johnny Cardoso, Weston McKennie, Aidan Morris, Yunus Musah and Tanner Tessmann, and forward Haji Wright.

Several players were bypassed because they are hurt or recovering from injuries, including left back Antonee Robinson (knee surgery in May), midfielder Malik Tillman (calf), and forwards Patrick Agyemang (hernia surgery), Folarin Balogun (ankle), Ricardo Pepi (knee surgery following injury on Jan. 29).

Midfielder Gio Reyna was not included after transferring Saturday from Borussia Dortmund, which gave him just eight league starts over the past three seasons, to Borussia Mönchengladbach.

Best of the Rest

Levante signs Australia keeper Ryan: La Liga side Levante has confirmed the arrival of experienced Australia international goalkeeper Mathew Ryan on a free transfer.

Ryan joins the newly promoted side after his previous deal with French outfit Lens expired over the summer. The move sees the 33-year-old return to the city of Valencia, where he spent two seasons with Valencia CF, making 23 appearances.

Ryan's varied career has included stints with San Sebastian-based Real Sociedad in La Liga, as well as Brighton, Club Brugge, Arsenal, Roma, Copenhagen and AZ Alkmaar.

Ryan is also captain of Australia's national team, and has 100 caps for the Socceroos.

"I'm very excited and happy to return to a top league and to enter in a project like Levante's. There is a lot to be excited about," Ryan was quoted as saying on Levante's website. (Xinhua)

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Matic signs a 1-year contract with Sassuolo: Veteran Serbian midfielder Nemanja Matic signed a one-year contract with promoted Serie A club Sassuolo on Tuesday.

The 37-year-old Matic's contract with Lyon was recently terminated by mutual consent. He brings a wealth of experience following long spells at Chelsea and Manchester United.

It will mark Matic's second season in the Italian league after playing under Jose Mourinho at Roma in 2022-23.

Sassuolo won Serie B last season. The Emilia-Romagna club was beaten 2-0 by defending champion Napoli in its Serie A opener on Saturday.

The deal includes an automatic renewal for a second season if certain objectives are reached. (AP)

From surgeries to comebacks

Stars defy odds to shine at Women's Rugby World Cup

LONDON, Aug 27, (AP): Heartbreaking sports injuries before major events are as fated as sunset. The Women's Rugby World Cup is no different.

Charlotte Caslick gave up the captaincy of Australia's world champion sevens team to be a World Cup Wallaroo but withdrew from the squad this month after running out of time rehabbing the right ankle she broke last month. However, she's on standby for the knockout rounds.

In tune-ups against Ireland this month, Canada flanker Pamphinette Buisa injured her arm and was ruled out a week before the World Cup, and Scotland fullback Lucia Scott broke her hand and had to drop out.

Ireland suffered its own major blows in April when two key flankers went down; Erin King, the world breakthrough player of 2024, to a knee injury, and Dorothy Wall to an Achilles tendon injury.

But some players do manage to come back, and here's their stories.

Scarrott became the first Englishwoman to appear in five World Cups last Friday in the opening win over the United States, but that was far from a certainty.

She went under the knife in September 2023, her neck opened up and windpipe moved aside to replace a disc pressing on her spinal cord. Scarrott suffered the injury in January that year, but mixed medical advice and the thought of surgery delayed her green light for it until it became an issue of prolonging her life, let alone her rugby career.

The operation was a success.

But after 13 months off the rugby field, and despite starting in the World Cup finals of 2010, 2014, 2017 and 2022, the center discovered she was no longer a starter for England, and sometimes not even a bench player. She was, however, good enough to get into the World Cup squad. The 35-year-old described her historic fifth selection as "super cool."

Coming back from neck surgery has made Scarrott feel more free. "In a strange way," she told the England Rugby website, "it felt like a second chance."

Her greatness is already certified: A 10-time Six Nations winner and the all-time leading point-scorer for England, the Six Nations and the World Cup.

"Emily brings more than just experience," England coach John Mitchell said. "She understands the legacy of the Red Roses and brings leadership to the younger players. She's very calm in demeanour and just leads by example. She wants to leave the Red Roses in a better place."

Barely a month had passed since Canada's historic first test win over world champion New Zealand when captain Sophie de Goede tore her ACL while in camp with the national sevens squad in California.

