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#### **Opinion**

#### Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

## Maximizing the gross domestic product requires quick decision

FOR the first time, observers could sense ministerial discipline within the Cabinet.

This is crucial for the wheel to move according to plan on the path toward the long-awaited development, especially since the government no longer faces obstacles to the implementation of the plans of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah regarding the advancement of Kuwait and the restoration of its leadership status.

Indeed, in the past, several obstacles prevented the executive authority from achieving its goals unless they were consistent with the wishes of MPs or those they represent, or did not meet the goals of voters.

We witnessed a significant decline in all development projects, as a result of the traps set for ministers and the entire government.

This caused many laws to languish in the drawers of the National Assembly for years, while legislation that served certain groups was passed.

This burdened the State budget, making it fall into a huge deficit.

At some point, everyone noticed the announcement of the Cabinet that liquidity was nearing depletion due to unreasonable spending under the slogan, "Do not touch the citizen's pocket."

On the other hand, there was an indirect hit to the budget through the economic contraction and limited commercial activity, which raised inflation rates and left citizens with a huge deficit, particularly since around 85 percent of the citizens are working in the public

Despite warnings about the surplus of random hiring, this trend continued, with the first chapter of the budget reaching a figure exceeding the salary of a major country.

Yet, there were no attempts to boost the gross domestic product (GDP) and stop from relying solely on oil as the primary source of

Meanwhile, no development was made to plans for sovereign wealth funds and other funds which, if properly utilized, could have been the primary source of national income.

We have written several times about the fact

that salaries have not increased for 16 years, while the retirees' voices are rising regarding the insufficiency of their pension.

In the meantime, the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) has a financial surplus in spite of the actuarial deficit.

The number of retirees increases annually, hence, the need to search for ways to provide these people with the capacity to spend, taking into consideration that oil prices are declining, with a loss of about 40 percent in recent years. This necessitates exploring other sources of income to bolster public finances.

The Social Security Fund and other funds are important arms of the development process, provided there are capable minds to put funds into investments with lucrative returns -- first domestically and second externally as long as they are guaranteed.

This is similar to the Norwegian Pension Fund, which has become the largest sovereign wealth fund in the world, thanks to the management mindset of preventing its exploitation, whether for employment or otherwise, so that it can continue to grow as planned.

In Kuwait, we must acknowledge that things are different due to outdated slogans, which lay the foundations for negative development, not

Slogans, such as "This is our son," have opened the door to the exploitation of all State institutions and resources for direct and indirect plunder, as if the nation is just a temporary

This has led to corruption extending to traffic violations and drug smuggling, along with the lack of conscience.

#### **Continued on Page 5**

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HH the Amir, in the presence of HH the Crown Prince, receives the Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs, the Head of the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince, and the Undersecretary of the Amiri Diwan.

#### Amir receives newly appointed Amiri Diwan Minister

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Further, His Highness the Amir received Kuwait National

Guard President Sheikh Mubarak Homoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

His Highness the Amir also received First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud

**Continued on Page 5** 

## **Community service** for traffic violators

Kuwait launches 43 rehab paths

#### **By Munif Naif**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah issued a ministerial decision amending some provisions of Ministerial Resolution No. 81/1976 regarding the Executive Regulations of the Traffic Law and its Amend-

The new decision, published in the Official Gazette,

'Kuwait Al-Youm', on Sunday stipulates adding Article 212 bis to the resolution, specifying the alternative penalties "that the judge may impose in lieu of the original prison sentence for the crime committed, with one or more of the alternative penalties stipulated in this law and its executive regulations."

The new article defines 'community service' as the assignment of a convict to work at a designated place for the benefit of the public without compensation, provided the work is compat-

**Continued on Page 5** 



A thick haze envelopes Kuwait Towers, reducing visibility as fine dust and suspended particles blanket the skyline.

Haze a daily threat

### **Kuwait weather to cool after** mid-Sept, says meteorologist

Sept brings rare astronomical

wonders to Kuwait night sky

By Abdul-Razzaq Al-Muhsin Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: Meteorologist Fahad Al-Otaibi said temperatures across the country are expected to drop gradually after mid-September, indicating that humidity will be intermittent until the onset of winter

Al-Otaibi told the newspaper that temperatures will drop be-

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31, (KUNA): Kuwait's Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem

Cultural Center's Space Exhibit an-

nounced Sunday that distinctive astro-

nomical events will be visible in Ku-

In a statement to KUNA, the exhibit

explained that astronomical phenomena

include unique events such as eclipses

and comets, while events are recurring,

like moon phases, meteor showers, and

The first major phenomenon will be

a total lunar eclipse on Sunday, Sep-

tember 7, visible in its entirety across

Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf - the only

eclipse of the year and the first since

planetary oppositions.

wait's skies throughout September.

low 30 degrees in early October, with the possibility of scattered rains in late September and Oc-

Meanwhile, Kuwait frequently experiences a weather phenomenon known as "haze," characterized by suspended fine dust and particles in dry air, leading to reduced horizontal visibility, the Meteorological Center said Sunday.

**Continued on Page 5** 

The exhibit added that Saturn's con-

junction on Sunday, September 21 will

make the planet particularly bright for

several nights, offering clearer views

of its details, especially through tele-

On Monday, September 22, the au-

tumnal equinox will occur, when the

suns rays strike the equator directly,

making day and night equal in length

worldwide. Locally, autumn will be-

gin on Saturday, September 27, with

sunrise at 5:39 a.m. and sunset at 5:39

The exhibit noted that autumn in Ku-

wait is relatively short, bringing milder

## **Experts see Kuwait as key** hub for Chinese industries

#### By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: Economic and oil experts have affirmed that Kuwait can become a regional center for Chinese industries if they are

localized, especially with the implementation of the Mubarak Port project by Chinese companies, which will develop trade and maritime transport with various countries around the world.

The newspaper asked the experts the following ques-

■ Can Kuwait become a regional center for Chinese industries?

■ Why is Kuwait dealing with Chinese companies in its development and economic renaissance?

■ Given that China is the second largest importer of Kuwaiti oil - around 300,000 barrels per day, does this affirm that relations between the two countries are based on mutual interests?

Economic expert Salem Al-Hamoud asserted that





the economic openness between Kuwait and China is in the interest of both countries, considering China is the largest importer of Kuwaiti oil. He pointed out that China relies on giant Chinese companies in various fields, implementing housing

projects, including a city comprising 40,000 homes. He said this has contributed to their presence in the housing sector, as Kuwaiti contracting companies are unable to build an integrated city on their own. Al-Hamoud added that China has

succeeded in entering the Kuwaiti market in several areas, while preferring that cooperation includes the establishment of various Chinese industries for electrical appliances and cars, which will be assembled in Kuwait. He said this will make Kuwait a regional center for Chinese industries. He also cited the need

to strengthen economic cooperation between Kuwait and the United States to create balance, while emphasizing that bilateral relations with China have been witnessing stable development for more than half a century, and have grown stronger in recent

of economic cooperation. Economic expert and lawyer Mishari Al-Ayada be-

lieves that Kuwaiti-Chinese relations are growing steadily, serving both economies. He praised the expansion of trade between the two countries, particularly since China is mobilizing all its energy to enter Gulf markets more extensively than before.

**Continued on Page 5** 



In this video grab, suspects are seen with stolen government cables and

## **Kuwait police 'short-circuit'** cable, transformer thieves

#### **By Munif Naif**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: The Criminal Investigations General Department, Capital Governorate Investigations Department and Jaber Al-Ahmad Investigations Office arrested a gang involved in the stealing of government transformers and cables.

In a press statement on Sunday, the Ministry of Interior disclosed that after intensive follow up and investigations, detectives tracked down the main suspect in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh while transporting and storing the stolen government cables. He was caught red-handed with a large quantity of the seized items in his possession.

but talks were suspended in 2009

The ministry also confirmed the arrest of several other suspects -- Bangladeshis and Indians, who admitted their involvement in the thefts. They revealed that the thefts were carried out with the knowledge and participation of the citizen, who owns the house where the goods were stored. He also admitted involvement in the crime. They shared the profits among themselves. Large quantities of stolen government cables were found at the site. It went on to say that further inves-

loading the stolen cables onto a government vehicle owned by the ministry. **Continued on Page 5** 

tigation led to the arrest of a group of

workers in a company that signed a

contract with the Ministry of Electric-

ity, Water and Renewable Energy while

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#### Newswatch

**KUWAIT CITY:** Gulf Cooperation Council Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi said on Sunday the GCC 165th ministerial meeting will be held

The meeting, to be chaired by the Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, will be followed with another one, grouping the

headed by Japanese Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya, Al-Budaiwi said in a press statement.

The GCC ministerial meeting will

memos and reports filed by ministerial, technical committees, the GCC Secretariat General, issues related to inter-GCC dialogue and strategic relations, in addition to regional and international topics



Budaiwi said, adding that it will

the

countries' ef-

forts to cement

with states of

the globe, Al-

relations

would exchange views on various regional and international issues.

(KUNA) As for the GCC-Japanese meeting, comes as part of the Gulf

with Commander of US Central Command (CENTCOM) Admiral Charles Cooper and his accompanying delegation on ways of developing bilateral cooperation, mainly in military and defensive fields.

ther foster the friendly and strategic cooperation relations between the State of Oatar and the United States of America, particularly in the military and defense cooperation spheres, as well as the latest regional and international developments, according to the Qatari Royal Court. (KUNA)

in Kuwait today, Monday.

GCC ministers with their Japanese counterpart.
The GCC-Japanese meeting will be

address reports on implementation of the GCC Supreme Council's resolutions, issued at the 45th summit,

address the joint task plan and the two sides

The GCC states and the Japanese held free trade negotiations in 2006,

before resuming last December. Japan relies on GCC members for over 90 percent of crude oil supplies. **DOHA:** Qatari Amir **Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani** met Sunday

They also tackled ways to fur-

**Gulf Bank wins four** 

#### weather and lower temperatures. **Continued on Page 5**

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-45 km/h with a chance for rising dust and some scattered clouds will ap-

By Night: Hot to rather hot with

Weather light to moderate freshening at times over coastal areas northwest-

**Max Exp** 

high clouds will appear.

**Station** 

**Kuwait City** 

Kuwait Airport

Abdaly Bubyan erly wind to light variable wind, with Jahra speeds of 10-40 km/h and some Salmiyah Ahmadi Nuwaisib Min Rec Wafra Salmy









## **Amir congratulates Trinidad & Tobago on Independence Day**

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable to the President of Trinidad and Tobago, Christine Kangaloo, congratulating her on her country's Independence Day.

His Highness the Amir wished President Kangaloo good health, and her country and people further progress and prosperity.

#### **Crown Prince**

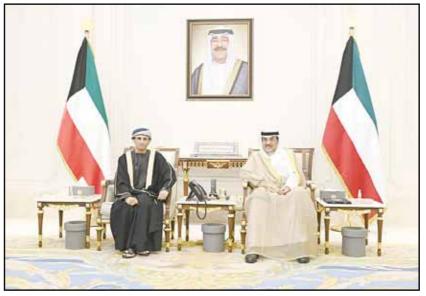
His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a congratula-

tory cable to the President of Trinidad and Tobago, Christine Kangaloo, on her country's Independence Day.
His Highness the Crown Prince

wished the President good health, and her country further progress and

#### **Prime Minister**

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent on Sunday a cable to the President of Trinidad and Tobago, Christine Kangaloo, congratulating her on her country's Indepen-



Crown Prince Diwan photo His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Iraq

### and Head of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, Ambassador Dr. Mohammad bin **Crown Prince receives UN official**

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the

United Nations for Iraq and Head of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, Ambassador Dr. Mohammad bin Awadh Al-Hassan, on the occasion of his visit

#### 'Specify work centers for Article 8 female teachers

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: Assistant Undersecretary for Public Education Affairs at the Ministry of Education Mansour Al-Dhafiri issued a directive to the directors of educational districts to specify the work centers for female teachers whose Kuwaiti citizenship was revoked under Article Eight of the Nationality Law, following the signing of their employment contracts and their registration in the Teachers Registry System, reports Al-Qabas daily

The daily obtained a copy of the directive, in which Al-Dhafiri clarified that these teachers have been entered into the registry as new employees.

He also instructed the directors to allocate work centers for the affected female teachers based on the available vacancies in each educational district.

#### 'Meet admission deadline'

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: The Secretariat General of the Private Universities Council called on students accepted into the internal scholarship plan for the 2025/2026 academic year to complete admission procedures at the educational institutions to which they have been accepted, and to sign the financial pledge and internal scholarship regulations before the first day of school.

Director of Internal Scholarships and Grants at the Secretariat General of the Council Fahad Riyadh Al-Khalifa revealed in a press statement on Sunday that the students' completion of these steps on time ensures their regular attendance from day one and reflects their commitment to the regulations governing internal scholarships

## Road repairs in full swing at 33 areas and highways

MPW, PART focus on smooth flow of traffic

**By Mohammad Ghanem** Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: The Ministry of Public Works (MPW) and Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) continue to carry out major maintenance works as per the new road contracts in 33 areas and highways, with full commitment to quality assurance and international standards.

On Sunday, the ministry announced the maintenance works from Aug 30 to Sept 4 through the Government Communication Center's account on the X platform.

PART are in eight locations: Abdally Road, Subiya Road, Fourth Ring Road intersection with Morocco Road, Fourth Ring Road with the intersection of Morocco Road to the intersection of Damascus Street, Salmi Road, Fahaheel Road opposite Mishref intersection with Salwa, flyover at the intersection of the Fourth Ring Road towards Salmiya and Seventh Ring Road with Kilometer 24 to Kilometer 27 in both directions.

It added that the maintenance works of the ministry in the six governorates cover 25 areas as follows:

- Jahra Governorate: Saad Al-Abdullah
- Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate: Masael Blocks Four and Five, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Block Three and Ourain Block Four
- Capital Governorate: Qairawan Blocks One, Two and Three, Al-Nahda Blocks Two

Four and Five, Jaber Al-Ahmad Blocks One, Two and Six, Shamiya Block Seven, Dasma Block One, Sulaibikhat Blocks One, Two and Five, Doha Block Five, Al-Rawda Blocks One, Four and Five

- Ahmadi Governorate: Sabahiya Blocks One, Two and Three and Sabah Al-Ahmad Blocks A,D and E
- Hawalli Governorate: Bayan Block Seven and Eight, Mishref Blocks Three, Four, Five and 7b, and Salwa Blocks 10 and 11
- Farwaniya Governorate: Ishbiliya Blocks Three and Four, Al-Ragga Blocks One and Two, Khaitan Block Nine, Firdous all plots, Ardiya residential plots One, Two, Three, Four and Five, Andalusia all plots, and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh Blocks One, Two, Three, Four and Five.

The ministry and PART are focusing on the implementation of road maintenance contracts to enhance road efficiency and ensure

Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah meets Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Iraq and Head of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, Ambassador Dr. Mohammad bin Awadh Al-Hassan.