That was in June 2024.

De Goede made her test comeback last month, 13 months later, off the bench to help Canada put daylight on South Africa to complete a two-test series win in Gqeberha.

The injury was cruelly timed. She missed Canada winning the Olympic sevens silver medal in Paris, the WXV 1 and Pacific Four.

The goalkicking forward made enough of an impression in the first half of 2024, however, to make World Rugby's annual women's dream team, two years after her first dream team pick and first nomination for world player of the year.

When Canada finally recalled her, she told the Canadian Press "It has been a really long, long, tough year. I'll be a lot stronger for it, mentally and physically, coming out the other side."

De Goede led Canada to the semifinals at the 2022 World Cup but hasn't been restored to the captaincy since her injury. As de Goede is still getting up to speed, center Alex Tessier leads Canada in this World Cup.

Her talismanic status in the squad was undimmed, though. She came flying around off a lineup ball to score Canada's opening try against Fiji on Saturday in York and kicked four conversions in the 65-7 win.

"It felt good to just get a strong start under my belt, trying to feel more comfortable coming back from injury," de Goede said. "That was a nice way to kick it off."

Like Sophie de Goede, Brianna Hoy tore her ACL in training, too, while with Australia in Belfast for the WXV 2 last September.

The loosehead prop didn't play another test until last Saturday in Manchester, where she made her World Cup debut off the bench in Australia's 73-0 win over Samoa.

At the time of the injury, Wallaroos coach Jo Yapp said, "It's heart-breaking. She's an extremely popular member of the squad. She's kind, caring and professional in everything she does."

Hoy excelled in training to earn Yapp's faith again, and at last week's announcement of the team to play Samoa her name received the biggest cheer among the squad. After playing 33 minutes on Saturday, Hoy admitted to doubting she would reach the World Cup, especially as the ACL tear was the second of her career.

"I'm just ecstatic to be able to lace the boots up again and take the field with my team," she said.

"It's been worth it. I mean, anyone that's been through a longer-term injury, you have those ups and downs, physically, emotionally and mentally, where you do doubt yourself, whether you are going to get to your goal. The feeling of running on with my mates, I was ecstatic to be there, and I was just super confident and proud of the hard work the team and myself have put in to get to that point."

Canada's Sophie de Goede concerts her own try during the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 Pool B match between Canada and Fiji at the York Community Stadium in York, England. (AP)

Canada's Sophie de Goede concerts her own try during the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 Pool B match between Canada and Fiji at the York Community Stadium in York, England. (AP)



Canada's Sophie de Goede concerts her own try during the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 Pool B match between Canada and Fiji at the York Community Stadium in York, England. (AP)

Ex-rugby player Christie, who called for study of concussion, dies at age 39

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, Aug 27, (AP): A leading New Zealand rugby player who had advocated for closer study of the connections between concussion and long-term brain injury has died at the age of 39.

Police were called early Wednesday morning to the Nelson home of Shane Christie, who played for the Highlanders in Super Rugby and for New Zealand Maori, where he was found dead.

The New Zealand Herald newspaper reported that his friends suspected Christie had taken his own life.

Police said "the death will be referred to the coroner and we have no further information or comment we can provide."

Christie suspected he was suffering from Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE), a degenerative brain disorder which has been linked in the U.S. to a number of suicides among players in the National Football League. The NFL in 2016 acknowledged a connection between football and CTE.

The condition can only be detected post-mortem. Christie had indicated he intended to leave his brain to researchers for study in the hope of making rugby a safer game.

"Without brain donations we're not going to be able to identify how long it takes to get this disease. It's important to help the research in New Zealand," Christie said in a recent interview.

Christie was a friend and teammate of Billy Guyton, who died of suicide in 2023 and who became the first New Zealand rugby player to be diagnosed with CTE. Christie helped to establish the Billy Guyton Foundation which attempts to foster better understanding on the consequences of concussion.

"Bill motivated me to have the courage to speak my mind about what I see," Christie said last year at a Foundation event.

Christie reported several concussions during his playing career and since his retirement said he'd suffered headaches and memory lapses. CTE is known to cause mood and behavioral changes and cognitive impairment.