### Kuwait vows cooperation with UN

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31, (KUNA): Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah met with Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Iraq and Head of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, Ambassador Dr. Mohammad bin Awadh Al-Hassan on Sunday.

During the meeting, they tackled ways of promoting bilateral cooperation and coordination between the State of Kuwait and the UN in a way that contributes to bolstering regional security and stability, the Ministry of Interior said in a press release.

Sheikh Fahad Yusuf reiterated Kuwait's commitment to continuing close cooperation with the UN, while the visiting UN official commended Kuwait's role and efforts in safeguarding regional security and stability, according to the release.

#### **Continuity of benefits hits dead end**

### Deadline for Article 8 women to amend status expires

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: The deadline set by the Ministry of Interior for women whose Kuwaiti citizenship was revoked under Article Eight of the Nationality Law to amend their legal status and prove their seriousness in doing so ended on Sunday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a previous statement, the ministry affirmed that this deadline is in line with the commitment of the concerned authorities to ease procedures and ensure the continuity of benefits granted to these women under the 'Kuwaiti treatment' clause.

The ministry stressed the need for these women to amend their status within the deadline, as delay or failure to prove seriousness will result in the cancellation of their benefits.

It clarified that amending the status does not prevent the consideration of a grievance submitted to the Grievance Committee for Withdrawal, Forfeiture and Loss of Kuwaiti Citizenship, as the last date for amending the status and proving seriousness to do so is on Aug 31, 2025. It launched a service through Sahel application to provide proof of seriousness in amending status to continue receiving the benefits.

Chairman of the committee Advisor Ali Al-Dhubaibi affirmed last week the commitment of the committee to study each grievance and submit recommendations to the Council of

In a post on the official account of the Gov-

ernment Communication Center on the X platform, Al-Dhubaibi said the committee receives grievances 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including official holidays.

He explained that "those concerned must provide proof of the restoration of their original nationality and obtain a passport from their country of origin in order to continue enjoying all the benefits approved by the Council of Ministers. If they complete the procedures and do not obtain a passport, the minimum requirement is to provide proof of seriousness in applying for a passport." He stressed that this does not prevent the committee from continuing to receive grievances, study them and submit recom-

### Kuwait to host 2nd Gulf housing confab Sept 3-4

#### By Mohammad Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: Kuwait will host the Second Gulf Housing Conference on Sept 3-4, with high-level Gulf participation, under the theme, "Sustainable Housing."
In a press statement on Sunday, Deputy Director Gen-

eral for Public Relations and Development and Chairman of the Conference Supreme Committee Omar Al-Ruwaih revealed that the objectives of the conference include activating the role of Kuwait in the Gulf housing sector, and providing a common platform for the announcement of partnerships between Gulf governments and the private sector in the construction field.

He said the conference activities include a series of discussions on key issues related to housing care and the development of services provided to citizens, as well as utilizing smart technologies in infrastructure and cities.

He disclosed that items in the agenda of the first day of the conference include a discussion of Gulf experiences in sustainable housing, a session on urban sustainability and smart cities with the participation of representatives of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and the Kuwaiti private sector, and a session on real estate investment opportunities and challenges. He said the second day will focus on digital technologies

and their impact on real estate development, followed by a session on residential unit design.

He added the conference will be held simultaneously with a housing exhibition, in which Gulf institutions will participate, along with local, regional and international companies specializing in real estate development and investment, with the aim of unifying efforts and achieving effective partnerships.

#### the untold story of Athens By Ahmad alsarraf cooperation with them Even after the establishment of Israel

Our Lady of Lebanon and

**Other Voices** 

We received an invitation from our friend Salim Shablaq to attend his eldest son's wedding in Greece. It was a wonderful three days, and an

opportunity to learn more about Greece.

Despite its \_\_\_\_\_

famed natural beauty and magnificent civilization, Greece has gradually fallen behind other European countries and nearly declared bankruptcy had Germany not rushed to save it, subject to

harsh conditions. Greece was the cradle of Western civilization, democracy, Western philosophy and theater, and the mother of the Olympic Games.

Even after 2,500 years, its heritage remains globally influential in art, literature, politics and culture.

Athens, with its exceptional historical and cultural significance, was a city-state, a source of art, culture and democracy, and its famous monuments, such as the Acropolis and the Parthenon, remain a global symbol of the classical spirit and civilization.

The name 'Athena' is derived from the ancient Greek goddess of wisdom and war, who was considered the patroness of the city. The name is pronounced and written

in the plural form 'Athens' in French and English. The 's' refers to the fact that the name was originally plural, but in modern Greek it is considered singular.

Athens is different from thousands of capitals and major cities, all located along a river or sea. The reason is that the city developed around the 'Acropolis', a natural defensive hill overlooking the fertile plain of Kifissia, but about 20 kilometers from the sea.

This gave it a fortified military position, perhaps more important than the river and the coast at the time.

It also had its maritime outlet through the nearby port of Piraeus, its ancient and modern maritime gateway.

Greece has a historical reputation as an anti-Semitic nation due to its anti-Jewish Christianity and its shameful

stance during the Ottoman occupation of Greece (1453–1833), enriched by its

in 1948, Greece took a pro-Arab stance throughout the early conflicts. Greece also had very close relations with most of Israel's historical Arab

enemies, in addition to a long shared history, and there were large and thriving Greek communities in Lebanon and Furthermore, Greece took a negative

stance toward Israel because of the latter's friendly stance toward Turkiye, a country Greece hates due to its dark history with Turkiye and views as a potential enemy.

Due to religion, Greece is more inclined toward Russia than other European countries, but over time, the younger generation has become less anti-Zionist.

However, what happened to a country that was once the cradle of the finest and most influential civilizations in history that led to its decline?

This goes back to the ancient wars and conflicts between Athens and Sparta (431-404 BC), which weakened it and made it vulnerable to invaders.

This led to the deterioration of its economy, which relied heavily on trade between neighboring cities and regions, and a decline in its population. Its economy slowly collapsed, exacerbated by

political instability.

The death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC led to the division of his vast empire among his generals, and internal strife that weakened its unity, facilitating the invasion of the Roman Empire's armies and its economic and political collapse.

Note: A well-known Kuwaiti woman hosted a luncheon for her Kuwaiti friends, including my wife, at a Beirut restaurant.

Everyone was surprised when the First Lady, wife of the President of the Republic of Lebanon, who was at the restaurant, left her table to go to them and welcome them to Lebanon.

This was a beautiful gesture of humility, demonstrating that Lebanon will endure, with all that it embodies: generosity, dignity, pride and beauty.

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

#### produce clean fuels, says EBRC By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari ence on fossil fuels. Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: A research team from the Energy and Building Research Center

Project to tackle climate change,

(EBRC) at Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) announced the completion of a research project funded by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) titled "Two-Dimensional Carbon



Nitride/Porous Zinc Sulfide Nanocomposites for Converting Carbon Dioxide to Solar Fuels under Simulated Solar Light."

Dr. Latifa Al-Hajji, Project Leader and Director of the Nanotechnology Program at EBRC, stated that the project aims to develop innovative nanomaterial-based technologies to use carbon dioxide as a source for producing clean fuels, and to create highly efficient photocatalysts capable of harnessing sunlight to convert carbon dioxide into fuels like methanol and methane.

She pointed out this will also contribute to efforts of the country to achieve carbon neutrality and reduce its depend-

She disclosed that the results of the project enabled the team to manufacture advanced nano-composites with a high capacity to convert carbon dioxide to methanol, in addition to high selectivity and stability in successive operating cycles.

She said the results showed that this technology is a practical step toward building efficient photoconversion systems for carbon dioxide in both the gaseous and liquid phases, as well as developing scientific knowledge in the field of using solar light and nanomaterials to find alternative solutions to the carbon emission problem.

She stressed the importance of this project in light of national and international trends to combat climate change. "It supports Kuwait Vision 2035 and the Sustainable Development Goals, and paves the way for the production of 'green fuel' from renewable sources, thereby, enhancing energy security and reducing harmful emissions," she elabo-

It is worth noting that this achievement is the nucleus for broader future projects in the field of carbon capture and conversion into valuable economic products, putting the State of Kuwait among the leading countries in providing scientific solutions to global environmental challenges.

## **Smart cities on agenda**



A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## 'It's the good deeds that count, not the faith an individual practices'

"THE first meeting between His Excellency the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah, and the groups responsible for organizing mosques and Husainiyas follows a previous meeting held by His Excellency with the owners of Husainiyas during the recent Ashura season," Hassan Ali Karam wrote for Al-Seyassah

"I believe that an official's meeting with public groups on a public issue is a way to convey public issues to the government.

"This is the best means of communication and contact between the government and the people, and the best way to expedite progress and achieve public de-

"This meeting, which brought together the public group and the most important official in the government, is the first of its kind, and such meetings should be repeated until the picture is complete and the desired goal is achieved.

"In my opinion, this meeting was aimed to present many ideas, not just about the so-called organization of mosques and Hu-

sayniyas, but rather expanding the scope of interest to include religions which have followers in the country

"Organization is the opposite of chaos, and that is what we need. "How can we communicate and meet with others if this other person is

not somewhere else, but may be your neighbor or a member of your neigh-

"From here arises a question: How do we create a Kuwaiti society where wills fuse into a unified national will?

"Goodness lies in agreement, not in disagreement and discord.

"As I write this article, I have in front of me a book whose author gathered all religions and sects, heavenly and man-made, within its pages. This is undoubtedly an effort for which the author should be commended.

"If the reader or researcher of this book or another who researches religions happens to come across unique religious or philosophical opinions and ideas, what remains most important is what unites religions: unity and

"The religious leaders are turbaned, each one defending his religion and belief, and making his sect the most correct.

"However, religion is not the only thing that leads you to heaven. There are deeds that may not constitute your prayers, fasting, zakat, khums or Hajj, but they are considered the key to enter heaven. In Kuwait, we are united with other brothers of different religions, ideologies and sects.

"We agree or disagree with them, but we must abide by the Almighty's saying, 'There is no compulsion in religion.'

"As for accusing others of deviance, this is not their business, considering that there is a Lord in the heavens who holds his servants accountable. "However, this does not mean anything, and this only happens due to ignorance and division.

"The residents of Kuwait – Muslims and Christians – with their various intellectual orientations and religious beliefs, practice their rituals and celebrate religious occasions.

"These religious practices are limited to Muslims and Christians, such as holidays and New Year's. So what about others?

"A few years ago, it was rumored that Buddhists established a house to practice their religious prayers.

"Pressure was brought upon the government, which forced it to shut down the house and prevent its visitors from practicing their faith. "Nevertheless, practicing one's religious belief is their business, and

they will be held accountable by the Lord of creation. "Due to the ban, we do not know whether adherents of opposing religions practice their beliefs in secret or in public, while unifying the permitted beliefs in the country is supposed to bring together people in one place to discuss matters, needs and shortcomings, as well as openness to others.

"Almighty Allah is not only for Muslims or Christians, but for all human beings who walk on the earth. "Introducing and getting to know others is a requirement of humanitarian

and security necessity, and there are common interests that unite everyone.' Also:

"The second edition of 'Lomi Hasawi' Exhibition conveys a mes-

sage that goes beyond traditional agricultural products, becoming a platform for celebrating the local identity and supporting sustainable development trends in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," Saudi writer Hajar Al-Saleem wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

The exhibition opened at Al-Ahsa Exhibition Center under the patronage of Governor of Al-Ahsa Prince Saud bin Talal bin Badr, with several officials, farmers and businessmen in attendance.

The launch of the exhibition coincided with the opening of 'Lomi Market', an addition that reflects the desire to enhance the economic value of the product and connect it directly with the consumers. This year's exhibition is distinguished for the diversity of pavilions and the richness of activities

The exhibition features food, health and cosmetic products extracted from the 'lomi' (lime), along with training workshops and advisory sessions for farmers and entrepreneurs. Spaces were also designated for children to introduce them to the stages of growing and manufacturing 'lomi' in a simplified educational manner.

"During the exhibition, several cooperation agreements were signed between government and private entities, including Al-Ahsa Development Authority and Saudi Airlines Cargo, as well as partnerships with educational and development institutions.

"These agreements indicate that the Hasawi 'lomi' sector is no longer limited to local activity, as it is rather part of a wider vision to increase exports and stimulate the rural economy.

What is striking about this edition is the presence of the social and cultural dimensions, alongside the economic one. Women's associations, craftsmen and photographers participated in highlighting the exhibition. Thus, lime transformed from a mere fruit into a symbol that encapsulates the spirit of Al-Ahsa and the richness of its agricultural environment.

We can say that the Hasawi lime exhibition is a new step in a long journey to transform a local product into a prominent Saudi brand. With official and public support, it seems this small fruit is poised to bear a great success story that reflects the authenticity of the land and human innovation."

— Compiled by Mohammad Wangengi/Simi K.Kutty

## **Kuwait extradites Nepalese human** peddler, migrant smuggler: report

Lawyer detained for 21 days

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: The Ministry of Interior extradited a Nepalese, identified as K. Sh., for involvement in human trafficking and migrant smuggling, reports Al-Anba daily.

The extradition followed the receipt of an official warrant from the Nepalese security authorities, supported by evidence confirming his involvement in the above-mentioned crimes, as established by the Nepalese judi-

The ministry coordinated with the Nepalese authorities to ensure the extradition of the accused for his arrival in Nepal. The international warrant indicated that the accused trafficked his fellow citizens, though it remains unclear whether he played a role in the deaths of some Nepalese who attempted to flee to European countries.

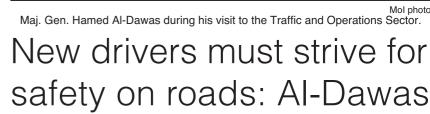
Asked if the accused engaged in human trafficking while in Kuwait by sending expatriates of his nationality abroad in exchange for money, a security source stated "it has not been proven that the accused committed these crimes while in Kuwait. Otherwise, the ministry of would have referred him to the Kuwaiti judiciary before extraditing him after serving his prison sentence.' The source also revealed that detectives arrested the accused in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.

Lawyer detained: The Public Prosecution ordered the detention of a lawyer for 21 days at the

Central Prison, pending investigation for infringing upon the powers of HH the Amir and spreading baseless rumors about citizenship grievances, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The lawyer was accused of interfering in the powers of His Highness the Amir and spreading false rumors based on a video clip, in which he discussed the procedures followed by the Grievance Committee and the amendment of the status of those whose Kuwaiti citizenship was revoked as per Article Eight of the Nationality Law.

Reliable sources told the daily that the prosecution charged the accused with violating constitutional powers and attempting to spread false information that could sow confusion and cast doubt on sovereign decisions related to citizen-



KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: Assistant Under-secretary for Public Security Affairs at the Ministry of Interior Major General Hamed Al-Dawas conducted an inspection visit at the Traffic and Operations Sector, where he was warmly welcomed by Sector Head Brigadier Abdullah Al-Ateeqi, reports Al-

Anba daily. The visit is part of ongoing field inspections carried out by ministry officials to monitor workflow and evaluate operational readiness.

During the inspection tour, Al-Dawas checked the driving test centers and reviewed the modern systems applied in theoretical and practical examinations. He commended the awareness programs for new

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drivers and affirmed their contribution to fostering the traffic safety culture.

He also visited the Traffic Operations Department, where he observed the central control room and the smart road monitoring system, which provides round-the-clock traffic surveillance and enables rapid response to accidents and

The inspection tour included an assessment of the new patrol units recently delivered to the General Directorate of Emergency Police. Outfitted with the latest security technologies and advanced systems, these patrol units strengthened the Directorate's capacity for swift intervention and effective response to emergencies.



#### **Crackdown nets illegals, criminals**

## 31,718 traffic violations, 65 minors driving sans license

#### **By Munif Naif**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: Field campaigns conducted by the General Traffic Department in all governorates over the past week resulted in the issuance of 31,718 traffic violation citations, referral of 65 minors to the Juvenile Prosecution for driving without a license, and detention of 35 individuals.

The weekly statistics of the department indicated that the campaigns also resulted in the impoundment of nine vehicles and seizure of 89 wanted vehicles, as well as the arrest of 51 individuals for absconding and evading arrest, 171 for holding expired residency permits, four who were found in an abnormal condition and four street vendors. The statistics showed as well that the

department dealt with 1,189 traffic acci-

dents, which resulted in 158 injuries. The department also referred 65 minors to the Juvenile Prosecution two weeks ago, increasing the total number of minors referred to the prosecution within the 15-

day period to 130. It confirmed that these campaigns are part of its efforts to instill traffic discipline, reduce the incidence of minors driving without a license, and protect road



A lone fireman tackles the blaze.

## **KFF** teams tackle blaze at farm; no one injured

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: Fire broke out in a warehouse at a farm in Al-Khuwaisat recently, reports Al-Seyassah. Firefighting teams from Jahra and Kazma fire centers con-

trolled the fire in record time. No injuries or loss of life were



The draw in progress.



Results are announced

150 candidates chosen; 50 on reserve list

## **Mol holds public draw for 33rd Specialized Officers batch**

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31, (KUNA): The Ministry of Interior (MoI) on Sunday held a public draw for the 33rd batch of specialized officer students, under the patronage of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

The draw, which took place at the Saad Al-Abdullah Academy for Security Sciences, resulted in the selection of 150 candidates, with an additional 50 placed on the reserve list. The event was attended by Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry, Major General Ali Al-Adwani, along with several high-ranking security officials.

Colonel Mohammad Al-Mutairi, Assistant Director of the Academy's Registration and Admissions Department, gave a detailed presentation ahead of the draw. He revealed that a total of 2,084 applicants had applied through the unified government platform for electronic services (Sahl), representing various specialized fields.

Following initial screening and review, 957 candidates met the basic eligibility criteria. These applicants then underwent a rigorous assessment process, which included aptitude and general knowledge tests, physical fitness evaluations, and personal interviews

 all aligned with the demands of military and security service.

Colonel Al-Mutairi noted that 806 candidates ultimately qualified for the public draw. The final selection met the ministry's requirement of 150 main candidates, with 50 others designated as reserves.

At the conclusion of the event, Major General Al-Adwani congratulated the selected candidates, conveying the greetings and well wishes of Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah. He emphasized the ministry's commitment to nurturing national talent and empowering them to serve in key security roles.



#### Former officials urge government to activate decisions frozen for years

## North Shuwaikh's ghost town: From eviction to neglect

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: In the year 2000, the government proposed the evacuation of North Shuwaikh, which housed most of the public benefit associations and civil society

This was the result of a Municipal Council decision issued on Sept 25, 2000. The first clause of the decision stipulates approval of the planning of the area and the creation of 65 plots measuring 32,500 square meters, in addition to terminating contracts with the public benefit associations in the area.

As the eviction period drags on and the current year draws to a close, the appearance of the abandoned buildings is increasingly becoming desolate and hideous. During the day, the area resembles a 'ghost town', empty

and teeming with stray animals, and at night, it is enveloped in utter darkness.

> What makes the scene even worse is that the area is surrounded by picturesque Kuwaiti landmarks like the headquarters of Kuwait Petroleum

Corporation (KPC), the Ministry of Oil and Al-Ahmad Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center (Kuwait Opera House). The Second Ring Road, which has been completely reforested, added to the splendor and beauty of the part before this vital and beauti-

ful road ends in a hideous sight. The goal of the eviction was to use the seaside part of the area for the implementation of massive investment and commercial projects. However, since the eviction in 2016, the headquarters of the old public benefit associations in that area have remained empty. The buildings are either demolished or wide open, revealing old furniture, not to mention the state of neglect and chaos, as if they are

The newspaper interviewed experts and former officials in these associations who witnessed the beginning of the eviction. They expressed their regret that the area has not been exploited until now, stressing the importance of activating the decisions issued regarding it years ago, which included the need to utilize it for huge investment and commercial projects, calling on the Ministry



eral of the Council of Ministers with a com-

Photos by Samer Shaqir

Abandoned buildings in North Shuwaikh stand in ruins years after eviction, awaiting redevelopment.

of Finance to quickly convert it into economic or tourism projects.

It can be recalled that the Council of Ministers issued a decision to vacate the area based on the letter of the Ministry of Finance containing the results and recommendations of a working group assigned by the Public Services Committee in its meeting held on Feb 1, 2011, headed by the Ministry of Finance and including representatives of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NC-CAL), Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor and Kuwait Municipality to carry out a study on the properties located in North Shuwaikh that were being utilized by public benefit associations and to provide the Secretariat Gen-

Dilapidated structures and open pits dominate the abandoned

North Shuwaikh area years after eviction.



prehensive report on the issue.

Dr. Buresli

Former Vice President of Kuwait Accountants and Auditors

Association (KAAA) Abdul Latif Al-Ahmad reviewed the first eviction letter, stating that "in 2001, eviction decisions were issued to the public benefit associations in North Shuwaikh." He revealed the government proposed allocating new

oukh -- 400 square meters for each association. "At the time, the associations discussed the issue with the government, as this space is insufficient and the location itself is not suitable," he elaborated. He said that he worked hard until the asso-

sites for these associations in Jleeb Al-Shuy-

ciation obtained a prime land measuring about 1,600 square meters. He pointed out that the associations were reluctant to evacuate, but the State compensation alleviated their suffering. He confirmed that his association received financial support from His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad to build on the land, in addition to support from the then Crown Prince HH Sheikh Nawaf Al-



Overgrown trees and crumbling walls define the neglected landscape of North Shuwaikh

Ahmad. He stated that other public benefit associations also received plots in various areas, in addition to the financial support from the

He is surprised that the area vacated by the associations years ago has not been utilized till date, especially since the evacuation took place between 2013 and 2016. He stressed the need to use this area for investment projects that serve the national economy, so it does not remain a breeding ground for garbage and neglected furniture, not to mention the dilapidated buildings.

In addition, former Chairman of Kuwaiti Contracting Companies Union Dr. Salah Buresli called for using the old association buildings in the area, which is currently a 'ghost town'. He wondered why these buildings have been left as they are despite their location overlooking the sea,

and why they have not been utilized for tourism and entertainment projects or for small businesses. He pointed out that the State pushed for the evacuation of buildings in the area based on a study conducted at the time, which specified pumping more than KD20 billion, in



Al-Numaisi

cooperation with the private sector, to utilize the buildings in the area for investment and commercial projects that align with the aspiration of the State to transform into a global and regional financial and commer-

Political analyst and head of the Civil Conservative Party Hamad Al-Numaisi believes that North Shuwaikh is a distinguished area, expressing regret that it has been neglected since the evacuation, until it became a deserted area infested with stray insects and rodents. He pointed out that the State could have used this seaside area for BOT projects like Souq Sharq, which is the best example of the success of this type of project in Kuwait. He stated that this area, which is close to the Ministry of Oil, requires the implementation of the decisions issued years ago regarding the evacuation of public benefit associations, considering the government announced then that the area would be allocated for economic and investment projects.



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## **MEW awaits SAB** nod on contracts

KD34 mln tenders under review

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: The** replacement of 132 kV breakers and State Audi Bureau (SAB) is currently reviewing and auditing 10 tenders and contracts of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy - eight of which have a total value of KD34.198 million, reports Al-Seyassah daily quoting sources.

Sources disclosed that the ministry is waiting for approval from the bureau to sign contracts with the winning bidders or extend them.

Sources explained that the contracts, in general, aim to modernize and develop electricity networks and production stations. Sources said these include a tender for the supply of a 400 kV overhead line to Abdally Z station at a cost of KD23,900.

Sources also cited a tender for the

their accessories at Shuwaikh power generation and water distillation sta-

In another development, the ministry obtained conditional approval from the bureau to sign a contract for the maintenance of street lighting equipment in Ahmadi Governorate at a cost of KD1.549 million — a saving of KD 4.675 million due to the low prices of some items.

The tender includes improving the performance of street lighting equipment throughout the governorate, replacing worn-out equipment, and maintaining and repairing malfunctions in this vital facility.

Meanwhile, the ministry will conduct a week-long advanced training course on digital transformation and artificial intelligence for department managers, including how to use these modern technologies, starting Sept 21.



Kuwait's mangroves boost marine life and bird habitats.

#### Jahra Reserve leads preservation push

## Kuwait steps up mangrove planting to preserve coasts

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: The Government Communication Center stated that mangroves are considered the 'green lungs of the coasts', because they protect biodiversity, reports Al-Seyassah

In an awareness post on its social media accounts, the Center stressed the importance of mangroves, indicating that the benefits include the following:

■ Water purification through the improvement of dissolved oxygen levels in water, which supports the ecological

balance of the marine environment. ■ Support marine life by providing

habitat for fish, migratory birds and crustaceans, and contributing to enhancing biodiversity.

■ Coastal protection, stabilizing soil, reducing erosion, and acting as a natural barrier against waves and storms.

■ Combat climate change, absorb carbon dioxide and improve air qual-

The Center pointed out that Kuwait's efforts in this area include planting thousands of mangrove seedlings in Jahra Nature Reserve, in addition to environmental projects and research to preserve the coastal ecological balance.

New leadership in Amiri Diwan signals reform drive

## **Kuwait entrusts key positions to experienced royals**

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: With the well-known wisdom and insightful reform vision of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and in line with his strategy that restored Kuwait to its former glory as the 'Pearl of the Gulf' and his motto: Competence and experience as the primary criteria for selecting senior positions and leaders, Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali was appointed Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs with the rank of Minister.

In addition, Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad was appointed Head of the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince with the rank of Minister for a term of four years and Sheikh Abdulaziz Mishal Mubarak Abdullah Al-

nd Sheikh Abdulaziz Mishal Mubarak Abdullah Al-Ahmad was appointed Undersecretary of the Amiri Diwan.

In an interview with the newspaper, a number of politicians affirmed this is a pro-reform step consistent with the era of the "strong and trustworthy" and the new reform era that aims to empower competencies and those with experience and good reputation in leadership positions.

Others regard it as a practical application of the principle of "putting the right man in the right place." Former Housing Affairs Minister Yahya Al-Sumait congratulated the three ruling family members for their appointment in the Amiri Diwan and the Diwan

their appointment in the Amiri Diwan and the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince, as it reflects the new reform approach of Kuwait, especially since their appointment is tantamount to "putting the right man in the right place."

He explained that anyone who follows the biography of Sheikh Hamad Al-Jaber Al-Ali will find that he is a seasoned politician, as he held the positions of Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Information, in addition to his work as Ambassador of Kuwait to the most important country in the region — the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. "His assumption of the new position is a shining sign for the country, confirming that Kuwait prioritizes those with competence and experience," he added.

He pointed out that the selection of Sheikh Thamer Al-Jaber is a confirmation that the State is injecting new blood into leadership positions, particularly since he has worked in various positions and has vast experience in military security, having held several positions in this sector.

He said the appointment of Sheikh Abdulaziz Al-Mishaal as Undersecretary of the Amiri Diwan demonstrates the wisdom and shrewdness of the political leadership that gives young people the opportunity to gain political experience in sensitive and important positions. "When the right man is placed in the right position, nations advance," he stressed.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid bin Shaaban, leader of Al-Hawajer tribe, stated that the abovementioned appointments affirm the keenness of the top political leadership, represented by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah, to choose the best, with a keen eye, experience, and known for their humility in dealing with everyone.

He stressed at the same time that he is fully aware that the three sheikhs

will be a good example in assuming positions and will support the country in all forums, whether inside or outside the Amiri Diwan.

He hopes that the current approach of the State in appointing competent people in major leadership positions, whether from within the family or outside, will continue, especially since Kuwait has high professional expertise in all fields.

Director General of the Gulf Information and Documentation Center Dr. Ibrahim Al-Shukri affirmed that the Kuwaiti people felt completely relieved by the appointment of officials with political weight in the Amiri Diwan, pointing out that the appointment of Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah as Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs came at the right time given his ministerial experience, as he held more than one ministerial position and proved to be a politically seasoned

rial position and proved to be a politically seasoned man.

He added the appointment of Sheikh Thamer Al-

He added the appointment of Sheikh Thamer Al-Jaber as Head of the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince proves that Kuwait is experiencing the new era of reform through the appointment of competent individuals.

On the appointment of Sheikh Abdulaziz Mishal Mubarak Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah as Undersecretary of the Amiri Diwan, he asserted this falls within the category of reforms that the country is following in accordance with the Holy Quran verse: "The best one you can hire is the strong and trustworthy." He wished the three sheikhs success, and that they will be a new

addition to the reform process.

He continued saying that the appointment of the three sheikhs is in line with the principle "the right man in the right place," explaining that this principle is one of the foundations that lead to the success of institutions and the achievement of their objectives as required. He pointed out that the

principle is one of the foundations that lead to the success of institutions and the achievement of their objectives as required. He pointed out that the State benefits from empowering those with experience and leadership in sensitive positions, which contributes to achieving efficiency.

He explained that the selection of the final team to assume these positions

is a wise and sound step, as they all possess values, morals and nobility, in addition to their extreme humility and adherence to the customs, traditions and norms prevailing in society.

He stressed the need for the State to continue appointing competent people, as it suffered in recent years from appointments based on nepotism, especially since the reform of countries happens when leadership positions are given to the qualified.

He added that the three sheikhs who recently assumed high-ranking positions are testament to their experience and qualifications, because they served the country in more than one position and proved through such positions that they are trustworthy.

Based on this, he believes His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is the best to apply the Holy Quran verse: "Indeed, the best one you can hire is the strong and the trustworthy," taking into consideration that Islam emphasized the need for scrutiny in choosing the most qualified to assume leadership positions.

He thinks the era of appointments based on favoritism, cronyism and other negative factors is over, as Kuwait is currently living in a new reform era that includes all areas of life. He added the negative choices in the past are behind the decline in the economic and developmental aspects of the country despite the fact that it was previously called the 'Pearl of the Gulf'.  $\hfill\Box$   $\hfill\Box$   $\hfill\Box$ 

Brief biography of Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali:

■ He holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Kuwait University in 1989.