"It feels like a bruise in your head and when you're walking it hurts. So when you're thinking it hurts, when you're trying to exercise the pressure hurts, and you're not as fast and can't think as quick," he was quoted as saying.

In a statement published by the New Zealand-based Stuff news site, New Zealand Rugby said in the wake of his playing career, Christie became passionate about coaching.

"Any time the rugby community loses a member it is felt deeply," New Zealand Rugby said. "Shane's passion for the game will be remembered always. Our thoughts are with Shane's whanau (family), friends, former teammates, and community at this incredibly difficult time."

Champs League heads to Kazakhstan and Norway

Almaty & Bodo/Glimt advance

ALMATY, Kazakhstan, Aug 27, (AP): The Champions League is heading to Kazakhstan for just the second time, and newcomers from Norway and Cyprus also advanced to the elite league phase.

Kairat Almaty goalkeeper Temirlan Anarbekov saved three penalties in the shootout to lift the Kazakh champion over Celtic in the qualifying playoffs after the teams played out a second straight 0-0 draw. Almaty won the shootout 3-2.

Bodo/Glimt of Norway eased past Sturm Graz - winning 6-2 on aggregate despite a 2-1 loss in the return leg in Austria - to bring Champions League games to its stadium inside the Arctic Circle this season.

Unheralded Cypriot champion Pafos stunned Red Star Belgrade, the European champion in 1991, with an 89th-minute goal by Brazilian forward Jajá to draw 1-1 at home and advance 3-2 on aggregate.

All three winners will take their places alongside title holder Paris Saint-Germain, Real Madrid and a stellar list of European powers in the draw ceremony at Monaco on Thursday.

Kairat advanced 10 years after Astana played in the group stage as the only other Kazakh team to compete in the elite European competition.

Almaty is four time zones and thousands of kilometers (miles) east of potential opponents from England and Portugal.

Celtic, the 1967 European Cup winner, drops into the second-tier Europa League with Red Star Sturm Graz, one year after all three played in the Champions League.



Kairat players celebrate after winning the Champions League playoff second leg soccer match between Kairat and Celtic at Ortalyk stadium in Almaty, Kazakhstan. (AP)

Hamburg braces for Bundesliga derby against St. Pauli

‘Disclose NIL deals’

Stuttgart squeezes past Braunschweig

BRAUNSCHWEIG, Germany, Aug 27, (Agencies): Stuttgart’s German Cup title defense started with a drama-filled 8-7 win on penalties over Eintracht Braunschweig on Tuesday after their game ended 4-4 following extra time.

New signing Lorenz Assignon struck Stuttgart’s winning penalty - the 20th of the shootout - after Alexander Nübel had already saved three for the visitors.

“I think the fans enjoyed it more than we did on the field,” said Stuttgart forward Ermedin Demirović, who scored two goals in normal time as well as a penalty in the shootout.

Braunschweig, which made a good start to the second division with two wins from three games, showed straight away it was not overawed by the defending champion.

Sven Köhler put the home side ahead early with a strike from distance that Nübel should have kept out after getting his hands to the ball.

Demirović replied four minutes later with a diving header to Maximilian Mittelstädt’s cross that went in off the far post and made it 2-1 on the hour-mark.

But Fabio Di Michele Sanchez, a left back, equalized by rifling a fierce shot into the roof of the net from a narrow angle in the 77th, then scored another spectacular goal to give Braunschweig a 3-2 lead with five minutes of normal time remaining.

Germany forward Nick Woltemade equalized four minutes after that, sending the game to extra time, where Stuttgart’s Tiago Tomás forced an own goal from Sanoussi Ba before Christian Joe Conte pulled Braunschweig level again to send the game to penalties.



VfB Stuttgart goalkeeper Alexander Nübel saves a penalty during a penalty shootout against Eintracht Braunschweig during a DFB Pokal, German Cup, soccer match, Tuesday, Aug. 26, 2205, in Brunswick, Germany. (AP)

Meanwhile, excitement is reaching fever pitch in Hamburg ahead of Friday night’s city derby, as Hamburg and St. Pauli prepare to face off in the Bundesliga for the first time in more than 14 years.