■ He served as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense in the government formed by Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah in December 2020, and also in the government formed in March 2021.

■ He served as Minister of Information from November 2011 to February 2012.

■ He served as Kuwait's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia from February 2007 to November 2011.

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■ From 1998 to 2001, he served as Assistant Undersecretary for External Supplies at the Ministry of Defense and Head of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense.

He worked at the Kuwaiti Embassy in Italy from 1993 to 1997.

■ From 1989 to 1991, he worked as a political researcher in the Office of the Minister of Interior.

Sheikh Thamer Al-Jaber... a prolific career

Born in 1971.

Dr. Al-Shukri

Married with three children.

Holds a degree in Military So

■ Holds a degree in Military Science from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in London.

Holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the United States of America.
Worked as an officer in the Ministry of Defense in the field of intelli-

worked as an officer in the Ministry of Defense in the field of intering gence and military security between 1991 and 1994.

Worked in the Ministry of Interior - State Security Department between

Worked in the Ministry of Interior - State Security Department between 1994 and 2000.

■ In 2000, a decree was issued appointing him Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Office Affairs at the Crown Prince's Court.

■ He corred as Doputy Chairman of the Citizens Service and Performance.

■ He served as Deputy Chairman of the Citizens Service and Performance Evaluation Agency, affiliated with the Council of Ministers, in 2003.
■ In 2012, a decree was issued appointing him Ambassador of the State of

Kuwait to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In October 2019, a decree was issued appointing him Ambassador of the

State of Kuwait to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

An Amiri Decree was issued appointing him as Chairman of the Court of His Highness the Crown Prince, effective Sept 1, 2025.

His Highness the Crown Prince, effective Sept 1, 2025. He chaired several government committees and teams as follows::

Committee for Secondment and Transfer between Government Agencies (2005)

■ State Audit Bureau Report Preparation Team (2003)
■ Team for Establishing Leadership Selection Guidelines in Government

Agencies (2005)
■ Permanent Committee for Implementing the Government Work Program

(2006) ■ Team for Investigating the Circumstances of the Citizenship File (2008)

■ Team for Following Up the Implementation of the Recommendations of the State Audit Bureau Report on Financial Expenditures Attributed to the Court of His Highness the Prime Minister (2008)

#### **Continued from Page 1**

#### **Maximizing the**

Al-Sumait

Therefore, when the Ministry of Interior announced today the discovery of fraud networks and other activities, it is no longer surprising.

The government has the opportunity to implement major development projects and utilize local funds to establish an effective economic system, while eliminating those who hinder progress.

It must lay down good plans to train citizens in professional skills to eradicate the loverabundance of public sector employees, as the case in civilized

All of this is possible if the intention is sincere and the government takes advantage of the ministerial discipline.

#### **Community service**

The convict must attend one or more awareness and rehabilitation training programs and lectures at a government or private institution or a public benefit association involved in the medical, psychological, social, educational, craft, industrial or religious fields to correct their behavior. Rehabilitation, training and awareness lecture programs and procedures for their implementation are specified. In case of damage caused by the crime, the convict is required to restore the property to its original condition, repair it or compensate for it.

The second paragraph of the added article stipulates 43 community service penalties in 16 government agencies, which are determined based on the nature of the crime and the convict's circumstances, in coordination with the General Traffic Department.

These penalties are as follows:
1. Ministry of Interior: participate in traffic awareness campaigns, and work of the General Traffic Department, correctional and rehabilitation institutions, and civil defense.

2. Ministry of Health: assist in health awareness campaigns and scheduling appointments.

3. Ministry of Education: assist in organizing school libraries, participate in student awareness campaigns, cleaning or other organizing activities.

4. Ministry of Social Affairs: participate in social welfare activities and distribution of aid, and assist in social development centers and cooperative societies.
5. Ministry of Endowments and

Islamic Affairs: assist in preparing religious activities, arrange copies of the Holy Qur'an and clean mosques.

6. Ministry of Electricity, Water

and Renewable Energy: participate in documenting electricity meter data.
7. Ministry of Public Works: participate in sidewalk painting, mainte-

nance and field works.

8. Ministry of Commerce and Industry: distribute awareness brochures, assist in consumer awareness and support awareness exhibitions.

9. Environment Public Authority:

participate in coastal cleanup, waste removal, tree planting and environmental campaigns.

10. Kuwait Municipality: organize

cemeteries, manage funeral affairs, waste removal and cleaning. 11. Public Authority for Applied Education and Training: organizing craft workshops and training convicts in simple professions.

12. Public Authority for Manpower: translation, organizing training courses and raising awareness among expatriate workers.

13. Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources: clean public parks and tree planting.
14. Public Authority for Roads and

Transportation: painting sidewalks, organizing signage and removing waste from roads.

15. Public benefit associations: Training in simple professions, participation in charitable work and

humanitarian aid, administrative support and awareness campaigns.

16. Ministry of Oil: work in gas

stations.

The third paragraph of the article states that the awareness, rehabilitation and training programs and lectures are aimed at raising awareness about the dangers of traffic violations and the importance of adhering to traffic rules, rehabilitating violators, and raising their awareness on traffic and safety rules, including the following programs: educational lectures, training workshops, and psychological and behavioral programs aimed at modifying irresponsible

driving behavior.

The fourth paragraph states that the General Traffic Department is responsible for organizing the awareness, rehabilitation and training programs and lectures stipulated in the regulations, in cooperation with government or private entities and public benefit associations.

The fifth paragraph stipulates the mechanisms for damage repair in coordination with the party harmed by

the crime as follows:

Restore the property to its original

condition through replacement.

Repair the damage and restore the

property it to its original condition.

Monetary or material compensation of the same type as the damage caused to the property, which could not be restored to its original condition or remedied, equivalent to restoring the property to its previous condition. The cost of repairing the damage is determined through the coordinated efforts of the General Traffic Department and the government agency that owns the movable or immovable property.

The sixth paragraph mandates the General Department for the Implementation of Judgments to notify the General Traffic Department about imposing the alternative penalty.

The seventh paragraph states that the entity where the alternative penalty is implemented shall submit a report to the General Traffic Department detailing the extent of the convict's commitment to the penalty. If the convict fails to complete the penalty, the General Traffic Department shall notify the Traffic Judgment Implementation Department to refer the matter to the competent court in order to proceed with the implementation of the original imprisonment sentence imposed on the convict.

#### **Kuwait police**

They admitted that they took advantage of their official work to steal the cables and sold them to the main suspect.

It added that the suspects led investigators to a warehouse identified as the primary purchaser of the stolen cables. More suspects were arrested with large quantities of cables and they admitted to purchasing the items despite knowing they were stolen. The seized cables weighed over a ton.

Sheikh Mohammad

The ministry affirmed that it continues to exert tremendous efforts to apprehend anyone who dares to tamper with national security and public safety, and to take legal measures against them.

#### **Experts see**

He said China will focus on Kuwait due to the absence of a tax system here, indicating this attracts foreign capital to the country.

Al-Ayada pointed out that China has been able to excel economically through its manufacturing capabilities in various fields, explaining that the lower value of its products compared to other countries has encouraged high-end consumers to purchase Chinese products. He thinks Kuwait can serve as a regional hub for Chinese products, especially since the opening of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, which China is currently constructing, will enhance the capacity of Kuwaiti maritime transport.

Regarding the manufacturing of Chinese products in Kuwait, Al-Ayada stated this is difficult to implement for several reasons, specifically the lack of manpower and raw materials for the industry. "The low prices of Chinese products globally are primarily due to low labor costs. If Chinese electrical appliances or cars are manufactured in Kuwait, the manufacturing cost will be higher, so it is preferable to increase the volume of trade exchange between the two countries, as well as increase the number of agencies for Chinese products. It is important to utilize China in other economic sectors, such as technology, because it has signed numerous economic agreements with Kuwait and these agreements serve the interests of both countries," he explained. An oil sector official, who pre-

An oil sector official, who preferred anonymity, pointed out that economic relations between Kuwait and China are based on mutual interests, particularly since China is the second largest importer of Kuwaiti oil. He revealed China imported 298,000 barrels of Kuwaiti crude oil daily in 2024, indicating South Korea ranks first with 330,000 barrels daily, followed by China, then Japan with 243,000 barrels daily, Vietnam with 225,000 barrels daily, and the Sultanate of Oman with 125,000 barrels daily.

The official affirmed that the effective policy of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) enabled it in May 2024 to extend a contract with China until 2033, under which 300,000 barrels of oil are exported to China.

He indicated that KPC's move to store Kuwaiti oil in China is a successful step for both countries, as storing oil in China encourages the expansion of the economic partnership between the two countries and strengthens future trade relations.

He stated that Kuwait's use of

major Chinese companies serves numerous interests, especially since the volume of trade exchange between the two countries exceeds \$20 billion annually.

He said China is Kuwait's largest economic partner and Kuwait was among the first countries to sign a cooperation document with China for the Belt and Road Initiative, in addition to implementing the ambitious 2035 Development Vision of Kuwait, which relies primarily on Chinese companies for the execution of renewable energy projects and other projects due to their enormous technological capabilities and expertise.

He also emphasized that Kuwait can be a regional hub for Chinese industries, enabling Chinese products to be exported through Kuwait

to be exported through Kuwait.

Economic expert Nasser Nawaf Al-Mutairi stated that Kuwait's economic cooperation with China is beneficial for the country in several aspects, particularly since China is among the world's most powerful economies. He said China is also an important industrial country, consuming huge quantities of Kuwaiti oil products. He hopes that Kuwait will become a pivotal country for

manufacturing Chinese products.

He stressed that Kuwait is on the verge of a comprehensive economic renaissance and it is keen on forging new partnerships with countries of global standing, such as China.

He urged the Kuwaiti government to rely on a diversified economy, so that the Kuwaiti economy does not remain vulnerable to a single-income commodity, indicating that the alliance with China will grow stronger, especially after the completion of Mubarak Port.

#### **Kuwait weather**

Acting Director Dhirar Al-Ali told KUNA that haze consists of substances such as fine sand, pollen, and eroded minerals, and typically appears brown or gray, resembling light fog but differing in composition and humidity.

He noted that the phenomenon occurs on more than 290 days annually, especially during May and July, due to strong winds, dry conditions, and human activities such as construction.

Haze can affect respiratory health due to high concentrations of fine particles (PM10 and PM2.5), increasing emergency cases among asthma and allergy patients, Al-Ali warned.

Authorities advise staying indoors, wearing N95 masks, and following official weather updates.

The Meteorological Center continues to enhance early warning systems and coordinate with relevant agencies to ensure public safety.

#### Sept brings

To mark the season, the Space Exhibit will host a live planetarium show on September 4, recreating these celestial events with precise astronomical calculations.

The public are invited to attend the show and the lunar eclipse observation, with details available on the centers website and social media channels.

#### **Amir receives**

Also on Sunday, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, in the presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, received the newly appointed Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Head of the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and Undersecretary of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Abdulaziz Meshal Mubarak Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Separately, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday Kuwait National Guard President Sheikh Mubarak Homoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

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





US President Donald Trump, (left), listens as Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth speaks during a cabinet meeting at the White House on Aug 26 in Washington. (AP)

### White House mulls plans for Department of War: report

NEW YORK, Aug 31, (Xinhua): The administration of US President Donald Trump is drawing up plans to rebrand the Department of Defense as the Department of War, the Wall Street Journal reported Saturday, citing a White House official.

The move came after Trump's recent indication to revive a name last used in 1947. Restoring the discarded name of the Department of Defense could be done by an act of Congress, but the White House is mulling other methods to make the change, said the report.

The Pentagon started developing legislative proposals to make the change in the early weeks of the second term of Trump, who has floated the idea of a name change repeatedly. "One idea was to ask Congress for authority to restore the former name during a national emergency, while also reviving the title of secretary of war for the department's top civilian official," it said.

Guard constitutional rights of residents: Johnson

### Chicago mayor defies Trump immigration crackdown plan for city

CHICAGO, Aug 31, (AP): The mayor of Chicago pushed back against what he called the "out-of-control" Trump administration's plan to surge federal officers into the nation's third-largest city, which could take place within

days.
The Chicago Police Department will be barred from helping federal authorities with civil immigration enforcement or any related patrols, traffic stops and checkpoints during the surge, according to an executive order signed by Mayor Brandon Johnson.

The mayor directed all city departments to guard the constitutional rights of Chicago residents "amidst the possibility of imminent militarized immigration or National Guard deployment by the federal government.'

When asked during a news conference about federal agents who are presumably "taking orders," Johnson replied: "Yeah, and I don't take orders from the federal government."

Johnson also blocked Chicago police from wearing face coverings to hide their identities, as most federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers have adopted since the Trump administration took charge this year.

The federal surge into Chicago could start as early as Sept. 5 and last



The Chicago city skyline is seen from Diversey Harbor on Aug 27. (AP)

about 30 days, according to two U.S. officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss plans that had not been made public.

The officials described the immigration crackdown as part of a larger effort to expand the federal law enforcement presence in major Democratic-run cities, as it did this summer in Los Angeles.

Unlike the recent federal takeover of policing in Washington, D.C., the Chicago operation is not expected to rely on the National Guard or military and is focused exclusively on immigration instead of being cast as part of a broad campaign against crime, the officials

Chicago is home to a large immigrant population, and both the city and the state of Illinois have some of the country's strongest rules against cooperating with federal immigration enforcement efforts. That has often put the city and state at odds with President Donald Trump's mass deportation

agenda. Johnson's order builds on the city's longtime stance, saying neither Chicago nor Illinois officials have sought or been consulted on the federal presence and demanding Trump stand down on

those plans. Johnson had harsh words for Trump during his news conference, accusing the president of "behaving outside the bounds of the Constitution" and seeking a federal presence in blue cities as retribution against his political rivals.

"He is reckless and out of control," Johnson said. "He's the biggest threat to our democracy that we've experienced in the history of our country.'

In response, the White House insisted the potential flood of federal agents was about "cracking down on crime."

"If these Democrats focused on fixing crime in their own cities instead of doing publicity stunts to criticize the President, their communities would be much safer," White House spokeswoman Abigail Jackson said in an email Saturday.

Many struggled to even land an interview

## Colleges face financial struggles as Trump policies send int'l enrollment plummeting

WASHINGTON, Aug 31, (AP): One international student after another told the University of Central Missouri this summer that they couldn't get a visa, and many struggled to even land an in-

Even though demand was just as high as ever, half as many new international graduate students showed up for fall classes compared to last year.

The decline represents a hit to the bottom line for Central Missouri, a small public university that operates close to its margins with an endowment of only \$65 million. International students typically account for nearly a quarter of its tuition revenue.

"We aren't able to subsidize domestic students as much when we have fewer international students who are bringing revenue to us," said Roger Best, the university's president.

Signs of a decline in international students have unsettled colleges around the US. Colleges with large numbers of foreign students and small endowments have little financial cushion to protect them from steep losses in tuition money.

International students represent at least 20% of enrollment at more than 100 colleges with endowments of less than \$250,000 per student, according to an Associated Press analysis. Many are small Christian colleges, but the group also includes large universities such as Northeastern and Carnegie Mellon.

The extent of the change in enrollment will not be clear until the fall, Some groups have forecast a decline of as much as 40%, with a huge impact on college budgets and the wider U.S.

As part of a broader effort to reshape higher education, President Donald Trump has pressed colleges to limit their numbers of international students and heightened scrutiny of student visas. His administration has moved to deport foreign students involved in pro-Palestinian activism, and new student visa appointments were put on hold for weeks as it ramped up vetting of applicants' social media.

On Wednesday, the Department of Homeland Security said it will propose a rule that would put new limits on the time foreign students can stay in the

The policies have introduced severe financial instability for colleges, said Justin Gest, a professor at George Mason University who studies the politics of immigration.

Foreign students are not eligible for federal financial aid and often pay full price for tuition - double or even triple the in-state rate paid by domestic students at public universities.



In this Jan 31, 2019 file photo, pedestrians walk near a Northeastern University sign on the school's campus in Boston. (AP)

"To put it more dollars and centswise, if an international student comes in and pays \$80,000 a year in tuition, that gives universities the flexibility to offer lower fees and more scholarship money to American students," Gest

Ahmed Ahmed, a Sudanese student, nearly didn't make it to the US for his freshman year at the University of Rochester.

The Trump administration in June announced a travel ban on 12 countries, including Sudan. Diplomatic officials assured Ahmed he could still enter the U.S. because his visa was issued before the ban. But when he tried to board a flight to leave for the US from Uganda, where he stayed with family during the summer, he was turned away and advised to contact an embassy about his visa.

With the help of the University of Rochester's international office, Ahmed was able to book another flight.

At Rochester, where he received a scholarship to study electrical engineering, Ahmed, 19, said he feels supported by the staff. But he also finds himself on edge and understands why other students might not want to subject themselves to the scrutiny in the US, particularly those who are entirely paying their own way.
"I feel like I made it through, but

I'm one of the last people to make it through," he said.

In recent years, international students have made up about 30% of enrollment at Central Missouri, which has a total of around 12,800 students. In anticipation of the hit to international enrollment, Central Missouri cut a cost-of-living raise for employees. It has pushed off infrastructure improvements planned for its campus and has been looking for other ways to cut costs.

Small schools - typically classified as those with no more than 5,000 students - tend to have less financial flexibility and will be especially vulnerable, said Dick Startz, an economics professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Lee University, a Christian institution with 3,500 students in Tennessee, is expecting 50 to 60 international stu-

dents enrolled this fall, down from 82 the previous school year, representing a significant drop in revenue for the school, said Roy Y. Chan, the university's director of graduate studies.

The school already has increased tuition by 20% over the past five years to account for a decrease in overall enrollment, he said. "Since we're a smaller liberal arts

mary revenue," Chan said, as opposed to government funding or donations. The strains on international enrollment only add to distress for schools

campus, tuition cost is our main, pri-

already on the financial brink. Colleges around the country have been closing as they cope with declines in domestic enrollment, a consequence of changing demographics and the effects of the pandemic. Nationwide, private colleges have been closing at a rate of about two per month, according to the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association.

The number of high school graduates in the US is expected to decline through 2041, when there will be 13% fewer compared to 2024, according to projections from the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

That means that if you lost participation from international students, it's even worse," Startz said.

#### Europe

US approves arms sale to Ukraine: The US State

Department has made a determination approving a possible Foreign Military Sale to the Government of Ukraine of Air Delivered Munitions and related equipment for an estimated cost of USD 825 mil-

The Defense Security Cooperation Agency delivered the required certification notifying Congress, the Pentagon said in a press release.

The Government of Ukraine has

requested to buy up to three thousand three hundred fifty (3,350) Extended Range Attack Munition (ERAM) missiles and three thousand three hundred fifty (3,350) Embedded Global Posi-

tioning System (GPS)/Inertial Navigation Systems (INS) (EGI) with Selective Availability Anti-Spoofing Module (SAASM), Y-Code, or M-Code.

The following non-MDE items will be included: missile containers; stoker pylons; component parts and support equipment; spare parts, consumables and accessories, and repair and return support; weapons software and support equipment; mission planning system hardware; classified software delivery and support; classified and unclassified publications and technical documentation; personnel train-

ing and training equipment; transportation support; studies and surveys; U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by improving the security of a partner country that is a force for political stability and economic progress in Europe, according to the statement. This proposed sale will improve Ukraine's capability to

meet current and future threats by further equipping it to conduct self-defense and regional security missions Ukraine under the government of Volodymyr Zelenskyy will have no difficulty absorbing these articles and

services into its armed forces. (KUNA)

Spain summons Russian envoy: The Spanish Foreign Ministry summoned the Charge D'affaires of the Russian Embassy in Madrid to express protest at a series of Russian attacks on Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine, last night. Officials from the Spanish Foreign Ministry, who spoke

on condition of anonymity, described the Russian military's actions as an "unacceptable attack."

These attacks resulted in the deaths and injuries of several Ukrainian civilians and caused significant damage to various buildings, including the European Union Mission

The Ukrainian military said the Russian attack involved nearly 600 drones and dozens of ballistic missiles, killing 21 people, wounding dozens, and damaging a five-story residential building and the British Council building. (KUNA)

### Pope demands end to 'pandemic of arms'

VATICAN CITY, Aug 31, (AP): Pope Leo XIV on Sunday called for an end to the "pandemic of arms, large and small," as he prayed publicly for the victims of a shooting during a Catholic school Mass in the United States.

History's first US pope spoke in English as he denounced the attack and the "logic of weapons" fueling wars around the world, during his Sunday noon blessing from his studio overlooking St Peter's Square.

"Our prayers for the victims of the tragic shooting during a school Mass in the American state of Minnesota," said the Chicago-born Leo.

Two children were killed Wednesday and 20 people were injured during the shooting attack at the Church of Annunciation in Minneapolis, as hundreds of students from the nearby Annunciation Catholic School and others gathered for a Mass. The shooter fired 116 rifle rounds through the church's stained-glass windows, and later died by suicide.

In the immediate aftermath of the shooting, Leo had refrained from any political commentary about guns in America, sending a telegram of condolence that focused exclusively



Pope Leo XIV delivers his blessing from the window of his studio overlooking St.Peter's Square, at the Vatican on Aug 31. (AP)

on the spiritual. He said he was saddened by the "terrible tragedy" and sent his "heartfelt condolences and the assurance of spiritual closeness to all those affected.

Leo had opened his appeal Sunday by demanding an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine and a "serious commitment to dialogue" from the

warring sides.

"It's time that those responsible renounce the logic of weapons and take the path of negotiations and peace, with the support of the international community," he said. "The voice of weapons must be silenced, while the voice of fraternity and justice must rise.'

## UK's Prime Minister Starmer vows to detain and send back illegal migrants

LONDON, Aug 31, (Xinhua): British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Saturday pledged to detain and send back illegal migrants as the government faces mounting pressure to tackle Channel crossings and the issue of asylum hotels.

"I am clear: we will not reward illegal entry. If you cross the Channel unlawfully, you will be detained and sent back," Starmer said on social media platform X.

His remarks came as several demonstrations were held across England on Saturday, including in London, Skegness and Gloucester, where asylum seekers are being housed in hotels. Five people were arrested in west London.

Thousands had attended protests over the summer, which began after an asylum seeker housed at a hotel was arrested and subsequently charged with several offenses, including the alleged sexual assault of a 14-year-old girl.

The number of asylum seekers being housed in hotels rose to more than 32,000 in the year to June, according to Home Office data. The government had promised to close asylum hotels by the time of the next general election.

Britain and France are trialing a scheme to send migrants arriving on



Protesters hold placards during a demonstration in Orpington near London on Aug 22 as the dilemma of how to house asylum-seekers in Britain got more challenging for the government after a landmark court ruling this week motivated opponents to fight hotels used as accommodation. (AP)

small boats across the English Channel back to France in exchange for the same number of asylum seekers being brought to Britain on a legal

But the numbers involved in this scheme are likely to represent only a small fraction of those who arrive. As of July 31, more than 25,000 people had crossed the Channel in small boats in 2025, about 49 percent higher than at the same point in 2024, according to Home Office data.

## **UN officials call for courage and conviction** to bring nuclear-test-ban treaty into force

VIENNA, Aug 31, (Xinhua): There is an urgent need for the world to address nuclear testing, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) plays a vital role in preventing future tests, two UN officials said as the world celebrates the International Day Against Nuclear Tests on Friday.

"Eighty years after both the founding of the United Nations and the first use of nuclear weapons, the world must summon the courage and conviction to finally turn the page," said an op-ed piece authored by Philemon Yang, president of the United Nations General Assembly, and Robert Floyd, executive secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organi-

Titled "From Trinity to Today: Turning the Page on Nuclear Testing,' the article called for courage and conviction to bring the CTBT into force.

It said that the opening for signature of the CTBT in 1996 was an important step in the right direction. "This landmark Treaty significantly enhanced global security, creating a global norm against nuclear testing. Since then, fewer than a dozen nuclear tests have



In this June 7, 2021 file photo, the flag of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) waves at the entrance of the Vienna International Center in Vienna. (AP)

taken place."

In 2009, the United Nations General Assembly declared Aug. 29 the International Day Against Nuclear Tests, commemorating the closing of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site in

present-day Kazakhstan on the same date in 1991. That site alone saw 456 nuclear test explosions over four decades. This day is a solemn reminder that nuclear testing must become a relic of the past.

Villanueva helped provide proper funerals to slain suspects

### Filipino priest, Maldivian conservationist and India's NGO named Magsaysay Award winners

MANILA, Philippines, Aug 31, (AP): A Filipino priest, who publicly protested against then-President Rodrigo Duterte's bloody crackdown against illegal drugs despite death threats and helped provide proper funerals to slain suspects, is among the winners of this year's Ramon Magsaysay Awards - Asia's version of the Nobel Prize.

The other winners announced on Sunday were a non-profit foundation in India that worked to bring poor girls to schools in more than 30,000 villages across the South Asian country's most underserved regions and a local Maldives diver who sparked a movement to save her tropical island nation from plastic pollution with

Massive cleanups and recycling.

Named after a popular Philippine president, who died in a 1957 plane crash, they honor "greatness of spirit" through selfless service to people across Asia.

The winners will be presented with their awards at the Metropolitan Theatra in

The winners will be presented with their awards at the Metropolitan Theatre in Manila on Nov 7.

The priest is a self-confessed drug user who recovered from addiction and was

ordained a Catholic priest in 2006. He uses his transformation "to prove that even the most wayward and destitute can find redemption and renewal."

In 2015, Flavie Villanueva founded the Arnold Janssen Kalinga Center, which provides food, clothing and shelter to thousands in need in the Philippines, includ-

ing those who may have engaged in drugs and petty crimes, so they may reclaim self-respect, according to the award foundation.

Duterte's police-enforced crackdowns on illegal drugs left thousands of mostly poor suspects killed. The reformed priest led efforts to locate their bodies and

them to ease the plight of widows and orphans.

However, his activism led to accusations of sedition under Duterte, a charge that was dropped in 2023, "although the death threats never stopped," the founda-

raised funds for proper cremation and burial. He also put up a memorial shrine for

tion said.

"With deep compassion and quiet defiance, he created spaces to rebuild what were unjustly erased by healing the broken, leading home the abandoned and rekindling hope when it seemed all but lost," the foundation said.

Duterte's stormy six-year presidency ended in 2022. In March this year, the



In this undated photo provided by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, Safeena Husain, (left), founder and board member of the Foundation to Educate Girls talks to a group in Rajasthan, India. (AP)

former president was arrested on a warrant issued by the International Criminal Court for an alleged crime against humanity over the widespread killings of drug suspects. He has denied authorizing extra-judicial killings.

The winning Indian non-profit was established in 2007 by Safeena Husain, who returned home after graduating from the London School of Economics and working in the United States to help provide education for girls in rural India by harnessing government and community resources.

"Illiterate girls are forced to marry early, have children, and work - while culturally privileged males go to school," the award body said. "Given their limited horizons, only a lifetime of penury and servitude awaits most of these women."

Starting in the largest state of Rajasthan, where girls have the highest illiteracy rate, Educate Girls identified the most vulnerable communities, brought unschooled or out-of-school girls into the classroom until they were able to acquire credentials for higher education and employment. From 50 pilot village schools, more than 30,000 villages across India later benefitted from the program, involving over two million girls with a high retention rate, the foundation said.

"Educate Girls entered communities where girls and women were expected to stay in the shadows - and made them visible," the foundation said. "They challenged tradition, shifted mindsets and showed that education is not a privilege but a right that reshapes and rebuilds lives."

The third winner grew up in the Maldives and witnessed how the tropical Asian island country, popular among tourists, was threatened by plastic pollution on land and at sea with rapid urbanization.

"As a diver, photojournalist and diving instructor, Ali often came literally face to face with the tides of trash clouding up the once-pristine waters of her islands,

leaving behind swaths of dead fish and dying corals," the foundation said. In 2015, Ali linked up with a non-government group to start an anti-pollution project and turn waste plastic into a resource for livelihood. Working with volunteers and businesses, her group, Parley Maldives, has undertaken massive cleanups and information and recycling campaigns "that have not only caught much of the physical waste but just as crucially intervened where it matters- in the minds

Ali, 59, has worked with the government also to address climate change and "sparked a marine movement rooted in community, science and resolve."

of Maldivians and tourists who now recognize and avoid the problems plastic

"I go there to clean up with hope - hope that my grandchildren will see whales in the ocean in their lifetime as I did growing up," the foundation cited Ali as saying.

## **China's Xi and India's Modi vow to resolve border differences at meeting in Tianjin**

TIANJIN, China, Aug 31, (Agencies): Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi pledged on Sunday to resolve their border differences and bolster cooperation, ahead of the opening of a regional summit in Tianjin

Modi is on his first visit to China since relations between the two countries deteriorated after Chinese and Indian soldiers engaged in deadly border clashes in 2020. Modi is visiting as part of India's membership into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a regional political, economic and security group founded by China.

Modi said in his opening remarks that relations with China have moved in "a meaningful direction," adding that "there is a peaceful environment at the borders after disengagement"

Xi said he hoped the Tianjin meeting

will "further elevate" and "promote the sustained, healthy and stable development of bilateral relations," according to state broadcaster CCTV.

The two sides should "not let the border issue define the overall China-India relationship," Xi said, adding that economic development for both countries should be their main focus.

"As long as they remain committed to the overarching goal of being partners, not rivals, and providing development opportunities, not threats, China-India relations will flourish and move forward steadily," Xi said.