For the 2025/26 season, Hamburg is the only city in Germany to boast two top-flight clubs. Hamburg are back after seven years in the second tier, while St. Pauli returned in 2024. The wait until kickoff feels endless for supporters, who see this as the defining event of the campaign.

“The city belongs to us,” Hamburg fans sang after last weekend’s goal-less opener in Monchengladbach. Their coach, 34-year-old Merlin Polzin, admitted his toughest critic isn’t in the stands but at home - his grandmother, who texts him detailed match analyses after every game. Ahead of the derby, she was clear: a draw against St. Pauli won’t do.

Despite Hamburg’s struggles in the second division between 2018 and 2025, history weighs heavily in their favor. The club, relegated for the first time in its history in 2018, still boasts two European Cups, six Bundesliga titles, and three domestic cups.

NCAA eyes transparency rule to curb pay-for-play concerns

WASHINGTON, Aug 27, (AP): The NCAA is weighing a rule that would require incoming Division I athletes to disclose name, image and likeness (NIL) deals from high school or junior college to the NIL Go clearinghouse established under the \$2.8 billion House settlement.

Athletes would report all non-institutional deals dating to the first day of their junior year. Junior college transfers would report deals from the date of initial enrollment at a two-year college. All reporting of previous deals would be due to the College Sports Commission upon enrollment.

NIL compensation at the high school level has rapidly expanded in recent years. At least 40 states allow high school students to earn money off their celebrity status. Alabama, Michigan and Ohio are among the states that have strict restrictions, including Texas, which prohibits athletes under 17 from pursuing deals.

The proposed rule stems from the House settlement, which allows institutions effective July 1 to share millions with athletes directly but requires reporting of any third-party deal exceeding \$600. NIL Go, developed by Deloitte and overseen by the CSC, evaluates whether deals reflect fair market value and serve a valid business purpose, a topic of some controversy.



Feldman

The potential rule aims to prevent pay-for-play deals between prospective athletes and boosters or school-affiliated entities. The exact consequences of failing to comply are still being determined, but lost eligibility is a possibility.

“It’s unclear what the discipline would be for athletes or third parties that violate these rules, just like it’s just not entirely clear what the discipline will be for current college athletes,” said Gabe Feldman, director of sports law at Tulane University. “The emphasis certainly seems to be on not unduly harming the athlete themselves and the team, whereas in the past, if an athlete had received an improper benefit, there could be significant repercussions.”

A tidal wave of lawsuits could stem from a new rule, but according to Feldman, the NCAA tends to like its odds - a recurring theme leading up to the settlement approval.

“The idea was that given how much money athletes would be making under these new rules, very few athletes would have incentive to sue,” Feldman said. “Even though there is still the risk of antitrust litigation, the risk is much smaller because the athletes are getting such significant compensation. But there is no guarantee that athletes can’t sue.”

Language in the House settlement kept the door open for future rule proposals, including “specifying that the NCAA and/or the conference defendants prohibit NIL payments by associated entities or individuals (individually or collectively) to current or prospective student-athletes.” But that may leave loopholes.

A rare change to its qualifying criteria

Masters will take winners of 6 national opens, eliminate invitations to PGA Tour fall winners

AUGUSTA, Aug 27, (AP): The Masters is making a rare change to its qualifying criteria by eliminating invitations to PGA Tour winners in the fall and joining the R&A in recognizing winners of six national opens on every main tour in the world.

Augusta National and the R&A announced plans Tuesday to align aspects of their criteria to create a path to the Masters and British Open for winners or top finishers in the South African Open, Australian Open, Japan Open, Spanish Open, Hong Kong Open and Scottish Open.

The Opens in South Africa and Australia are among the five oldest in golf.

This builds on the “Open Qualifying Series” the R&A created in 2013 to attract players from every continent where golf is played. The difference is that Augusta National invites only the winner, while the British Open often provide three or four spots for the leading finishers.

“The Masters Tournament has long recognized the significance of having international representation among its invitees,” Chairman Fred Ridley said. “We, along with The R&A, have a shared commitment to the global game and are proud to work together. Today’s announce-



In this file photo, Scottie Scheffler puts the green Jacket on winner, Rory McIlroy, of Northern Ireland, at the Masters golf tournament, in Augusta, Ga. (AP)

ment strengthens our organizations’ collective vision of rewarding top talent around the world who rise to the top of historic national open championships.”