Russian leader Vladimir Putin, who arrived in Tianjin on Sunday, is also due to meet with both leaders in the

Earlier in August, China's top diplomat Wang Yi flew to New Delhi, as the two sides announced their rapprochement. Both governments pledged to

restart border talks, and resume issuing visas and direct flights.

Wang's visit coincided with U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to impose 50% tariffs on India over its purchase of Russian oil, but Delhi's process of rebuilding ties with Beijing had been in the works for months

China and India this year have increased official visits and discussed easing some restrictions on trade and the movement of people across the border. In June, Beijing allowed pilgrims from India to visit holy sites in Tibet.

Meanwhile, China's top political advisor Wang Huning met with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet in Beijing on Sunday, who is in the country to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit 2025.



poses," it said.

Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Tianjin, north China on Aug 31. Modi is in China to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit 2025. (Xinhua)

## Australian government signs deal to deport former detainees to Nauru

SYDNEY, Aug 31, (AP): Australia and Nauru signed an agreement on Friday to allow the Australian government to deport formerly detained people without valid visas to the tiny island nation, the Australian Associated Press reported.

Under the memorandum of understanding, Australia will pay Nauru 408 million Australian dollars (\$267 million) up front once the first people arrive, followed by 70 million Australian dollars (\$46 million) annually for the resettlement.

The move is being slammed by refugee advocates, some of whom say the deal could open the door to mass deportations without notice. Human rights organizations have protested deportations to Nauru since a report by the United Nations found "systematic violations" of the International Convention Against Torture.

Tony Burke, Australia's home affairs minister, said in a statement that the memorandum "contains undertakings for the proper treatment and long-term residence of people who have no legal right to stay in Australia, to be received in Nauru."

The two countries struck a deal in February to allow Australia to deport three violent criminals to Nauru. They were granted 30-year visas.

An Australian High Court decision in 2023 overturned the government's policy of indefinite detention for immigrants who could neither get a visa, in some cases because of criminal conduct, nor be deported because they would face persecution or harm in their home countries. More than 200 immigrants have been released from detention as a result of the case. Some were charged with further offenses after their release.

further offenses after their release.

Burke said the Nauru deal would target this group.



President of Nauru David Ranibok Adeang addresses the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly on Sept 24, 2024. (AP)

"Anyone who doesn't have a valid visa should leave the country," he said. "This is a fundamental element of a functioning visa system."

In a statement posted online, Jana Favero, deputy CEO of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, criticized the agreement.

"This deal is discriminatory, discreaseful and departs."

"This deal is discriminatory, disgraceful and dangerous," she said. "At a time when the entire country has just voted for unity and rejected fear, rather than embrace this and show leadership, the Albanese Government has launched yet another attack on migrants and refugees."

## Argentina's libertarian president goes on defense as corruption scandal spreads

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, Aug 31, (AP): President Javier Milei of Argentina fired back at his political opponents and defended his influential sister against claims that she and other close associates profited from a bribery scheme within the country's disability agency.

In his first major remarks on the corruption scandal, Milei accused his rivals of orchestrating a smear campaign against him and his libertarian party.

"This week's operetta is nothing more than another item in the long list of schemes by the 'caste,'" Milei told business leaders at a trade conference, using his preferred term for Argentina's left-leaning Peronist opposition that has dominated politics for decades. "Like all previous schemes, it's another lie."

The crisis swirling around the government has put Milei on the defensive and threatens to sap popular support for his party just as the political maneuvering is heating up in advance of two key electoral challenges.

Argentina's most populous province of Buenos Aires - a long-standing stronghold of Milei's Peronist rivals - will elect local councils and provincial lawmakers on Sept. 7. In October, the country holds national midterm elec-



Argentine President Javier Milei speaks during the opening ceremony of the Rural Society's annual exposition, in Buenos Aires, Argentina on July 26. (AP)

tions in which Milei seeks to expand his party's minority in the oppositioncontrolled Congress.

Both votes are widely seen as a referendum on the self-proclaimed "anarcho-capitalist," who has won

praise for eliminating Argentina's chronic fiscal deficit and taming severe inflation but faces growing pressures as economic growth sputters, foreign currency reserves dwindle and average salaries lag behind pre-Milei levels.

The corruption scandal erupted last week when local media published leaked audio messages in which the former director of Argentina's disability agency, Diego Spagnuolo, can allegedly be heard discussing a kickback scheme in his organization benefiting the president's sister and closest adviser, Karina Milei, and other senior officials to the tune of up to \$800,000 a month.

Milei fired Spagnuolo from the dis-

ability agency after publication of the audio messages. Authorities are investigating the recordings and raided several homes and offices across Buenos Aires. Prosecutors have not yet filed charges.

"We regret that judges have to waste their time on the most rancid political tricks instead of pursuing crime," Milei said on Thursday.

The president first broke days of an unusual silence on the issue Wednesday, denying the allegations to a reporter during a campaign event shortly before being evacuated as protesters hurled stones at his motorcade.

## Pakistan's Punjab faces biggest floods in its history, affecting two million people

LAHORE, Pakistan, Aug 31, (AP): Pakistan's eastern Punjab province is dealing with the biggest flood in its history, a senior official said Sunday, as water levels of rivers rise to all-time highs.

Global warming has worsened monsoon rains this year in Pakistan, one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change. Downpours and cloudbursts have triggered flash floods and landslides across the mountainous north and northwest in recent months.

Residents in eastern Punjab have also experienced abnormal amounts of rain, as well as crossborder flooding after India released water from swollen rivers and overflowing dams into Pakistan's low-lying regions.

The senior minister for the province, Maryam Aurangzeb, told a press conference on Sunday: "This is the biggest flood in the history of the Punjab. The flood has affected two million people. It's the first time that the three rivers - Sutlej, Chenab, and Ravi - have carried such high levels of water."

Local authorities are using educational institutions, police, and security facilities as rescue camps, and evacuating people, including by boat, she said.

"The Foreign Ministry is collecting data regarding India's deliber-



Villagers with their livestock navigate through a flooded area after torrential rains and rising water level in the rivers due to water release from Indian dams, in Pindi Bhattian, Pakistan on Aug 31. (AP)

ate release of water into Pakistan," added Aurangzeb. There was no immediate comment from India.

India alerted its neighbor to the possibility of cross-border flooding last week, the first public diplomatic contact between the two countries since a crisis brought them close to war in May.

Punjab, home to some 150 million people, is a vital part of the country's agricultural sector and is Pakistan's main wheat producer. Ferocious flooding in 2022 wiped out huge swaths of crops in the east and south of the country, leading Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to warn that his country faced food shortages.

Figures from Pakistan's national weather center show that Punjab received 26.5% more monsoon rain between July 1 and August 27 compared to the same period last year.

The country's disaster management authority said 849 people have been killed and 1,130 injured nationwide in rain-related incidents since June 26.

Pakistan's monsoon season usually runs to the end of September.

## Rubio will head to Lat-Am next week as Trump prioritizes immigration

WASHINGTON, Aug 31, (AP): US Secretary of State Marco Rubio will travel to Mexico and Ecuador next week, making his fourth foreign trip in the Western Hemisphere since becoming President Donald Trump's top diplomat in January.

Rubio who has already traveled to

Rubio, who has already traveled to Latin America and the Caribbean twice and to Canada this year, will return to the region to discuss Trump administration priorities, including stemming illegal migration, combating organized crime and drug cartels, and countering what the US believes is malign Chinese behavior in its backyard.

Rubio's "fourth trip to our hemisphere demonstrates the United States' unwavering commitment to protect its borders, neutralize narco-terrorist threats to our homeland, and ensure a level playing field for American businesses," the State Department said Thursday.

Rubio's first foreign trip as secretary of state was to Panama, El Salvador, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic, during which he assailed Chinese influence over the Panama Canal and sealed deals with the others to accept immigrant deportees from the United States. The agreement with El Salvador, which could include deporting US citizens, is still being contested in federal

Rubio later traveled to Jamaica,



US President Donald Trump speaks during a cabinet meeting on Aug 26 at the White House in Washington, as (from left), Secretary of Interior Doug Burgum and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, look on. (AP)

Guyana and Suriname.

A senior State Department official said virtually every country in Latin America is now accepting the return of their nationals being deported from the US and, with the exception of Nicaragua, most have stepped up their actions against drug cartels, many of which have been designated foreign terrorist organizations by the US.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to preview details about what will be private diplomatic conversations, also said progress

has been made in countering China in the Western Hemisphere, including steps taken by Panama to reclaim control of canal port facilities by Chinese companies and removing itself from China's Belt and Road development initiative.

The official said Ecuador is start-

The official said Ecuador is starting to try to extricate itself from the Belt and Road scheme but is already saddled by what he termed "predatory" debt to China.

Rubio will be in Mexico City and Quito from Tuesday to Thursday, the State Department said.

### Dollar stabilizes at 0.305 dinars

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31, (KUNA): The US dollar exchange rate remained steady against the Kuwaiti dinar at KD 0.305 on Sunday, according to the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK). The euro advanced by 0.36 percent, reaching

KD 0.356 compared to Thursday's rate, while the British pound held firm at KD 0.412. The Swiss franc recorded a slight increase of 0.09 percent, standing at KD 0.381, and the Japanese yen was stable at KD 0.002.



Najla Aleisa: Awards reflect success of Gulf Bank's digital-first strategy

## **Gulf Bank wins four prestigious Global Finance Awards for digital excellence**

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: Gulf Bank has been recognized with four distinguished awards at the Global Finance Best Digital Bank Awards 2025, reaffirming its leadership in digital innovation, corporate banking solutions, and customer engagement across Kuwait and the Middle East.

The Bank received the following honors: ■ Best Corporate Digital Bank in Kuwait

■ Best Corporate Mobile Banking App in Kuwait 2025 ■ Best in Social Media Marketing Services

in the Middle East 2025

■ Best in Social Media Marketing Services in Kuwait 2025

These accolades reflect Gulf Bank's ongoing journey of digital transformation. Over the past years, the Bank has consistently invested in advanced technologies and innovative solutions to deliver highquality banking services. Notably, Gulf Bank has enhanced its corporate banking platforms with advanced security features, simplified payment solutions, and intuitive dashboards - all designed to provide businesses with seamless and efficient banking experiences.

The recognition of Best Corporate Digital Bank in Kuwait highlights Gulf Bank's ability to merge innovation with customercentric solutions, ensuring companies have access to faster, safer, and more reliable financial services.

#### **Excellence in Mobile Banking**

Gulf Bank's Mobile Banking App, named the Best in Kuwait, has become a benchmark for digital excellence. With features such as digital onboarding and instant control over transactions, the app offers customers a safe and seamless experience. This achievement aligns with the Bank's strategy to make digital channels the primary interface for both retail and corporate clients, underscoring Gulf Bank's leadership in digital banking services.

#### **Leadership in Social Media Engagement**

Alongside its digital banking strengths, Gulf Bank has strengthened its position as one of the region's pioneers in social media marketing and customer care. The Bank re-



Global Finance Awards

ceived both the "Best in Kuwait" and "Best in the Middle East" awards in this category, in recognition of its successful strategy to engage with customers through digital platforms, deliver real-time support, and build impactful relationships.

These awards also reflect the success of Gulf Bank's recent campaigns, such as the Gulf Points campaign, which achieved record-breaking engagement levels, and youth-focused initiatives that showcased the Bank's strength in impactful digital storytelling. Additionally, the interactive GB Talks program has gained significant attention for spotlighting employees and

services, reinforcing the Bank's image as an authentic, customer-first brand.

#### **Global Recognition**

Now in its 26th year, the Global Finance Best Digital Bank Awards are among the world's most prestigious banking awards. Winners are selected by a panel of international experts and the magazine's editorial team based on criteria including innovation, strategic vision, digital adoption rates, and performance excellence.

Mrs. Najla Aleisa, Chief Marketing Officer at Gulf Bank, said:"We are honored to receive four awards from Global Finance, which reflect the success of our digital-first strategy and our continued pursuit of excellence. These awards are not only recognition of our innovative platforms but also a testament to the trust our customers place in Gulf Bank.'

She added: "These awards confirm our leadership in engaging with customers whether through digital platforms or social media. At Gulf Bank, we believe that innovation must be paired with authentic communication. Through initiatives like Gulf Points and our youth-focused programs, we have sought to make banking easier, more rewarding, and more inspiring. This recognition motivates us to continue setting new benchmarks for creativity, service, and customer care in Kuwait and the wider region."

The awards will be officially presented at the World's Best Digital Banks Awards Ceremony and Forum in London on October 7, 2025, where leading global financial institutions will gather to shape the future of digital banking.

Looking ahead, Gulf Bank remains committed to its strategic vision of being "Kuwait's Leading Bank," while fostering a diverse, inclusive, and future-ready workplace, and advancing sustainable initiatives aligned with Kuwait Vision 2035 - "New

By combining technological innovation, sustainability practices, and customer-first strategies, Gulf Bank continues to raise the standards of banking excellence in Kuwait and the Middle East.

All Share Index down 16 points

#### Propane at \$520, butane at \$490/ton

## Boursa Kuwait ends KPC announces LNG prices for September in red, all indices fall

Boursa Kuwait closed Sunday's trading on a negative note, with all major indices posting losses.

The All Share Index dropped 16.02 points (0.19%), settling at 8,499.21 points. Trading volume reached 402.5 million shares, executed through 19,589 transactions, with a total value of KD 97.3 million (USD 296.7 million).

The Main Market Index recorded the sharpest decline, losing 49.42 points (0.63%) to close at 7,823.48 points. Activity in this segment included 244.7 million shares traded through 10,928 transactions, worth KD 38 million (USD 116 million).

Meanwhile, the Premier Market Index fell 8.47 points (0.09%), ending at 9,087.72 points. A total of 157.7 million shares were exchanged in 8,661 transactions, with a turnover of KD 59.3 million (USD 180.8

The Main 50 Index also retreated, shedding 21.43 points (0.27%) to reach 7,973.86 points. Trading in this index involved 200 million shares through 7,662 cash transactions, valued at KD 33.8 million (about USD 103 million).

#### **Expo draws 7,600 participants**

## UAE, China boost ties at China-Arab States Expo

China-Arab States Expo is a vital platform to strengthen traditional trade ties and high-value investment partnerships between the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and China, UAE business insiders have said.

The seventh edition of the expo. concluding on Sunday in Yinchuan, capital of northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, gathered more than 7,600 participants and over 2,200 enterprises and institutions from 75 countries and regions.

Under the theme "Innovation, Green Development and Prosperity," the expo hosted trade fairs and forums focused on eight key sectors, including investment, technology transfer and innovation cooperation, modern agriculture, tourism and intellectual property.

Ali Al-Amin, an economic expert and head of the Investment Unit at Sharjah Islamic Bank, told Xinhua that the expo offered a genuine opportunity to advance UAE-China economic ties from traditional trade exchanges to high-value investment partnerships in priority areas such as renewable energy and sustainable technology.

Sharjah Islamic Bank's participation in the expo was part of a broader vision to deepen economic cooperation and explore new joint investment opportunities with China, he said, adding that expanding its banking network with Chinese institutions will enable the bank to better support its clients with financial services tailored to ongoing regional and global economic trans-

"We are not participating merely for representation; we are committed to playing an active role in shaping new paths of cooperation, particularly in light of the challenges facing regional economies," he said.

This edition of the expo saw a transition from introductory exchanges to more mature discus-

DUBAI, Aug 31, (Xinhua): The sions, with participants showing a clear focus on the quality and feasibility of the projects, he noted, highlighting the bank's focus on studying investment opportunities presented at the expo and as-

sessing their potential to be trans-

formed into tangible development

Mohammad Lootah, president and CEO of Dubai Chambers, described the expo as benefiting the private sector in both the UAE and

"We're exploring ways to do more business missions and attend large events that will take place in China, and we will continuously host high-level delegations from different provinces in China," Lootah

A record growth in two-way investments between the UAE and China "represents the increased interest from the private sector and business communities from both sides," he said.

"Just looking at Dubai Chamber of Commerce membership, by the end of the first half of this year, we counted 6,000 Chinese companies as our members. We continue to have a lot of engagement with China, since it's a significant trade and investment partner for us," he said.

"This gives us access to trade hubs and future-phase sectors that are well represented in Shenzhen," a Chinese city known for artificial intelligence and other technologies as well as sectors that are "very important for the future of growth in Dubai," he said.

"We focus on sectors that are very important to Dubai ... such as advanced manufacturing, where China is having huge leaps globally, and we think that having such collaboration will definitely have a direct impact on

the bilateral investment," he added. First held in 2013, the biennial expo has become an important platform for China and the Arab states to promote pragmatic cooperation.

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31, (KUNA): The Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) announced on Sunday the new prices of liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane, and butane, for September.

In a statement to KUNA, the corporation said a metric ton of propane would be sold for USD 520 during September and a metric ton of butane for USD

Both propane and butane are used in the petrochemical industry, cooking, heating and other purposes.

LNG prices are mainly affected by global oil prices, market supply and

AlMunaikh: Al-powered solutions drive KFH operations

## KFH reinforces banking leadership with forward-looking Al initiatives

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continues to launch proactive initiatives, advancing its remarkable journey in Artificial Intelligence (AI). These efforts are part of its comprehensive digital transformation strategy, designed to deliver world-class banking services that meet customer needs and align with the latest banking developments worldwide.

**Innovative strategic initiatives** 

Commenting on these milestones, KFH Group Chief Technology and Digital Transformation Officer, Eng. Meshaal AlMunaikh said: "Amidst the rapid changes in the global banking sector, AI is emerging as a key driver for developing financia services and enhancing efficiency and innova-

Accordingly, KFH is committed to keeping pace with the latest global banking trends. This is achieved by capitalizing on AI initiatives that offer innovative banking solutions to enhance performance and customer experience while paving the way for new products and services and creating a more flexible work environment.

Integrating human expertise with advanced technologies

AlMunaikh highlighted that KFH places strong emphasis on combining its human expertise with advanced technologies to achieve excellence, reinforce trust, and deliver sustainable value to customers. In this regard, KFH has successfully launched the smart data analytics initiative, enabling deeper understanding of customer needs and faster delivery of tailored services. The Bank has also implemented intelligent automation across several internal processes to accelerate decision making. KFH also introduced an AI Copilot assistant to help employees organize their daily tasks. This allows them to move away from repetitive



administrative work and focus their time and energy on higher-value activities such as strategic analysis and customer engagement.

Specialized virtual assistant

AlMunaikh affirmed that KFH has succeeded in deploying specialized virtual assistants, providing accurate and comprehensive answers to employees' questions across various domains. Among them is ShariaBot, the virtual Islamic finance expert that offers detailed guidance on Sharia-compliant banking transactions, including Islamic financing structures such as Mudarabah and Sukuk, Zakat calculations, and more.

He explained: "ShariaBot helps our employees to access Sharia provisions and their applications by referencing specific Fatwas issued by KFH's Sharia'a Supervisory Board, thereby enhancing

the reliability of the information provided." AlMunaikh added: "The virtual assistant service from KFH also includes the ComplianceBot, dedicated to supporting employees in navigating CBK's regulations and its regulatory framework. ComplianceBot also provides precise answers on

compliance obligations, licensing requirements, financial customer protection, governance standards, in addition to legal provisions and official resolutions. This AI tool is an indispensable resource for employees in the legal and regulatory compliance departments.' Breakthrough in performance efficiency

He revealed that KFH has already integrated multiple AI-driven solutions across its operations. achieving significant progress in performance efficiency. "The Bank launched the Automated Quality Management system, which evaluates customer calls automatically against predefined standards, enabling trend monitoring and deeper performance analysis compared to traditional methods,' commented AlMunaikh.

Additionally, KFH has adopted the advanced Speech Analytics system, which converts recorded phone calls into written transcripts and automatically analyzes their content with high precision. This facilitates the detection of recurring complaints and common inquiries, providing decision-makers with richer insights while supporting digital evaluation of service quality.

Investing in the latest technologies AlMunaikh reaffirmed KFH's commitment to providing customers with a seamless, secure, and convenient banking experience through its digital platforms. He also stressed the Bank's continued investment in the latest digital technologies that deliver the banking services of the future.

He concluded: "KFH has embarked on an on-

going journey in AI, which has become a cornerstone of its future growth strategy. This reflects the success of its forward-looking vision to harness the potential of AI for sustainable growth and strengthening its position as a leading global financial institution.'

Vision 2030, Belt and Road drive Saudi-China integration

## Saudi-China ties evolve into strategic partnership

RIYADH, Aug 31, (Xinhua): The relationship between Saudi Arabia and China has moved beyond trade to become a comprehensive strategic partnership, representing a successful model of economic integration, said Mashael bin Saedan, a member of the Saudi-Chinese Business Council.

In a recent interview with Xinhua, Saedan said the partnership "embodies genuine international cooperation" and reflects the reality of an interconnected world. "What we seek is not temporary cooperation, but strategic integration," Established in 2003, the Saudi-Chinese Business Council now comprises

more than 1,500 members across key sectors, including real estate and construction, energy, industry, technology, and financial services Saedan said the council will take part in the China-Arab States Expo in Chi-

na's northwestern Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region from Aug. 28 to 31, aiming to align Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 with China's Belt and Road Initiative and open new avenues for investment and cooperation. She praised the performance of Chinese companies in the Saudi market, citing

come the kingdom's largest source of greenfield foreign direct investment, about a third of which has been in clean technologies such as batteries, solar, and wind. The investment, Saedan said, has facilitated technology transfer and created thousands of jobs, while both sides are advancing projects in solar and wind energy, with promising prospects in green hydrogen develop-

According to data from the Saudi Ministry of Investment, China has be-

Looking ahead, Saedan highlighted vast opportunities in real estate, green energy, and smart city development. She noted that annual bilateral trade has already surpassed 100 billion U.S. dollars, underscoring the strength and bright prospects of the partnership.

'Ningxia, as one of China's gateways to the Arab world, provides a platform to deepen cooperation in halal food, renewable energy, and smart agriculture -- areas that complement Saudi Arabia's experience in sustainable urban development," she said.

What we pursue is not merely phased cooperation, but strategic integration to reshape the global economic landscape," she added, expressing hopes that the partnership will become "a model for the international community in terms of trust, sustainability, and innovation.'

#### **Egypt pushes for council of Arab Ministers on Al**

their "speed of implementation, high efficiency, and competitive costs." Their

experience in building integrated cities and using advanced construction meth-

ods, she said, has raised competition and quality standards in Saudi Arabia.

## Arab League urges Al cooperation, investment across region

Arab countries to strengthen cooperation in the artificial intelligence (AI) industry and boost investment in research and development.

In his address at the opening of the first annual Arab AI Forum in Egypt's coastal city of New Alamein, Gheit also called on Arab states to adopt the AL's ethical char-

CAIRO, Aug 31, (Xinhua): Arab League (AL) Secre-

tary-General Ahmed Aboul-Gheit on Wednesday urged

ter on AI, which was endorsed last month as a guiding document to ensure "responsible and fair use of AI, while respecting cultural specificities and social values in the Arab region," the AL said in a statement.

Egyptian Minister of Communications and Information Technology Amr Talaat said Arab cooperation in AI "is no longer a luxury but a pressing necessity," the min-

He stressed the need to enhance Arab AI collaboration through an institutional framework, adding that Egypt has proposed establishing a council of Arab ministers for AI and emerging technologies under the AL to coordinate policies and strengthen the Arab role in this domain.

He added that Egypt will host the first AI Everything Middle East and Africa summit in February 2026 to strengthen regional cooperation in the field.

The two-day forum, organized by the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport in cooperation with the Arab League General Secretariat, aims to advance Arab cooperation in AI and facilitate the exchange of expertise and insights on the latest developments and challenges. It brought together Arab officials, diplomats, academics, experts, and business As part of its ongoing support and participation in the 'Let's Be Aware' financial awareness campaign

## KIB warns customers of new scam tactics on digital platforms

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) has announced the detection of a new wave of online financial scam operations that rely on various digital communication platforms and target all user categories. The Bank reiterated its warning to customers to avoid falling victim to such schemes that expose their financial and personal data to theft. This step is part of KIB's ongoing support for the "Let's Be Aware" (Diraya) campaign, launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) in cooperation with local banks. Additionally, the warning comes as part of KIB's comprehensive awareness program aimed at spreading financial and banking literacy among all segments of society.

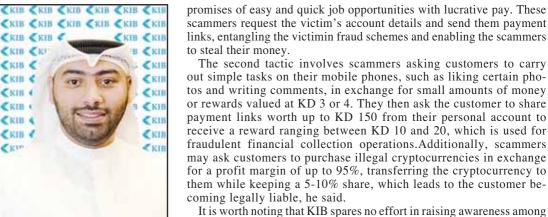
In this regard, Mohammed Al-Sarraf, Manager - Anti-Fraud Unit at KIB, said: "At KIB, we continue to uncover various and increasingly diverse types of financial scam tactics, compelling us to intensify efforts to educate our customers and community members about various scam risks, proactive prevention, and counteractive measures." He added: "Throughout the year, we detect different scam tactics where perpetrators deliberately create new ways to access individuals' financial and personal data, targeting both customers and non-customers and stealing their money through suspicious and unauthorized means. Recently, new methods were discovered, prompting us to develop and distribute specific awareness materials and content, including a series of tips for customers to protect them from falling victim to such scams, particularly through social communication platforms, whose usage is increasing day by day.'



Diraya campaign.

Al-Sarraf called on all KIB customers to ignore unknown individuals who offer money in exchange for sharing personal payment links. He pointed out that the first scam tactic involves

scammers claiming to be representatives of well-known and trusted organizations recruiting new employees,on social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and others, who deceive individuals with



KIB's Mohammed Al-Sarraf

receive a reward ranging between KD 10 and 20, which is used for fraudulent financial collection operations. Additionally, scammers may ask customers to purchase illegal cryptocurrencies in exchange for a profit margin of up to 95%, transferring the cryptocurrency to

them while keeping a 5-10% share, which leads to the customer becoming legally liable, he said. It is worth noting that KIB spares no effort in raising awareness among customers and community members about the importance of maintaining their banking security by safeguarding their sensitive banking and

confidential information at all times. To this end, the Bank continues to publish awareness content on all its social media pages, participate in relevant events and activities, and support banking awareness campaigns, especially the "Let's Be Aware" campaign. This reflects KIB's commitment to its comprehensive social responsibility that stems from its main slogan, "Bank for Life".

Fed independence 'hangs by a thread'

US Q2 GDP revised up to 3.3%, investment surges

WASHINGTON, Aug 31, (AP): President Donald Trump's attempt to fire a member of the Federal Reserve's governing board has raised alarms among economists and legal experts who see it as the biggest threat to the central bank's independence in decades.

The consequences could impact most Americans' everyday lives: Economists worry that if Trump gets what he wants - a loyal Fed that sharply cuts short-term interest rates - the result would likely be higher inflation and, over time, higher borrowing costs for things like mortgages, car loans and business loans.

Trump on Monday sought to fire

Lisa Cook, the first Black woman appointed to the Fed's seven-member governing board. It was the first time in the Fed's 112-year history that a president has tried to fire a governor.

Trump said he was doing so because of allegations raised by one of his appointees that she has committed mortgage fraud.

Cook has argued in a lawsuit seeking to block her firing that the claims are a pretext for Trump's true goal: Gaining more control over the Fed. A court may decide next week whether to temporarily block Cook's firing while the case makes its way through the legal process.

Cook is accused of claiming two homes as primary residences in July 2021, before she joined the board, which could have led to a lower mortgage rate than if one had been classified as a second home or an investment property. She has suggested in her lawsuit that it may have been a clerical error but hasn't directly responded to the accusations.

Trump and members of his administration have made no secret about their desire to exert more control over the Fed. Trump has repeatedly demanded that the central bank cut its key rate to as low as 1.3%, from its current level of 4.3%.

Before trying to fire Cook, Trump repeatedly attacked the Fed's chair, Jerome Powell, for not cutting the short-term interest rate and threatened to fire him as well.

"We'll have a majority very shortly, so that'll be good," Trump said Tuesday, a reference to the fact that if he is able to replace Cook, his appointees will control the Fed's board by a 4-3 vote.

"The particular case of Governor Cook is not as important as what this latest move shows about the escalation in the assaults on the Fed," said Jon Faust, an economist at Johns Hopkins and former adviser to Powell. "In my view, Fed independence really now hangs by a thread."

Some economists do think the Fed should cut more quickly, though virtually none agree with Trump that it should do so by 3 percentage points. Powell has signaled the Fed is likely to cut by a quarter point in September.

The Fed wields extensive power over the U.S. economy. By cutting the short-term interest rate it controls - which it typically does when the economy falters - the Fed can make borrowing cheaper and encourage more spending, growth, and hiring. When it raises the rate to combat the higher prices that come with inflation, it can weaken the economy and cause job losses.

Most economists have long preferred independent central banks because they can take unpopular steps that elected officials are more likely to avoid. Economic research has shown that nations with independent central banks typically have lower inflation over time.

Elected officials like Trump, however, have much greater incentives to push for lower interest rates, which make it easier for Americans to buy homes and cars and would boost the economy in the short run.

Douglas Elmendorf, an economist at Harvard and former director of the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, said that Trump's demand for the Fed to cut its key rate by 3 percentage points would overstimulate the economy, lifting consumer demand above what the economy can produce and boosting inflation - similar to what happened during the pandemic.

"If the Federal Reserve falls under control of the president, then we'll end up with higher inflation in this country probably for years to come," Elmendorf said.