The Masters has the smallest field of the four majors and prefers it stay under 100 players to enhance their experience.

Adding as many as six spots from the national opens meant losing the invitations to the PGA Tour’s weaker fall events. Last year, all eight winners in the fall were not already

eligible and four of them were outside the top 100 in the world ranking.

The previous year, three of the fall winners were outside the top 150 in the world. Those tournaments fall after the FedEx Cup season and typically are players who are trying to keep their tour cards.

Ridley had said in April at the Masters that the club looks at the qualifications each year. He said international events “will be part of our examination.”

The Masters had made a few tweaks over the years, such as adding the NCAA champion to the field. But this is the first significant change since 2013 when it did away with the top 30 from the PGA Tour money list and reduced from the top 16 to the top 12 leading finishers in the previous Masters.

Except for the Scottish Open in July, which is sanctioned by the PGA Tour and European tour, the other national opens Augusta National and the R&A identified are from October through February.

The R&A will release in September its Open Qualifying Series for the 2026 Open at Royal Birkdale, but the six national opens will be part of them. This year’s Open included 24 players who earned spots through 11 events as part of the Open Qualifying Series. That did not include the Hong Kong Open, Spanish Open or Japan Open, though the Japan Open winner was exempt through a different category.

“We’re delighted to have the strength of the Masters supporting the national opens,” said Johnnie Cole-Hamilton, championships director of the R&A. “It sends a really powerful message to the globe about these pathways to our championships, and it shines a light on these tours.”

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NEWS



Wolverhampton Wanderers' Jorgen Strand Larsen, center, celebrates scoring during the English League Cup second round match between Wolverhampton Wanderers and West Ham United at Molineux Stadium, Wolverhampton, England. West Ham's miserable start to the season continued with a 3-2 loss at Wolverhampton in the second round of the English League Cup. (AP)

Sports

Kuwaiti riders 'sweep' podium at MENA Special Olympics equestrian event in UAE



The dominant Kuwaiti riders celebrate on the podium.

KUNA photo

AL-AIN, Aug 27: Kuwaiti riders from Al-To-mooh Club delivered a stellar performance at the first Regional Equestrian Competition for the Special Olympics in the Middle East and North Africa, held in Al Ain, UAE. The team swept the top three positions in the English Riding event. Basma Al-Busaily claimed the gold medal with a first-place finish, followed by Maryam Dhiab, who earned silver. Abdullah Al-Ali secured the bronze, completing Kuwait's impressive podium sweep. Sadiqa Al-Ansari, Secretary-General of Al-Tamouh Club and head of the Kuwaiti delegation,

praised the riders' achievements, noting that the results "reflect the determination and resilience of athletes with intellectual disabilities and underscore Kuwait's commitment to supporting them in showcasing their talents at regional and international events." Al-Ansari also highlighted that the victory "demonstrates the progress and excellence of Kuwaiti riders in equestrian sports, built on the strong support and care provided by the state," while commending the UAE Special Olympics for their outstanding organization and the facilities provided to participating delegations.

Kuwait raises tally to six medals at Asian Shooting Championship



KUNA photo

Bronze medalists, comprising Abdullah Al-Rashidi, Saad Al-Enezi, and Ahmad Al-Mandeel display their medals.

Al-Osaimi praises efforts of promising young shooters

ASTANA, Aug 27: Kuwait's shooting team added a new bronze medal at the 16th Asian Shooting Championship, currently taking place in Kazakhstan, raising their overall tally to six medals: two gold, one silver, and three bronze.

Secretary-General of Kuwait

Shooting Club, Obaid Al-Osaimi, said from Kazakhstan that this latest achievement came after the junior team—comprising Abdullah Al-Rashidi, Saad Al-Enezi, and Ahmad Al-Mandeel—secured third place in the team trap competition. He explained that the victory came after a tough contest, with India taking first place, Kazakhstan second, Qatar fourth, and Uzbekistan fifth. Al-Osaimi praised the efforts of the

promising young shooters, highlighting their high focus and the support of the technical and administrative staff as key reasons for this success, despite the strong competition at the championship. So far, Kuwait's medal haul at the tournament includes two golds in the men's team skeet and trap events, a silver medal won by shooter Mansour Al-Rashidi in individual skeet, and three bronzes through the women's and juniors' teams in skeet, along with the juniors' trap bronze achieved yesterday.



Božo listens as his player asks a question during training session.



A file photo of Al Arabi players celebrating.



Players hold their final training session.

Kazma, Sulaibikhat wrap up camps

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

IZMIT, Turkey, Aug 27: Kazma and Sulaibikhat handball teams are returning home today after wrapping up their overseas training camps. Kazma concluded its camp in Izmit, Turkey, while Sulaibikhat completed its preparations in Bosnia. Both teams are gearing up for the new season's competitions, most notably the 40th Arab Club Championship for League and Cup Winners, set to be hosted in Kuwait from September 12 to 22. The tournament will feature clubs including host Kuwait Club, Egypt's Ahly Bank, Iraq's Al-Hashd Al-Riyadhi, and Syria's Talia, Nawaeir, and Shabab, along with Ahly Qatar and Qatar SC. Kazma has strengthened its squad with Slovenian player Labaine Ganos, joining Tunisian duo Anwar bin Abdullah and Mohamed Farad, under the guidance of Serbian coach Božo. Meanwhile, Sulaibikhat, coached by Kuwaiti Waleed Salmeen, signed French-Algerian player Nouri bin Halima and Portuguese Gonzalo Ribeiro, with efforts underway to add a third professional. It is worth noting that Kuwait Club, champion of the last two editions, will be aiming for a third consecutive crown. They defeated Egypt's Zamalek in the 2023 final held in Dammam and beat Salmiya in last year's final in Kuwait. The team is determined to capitalize on home advantage and strong preparations to secure a historic treble. On his part, Hussein Sioan, team manager of Sulaibikhat, praised the Bosnia camp and the players' discipline in following the technical and administrative staff's instructions. He also expressed gratitude to the club's board for their support and for arranging such an important camp ahead of the Arab challenge.

Kuwait Club and Al-Arabi await draw

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 27: Kuwait Club and Al-Arabi are set to discover their group stage opponents today as the 2025-2026 AFC Challenge League draw takes place at the AFC headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Kuwait qualified directly for the group stage, while Al-Arabi secured its spot by defeating Maldivian side Mazya Spur 4-0 in the playoff round. This marks Kuwait Club's first participation in the revamped AFC Challenge League, following last year's exit from the AFC Champions League 2 group stage. Al-Arabi will compete for the second consecutive edition after being

eliminated in the West Zone final last year. The draw will feature a protection mechanism to ensure that no two teams from the same country face each other. Group stage matches are scheduled from October 25 to November 1, 2025, in a single round-robin format. In the West Zone, Kuwait, Baro (Bhutan), and Muras United (Kyrgyzstan) will host their group matches, while East Zone fixtures will take place in Indonesia (Diva United) and Cambodia (Preah Khan Reach Svay Rieng). The knockout stages, including the quarterfinals and semifinals (home and away), are set for March and April 2026, with the grand final scheduled for May 9, 2026.

Kuwait opens first Gulf U20 Cup campaign against Qatar in Abha

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

ABHA, Saudi Arabia, Aug 27: Kuwait's national under-20 soccer team begins its journey in the first Gulf U20 Cup today, facing Qatar in the opening match of Group A at 8:30 PM at Damak Stadium in Abha, Saudi Arabia. Earlier in the day, Saudi Arabia will take on Yemen at 6:00 PM. The tournament, hosted in Abha until September 10, features two groups. Group B includes Oman, Bahrain, Iraq, and Egypt, which participates by invitation from the Gulf Football Federation after the UAE withdrew. Under the leadership of Croatian coach Virdo Milin, Kuwait is aiming for a strong start. The squad of 23 players includes Abdullah Al-Taweel, Sand Al-Mutairi, Al-Waleed Al-Enezi, Ayed Al-Shammari, Zain Al-Abidin Maarefi, Youssef Jawad, Abdullah Al-Qurzi, Hussein Al-Aryan, Mohammed Al-Ansari, Mohammed Al-Mulla, Rakan Al-Saeed, Abdullah Al-Eibani, Suleiman Jamal, Hamad Al-Saeed, Abdullah Al-Ansari, Ghanem Al-Rajebea, Khalid Al-Saeed, Hashem Naqi, Hadi Al-Enezi, Mohammed Al-Halwaji, Mubarak Al-Ajmi, Laith Al-Qallaf, and Misfer Al-Adwani. The team has prepared for the championship through a series of domestic and international training camps, including friendly matches to fine-tune tactics and team cohesion. Coach Virdo Milin expressed confidence in his squad, highlighting the rigorous training camp and his goal for the team to perform at a high level throughout the tournament. Qatar's coach, Emmanuel Infante, called the Gulf Cup a key stepping stone for this generation of players and praised their current form. Meanwhile, Saudi coach Sergio Antonio noted that his team had trained extensively with a new roster and aimed to deliver strong performances. Yemen's coach Mohammed Al-Nafie shared that his team began preparations in July, forming a new squad in just over a month. He expressed optimism that Yemen could represent itself well despite the challenges.

Kuwait trains intensively in Bangkok ahead of qualifiers

BANGKOK, Aug 27: Kuwait's Olympic football team trained twice, with sessions in the morning and evening, as part of its preparation camp in Bangkok, Thailand. The team will remain in Bangkok until next Monday before heading to Myanmar to compete in the qualifiers for the 2026 AFC U-23 Asian Cup in Saudi Arabia. Kuwait has been drawn

in Group B alongside Myanmar, Japan, and Afghanistan, with the qualifiers scheduled from September 3 to 9, 2025. During the Bangkok camp, the Olympic team played three friendly matches, securing victories over Non-thaburi FC (2-0), Malaysia (1-0), and Oman (1-0), and showcasing strong form ahead of the crucial qualifiers.

Gauff holds off Tomljanovic

Sinner and Iga Swiatek get off to good starts at US Open

NEW YORK, Aug 27, (AP): Iga Swiatek is trying to do something no woman has done since Serena Williams in 2012: win the U.S. Open and Wimbledon in the same season. Jannik Sinner is trying to do something no man has done since Roger Federer in 2008: repeat as U.S. Open champion. Seeded winners included 2023 U.S. Open champion Coco Gauff, No. 8 Amanda Anisimova, No. 18 Beatriz Haddad Maia, No. 23 Naomi Osaka and No. 27 Marta Kostyuk among the women, and No. 3 Alexander Zverev, No. 10 Lorenzo Musetti, No. 19 Francisco Cerundolo, No. 23 Alexander Bublik - who eliminated 2014 champion Marin Cilic - and No. 27 Denis Shapovalov among the men. Gauff defeated Ajla Tomljanovic 6-4, 6-7



Jannik Sinner, of Italy, returns a shot to Vit Kopriya, of the Czech Republic, during the first round of the U.S. Open tennis championships in New York. (AP) (2), 7-5, and Zverev was a 6-2, 7-6 (4), 6-4 winner against Alejandro Tabilo in a match that ended a little before 1 a.m. By the looks of things on Tuesday

in Arthur Ashe Stadium as the now-three-day first round wrapped up, the two players who triumphed at the All England Club last month - and who both served short doping-related bans last year - look ready to contend again in New York. And how. The second-seeded Swiatek was up first in the U.S. Open's main arena and needed merely an hour to dismiss Emiliana Arango of Colombia 6-1, 6-2. No. 1 Sinner then took only 39 minutes more to finish off his 6-1, 6-1, 6-2 victory over Vit Kopriya of the Czech Republic. "Obviously, every year is different," said Sinner, sporting the white arm sleeve he began wearing after hurting his elbow in a fall during Wimbledon. "You come here starting this tournament, hopefully, the best possible way

- which I did." He certainly showed no signs of the virus that forced him to quit in the first set of the Cincinnati Open final against his biggest rival, No. 2 Carlos Alcaraz, last week. Either Sinner or Alcaraz, who have combined to win the past seven major titles, can own the top ATP ranking after these 15 days. Similarly, Swiatek, Coco Gauff or No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka, the defending champion, can leave New York atop the WTA. Sinner saved both break points he faced and won 33 of 40 first-serve points. Swiatek was even more dominant, not only never facing a break point but never even being taken to deuce in any of her eight service games, while accumulating a 26-5 edge in winners.