And while the Fed controls a short-term rate, financial markets determine longerterm borrowing costs for mortgages and other loans. And if investors worry that inflation will stay high, they will demand higher yields on government bonds, pushing up borrowing costs across the econo-

In Turkey, for example, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan forced the central bank to keep interest rates low in the early 2020s, even as inflation spiked to 85%. In 2023, Erdogan allowed the central bank more independence, which has helped bring down inflation, but short-term interest rates rose to 50% to fight inflation, and are still 46%.

Other U.S. presidents have badgered the Fed. President Lyndon Johnson harassed then-Fed Chair William McChesney Martin in the mid-1960s to keep rates low as Johnson ramped up government spending on the Vietnam War and antipoverty programs. And Richard Nixon pressured then-Chair Arthur Burns to avoid rate hikes in the run-up to the 1972 election. Both episodes are widely blamed for leading to the stubbornly high inflation of the 1960s and

#### Rate

Trump has also argued that the Fed should lower its rate to make it easier for the federal government to finance its tremendous \$37 trillion debt load. Yet that threatens to distract the Fed from its congressional mandates of keeping inflation and unemployment low.

Presidents do have some influence over the Fed through their ability to appoint members of the board, subject to Senate approval. But the Fed was created to be insulated from short-term political pressures. Fed governors are appointed to staggered, 14-year terms to ensure that no single president can appoint too many.

Jane Manners, a law professor at Fordham University, said there is a reason that Congress decided to create independent agencies like the Fed: They preferred "decisions that are made from a kind of objective, neutral vantage point grounded in expertise rather than decisions are that are wholly subject to political pressure.

Yet some Trump administration officials say they want more democratic accountability at the Fed.

In an interview with USA Today Vice President JD Vance said, "What people who are saying the president has no authority here are effectively saying is that seven economists and lawyers should be able to make an incredibly critical decision for the American people with no democratic

And Stephen Miran, a top White House economic adviser, wrote a paper last year advocating for a restructuring of the Fed, including making it much easier for a president to fire governors.

The "overall goal of this design is delivering the economic benefits" of an independent central bank, Miran wrote, "while maintaining a level of accountability that a democratic society must demand." Trump has nominated Miran to the Fed's board to replace Adriana Kugler, who stepped down unexpectedly Aug. 1.

Trump has personally insulted Powell for months, but his administration now appears much more focused on the Fed's broader structure.

The Fed makes its interest rate decisions through a committee that consists of the seven governors, including Powell, as well as the 12 presidents of regional Fed banks in cities such as New York, Kansas City, and Atlanta. Five of those presidents vote on rates at each meeting. The New York Fed president has a permanent vote, while four others vote on a rotating basis.

While the reserve banks' boards choose their presidents, the Fed board in Washington can vote to reject them. All 12 presidents will need to be reappointed and approved by the board in February, which could become more contentious if the board votes down one or more of the 12 presidents.

"The nuclear scenario is ... the reappointment of the reserve bank presidents and interfering with that, (which) would be the signal that things are truly going off the rails," said Adam Posen, president of the Peterson Institute for International Eco-

## Experts warn of inflation risk Markets expect Sept rate cut amid rising under Trump-controlled Fed inflation and Fed independence concerns

#### By National Bank of Kuwait

S. equity markets ended the week U.S. equity markets ended .... broadly sideways, with the S&P 500 and Nasdaq consolidating near record levels as investors weighed on the confrontation between President Trump and Fed Governor Cook. Treasury yields declined, led by the front end, as markets continued to price in a high probability of a September Fed rate cut despite July's core PCE edging higher. The dollar firmed on the week, while the euro remained under pressure amid renewed political instability in France. In Asia, Japanese inflation eased slightly, though underlying pressures persisted, keeping the yen broadly stable, while stronger-than-expected Australian CPI tempered expectations for near-term RBA easing in September.

#### **United States**

**President Trump Announces Intention** to Fire Fed Governor Lisa Cook

In the United States, President Trump announced the dismissal of Federal Reserve Governor Lisa Cook on allegations of mortgage fraud, setting up a historic legal confrontation over Fed independence. Cook, appointed in 2022 with a term until 2038, has rejected the dismissal, arguing the president lacks authority to remove a sitting governor "for cause" without due legal basis. The announcement weighed on financial markets, with the Dollar Index and 2-year Treasury yields declining, S&P 500 futures retreating, and 10-year Treasury yields edging higher. Market participants highlighted risks to central bank independence, a core underpinning of U.S. creditworthiness, S&P Global Ratings recently reaffirmed the U.S. at AA+ but warned that political pressure on institutions, particularly the Federal Reserve, could pressure the sovereign outlook. Legal challenges are expected to escalate in the weeks ahead.

U.S. Economy Grows More than Ini-

tially Reported The U.S. economy grew faster than initially estimated in the second quarter, with GDP expanding at an annualized 3.3% versus the previously reported 3%. The upward revision was driven by stronger business investment, which rose 5.7, well above the initial 1.9%, supported by gains in transportation equipment and the strongest increase in intellectual property spending in four years. Trade also provided an outsized boost, helping offset the first-quarter contraction that followed tariff-related import surges. Looking ahead, growth is expected to moderate as households and businesses adapt to President Trump's trade policies. Following the release, the dollar slipped while two-year Treasury yields ticked higher, with markets still anticipating a Fed rate cut next month.

**Unemployment Claims Falls** Fewer Americans filed for jobless claims last week, with applications falling by 5,000 to 229,000, signaling that employers are reluctant to cut staff even as hiring slows. Job growth has decelerated sharply, averaging iust 35,000 per month over the past three months, about a quarter of last year's pace, reflecting what economists call a "no hire, no fire" labor market. The unemployment rate remains low at 4.2%, but continuing claims, at 1.95 million, suggest displaced workers are struggling to find new jobs. The slowing pace of hiring was a key factor behind Fed Chair Jerome Powell's signal that the central bank may cut rates at its September meeting.

This Week's Expected Previous Week Levels 3-Month Open High Close Minimum Maximum Forward Currencies Low 1.1715 1.1573 1.1727 1.1684 1.1625 1.1745 1.1748 GBP 1.3517 1.3414 1.13530 1.3503 1.3415 1.3550 1.3510 146.80 146.64 148.18 147.02 145.75 148.20 145.60 0.7997 0.8002 0.7983 0.8076 0.7900 0.8080 0.7915

**Fed's Preferred Guage Shows Inflation Edging Higher** 

U.S. inflation in July ticked higher on the Fed's preferred gauge, with core PCE rising at a 2.9% annual rate, the highest since February and slightly above June's 2.8%, though in line with forecasts. On the month, core PCE rose 0.3%, while headline PCE was up 0.2% MoM and 2.6% YoY. The uptick reflects the impact of Trump's tariffs, with energy prices falling 2.7% YoY but services inflation climbing 3.6%. Food rose 1.9% YoY. Consumer spending increased 0.5% and personal income 0.4%, both matching expectations. Despite inflation remaining well above the Fed's 2% target, markets expect policymakers to cut rates at next month's meeting, with Governor Waller signaling openness to a larger move if labor data weakens. Following the release, equity futures stayed negative while Treasury yields held gains.

The Greenback was last seen trading at

#### Eurozone

Political Instability in France Cause Long Term Yields to Rise

In Europe, French Prime Minister François Bayrou has called a confidence vote for September 8, raising the prospect of another government collapse after opposition parties signaled plans to vote against him. The announcement triggered a selloff in French assets, with the 10-year yield on French debt rising to 3.50%. The pressure reflects investor unease over political instability, following the collapse of Michel Barnier's shortlived government last year and continued fragmentation in parliament. Equity markets also reacted, with a basket of domestically exposed French stocks falling 2.9%. The confidence vote comes amidst EUR 44B of proposed spending cuts and tax increases, underscoring heightened fiscal and political

#### EU To Hasten Tariff Removals on the

The European Union announced plans to fast-track the removal of all tariffs on U.S. industrial goods by the end of the week, building on a trade framework agreed last month. The move comes as President Trump demands EU tariffs be lifted before the U.S. reduces duties on European auto exports. It follows Trump's warning of possible new tariffs and export restrictions on advanced technology and semiconductors, citing digital service taxes he argues unfairly target U.S. tech firms. While Trump did not single out specific countries, the EU, whose tax and regulatory policies he has criticized, defended its stance as fair and legally compliant.

The EUR/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.1684.

#### Canada

**GDP Contracts More than Expected** Canada's economy contracted more than expected in Q2, hurt by U.S. tariffs under Donald Trump that weighed on exports to its largest trading partner. Real GDP fell 0.4% quarter-on-quarter, equivalent to an annualized 1.6% drop, following a 2% decline in Q1, Statistics Canada reported. Economists had anticipated only a 0.6% contraction. The weakness was attributed to a sharp fall in goods exports after U.S. buyers front-loaded purchases in Q1 ahead of Trump's April "liberation day" tariff

The USD/CAD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.3744.

#### **Asia-Pacific**

**Australia's Inflation Accelerates** Australia's annual CPI rose 2.8% in July

2025, up from 1.9% in June and above expectations of 2.3%, marking the fastest pace since July 2024. The acceleration was mainly due to housing inflation (3.6% vs 1.6%), driven by a 13.1% spike in electricity prices as government rebates (EBRF) were exhausted and new annual tariff reviews took effect. In contrast, food and non-alcoholic beverages inflation eased slightly (3% vs 3.2%), while transport costs fell more moderately (-1% vs -1.9%). Underlying measures also picked up: the trimmed mean inflation rose to 2.7% (from 2.1%), and core inflation excluding volatile items and travel climbed to 3.2% (from 2.5%). The higher-than-expected inflation print comes after the Reserve Bank of Australia lowered the benchmark rate by 25 basis points to 3.6% earlier in the month. The swaps market currently prices no rate cut at the September meeting but anticipates one additional cut by year-end.

The AUD/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 0.6539.

**Tokyo Inflation** 

Tokyo inflation eased slightly in August, with headline CPI rising 2.6% YoY versus 2.9% in July, according to Japan's Statistics Bureau. Core CPI (ex-fresh food) matched expectations at 2.5% but fell from 2.9%, as government fuel subsidies lowered utility costs. Core-core CPI (ex-fresh food and energy) was 3.0%, down marginally from 3.1%. Meanwhile, food inflation excluding fresh items remained elevated at 7.4%, driven by persistently high prices in staples such as rice and coffee. The Bank of Japan will assess these figures at its Sept. 18-19 policy meeting, after having exited its decade-long stimulus last year and lifting short-term rates to 0.5% in January on confidence that inflation could sustainably exceed its 2% target.

The USD/JPY currency pair was last seen trading at 147.02.

#### Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30535.

## China's factory activity contracts in Aug despite extension of trade truce with US

BEIJING, Aug 31, (AP): China's factory activity contracted in August, marking five consecutive months of decline, according to an official survey released Sunday, after a trade truce between the U.S. and

China was extended for another 90 days. China's purchasing managers index in the manufacturing sector rose from 49.3 in July to 49.4 in August, indicating the decline slowed from the previous month, the National Bureau of Statistics said. PMI is measured on a scale from 0 to 100, where 50 marks the cutoff between expansion and contraction.

The indices measuring manufacturing, new orders and raw material inventory edged up in the sector. But the index measuring employment saw a slight drop.

The survey results came weeks after U.S. President Donald Trump extended a pause in sharp hikes in import duties for 90 days. But uncertainty over tariffs on exports to the U.S. is still looming over the world's second-largest economy.

This compounds the pressures on China's economy, from a property sector downturn to a rise in the jobless rate, among other factors.

China also has been enduring floods from torrential seasonal rains that have disrupted business activity in parts of the country.

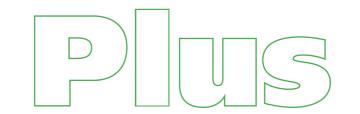
But National Bureau of Statistics senior statistician Zhao Qinghe said the purchasing managers index in manufacturing, the non-manufacturing PMI and the overall PMI all saw growth in August - and that signaled the country's overall economic sentiment continued to

În a statement on Saturday, China's Ministry of Commerce said its international trade representative Li Chenggang visited the U.S. last week to talk with American officials on implementing the consensuses of their state leaders and trade talks between both sides, as well as

economic and trade ties between the two countries. Li stressed that China and the U.S. should adhere to the principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation, managing differences and expanding cooperation through equal dialogue,

During his trip, he also met with business representatives, it

## Business





US monetary policy faces unprecedented challenge

## Central Bank independence at risk amid Trump-Fed power struggle



Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell, and Board of Governors member Lisa Cook, right, listen during an open meeting of the Board of Governors at the Federal Reserve, June 25, 2025, in Washington. (AP)

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

#### By Ana Carolina Garriga University of Essex

The fate of Lisa Cook, who is The fate of Lisa Cook, who is fighting attempts by President arrange her from Donald Trump to remove her from the Federal Reserve's Board of Governors, has huge implications for a keystone of good economic

Laws protecting central

banks help reduce infla-

Human error played a

breaches

role in 68% of 2024 data

tion.

policy: central bank independence. At the heart of her firing attempt and other moves to undermine the Fed by the Trump administration is a power struggle. Central banks, which are public institutions that manage a country's currency and its monetary policy, have an extraordinary amount of power. By controlling the flow of money and credit in a country, they can affect economic growth, inflation, employment and

financial stability. These are powers that many politicians would like to control or at least manipulate. That's because monetary policy can provide governments with economic boosts at key times, such as around elections or during periods of falling popular-

The problem is that short-lived, politically motivated moves may be detrimental to the long-term economic well-being of a nation. They may, in other words, saddle the economy with problems further down the line.

That is why central banks across the globe tend to receive significant leeway to set interest rates independently and free from the electoral wishes of politicians.

In fact, monetary policymaking that is data-driven and technocratic, rather than politically motivated, has since the early 1990s been seen as the gold standard of governance of national finances and has largely achieved its main purpose of keeping inflation relatively low and

But despite independence being seen to work, central banks over the past decade have come under increased pressure from politicians.

Trump is one recent example. In his first term as president, he criticized his own choice to head the U.S. Federal Reserve and demanded lower interest rates.

Attacks on the Fed have accelerated in Trump's second administration. In April 2025, Trump lashed out at Fed Chair Jerome Powell in an online post accusing him of being "TOO LATE AND WRONG" on interest rate cuts, while suggesting that the central banker's "termination cannot come fast enough!" Unable to force Powell out, Trump has now brought the power struggle to a head with his firing of Cook, nominally over allegations that the Fed governor falsified records in a mortgage application. Cook has said that the president does not have the grounds or authority to fire her.

As political economists, we are not surprised to see politicians try to exert influence on central banks. For one thing, central banks remain part of the government bureaucracy, and independence granted to them can always be reversed - either by changing laws or backtracking on established practices.

Moreover, the reason politicians may want to interfere in monetary policy is that low interest rates remain a potent, quick method to boost an economy. And while politicians know that there are costs to besieging an independent central bank - financial markets may react negatively or inflation may flare up - short-term control of a powerful policy tool can prove irresistible.

If monetary policy is such a coveted policy tool, how have central banks held off politicians and stayed independent? And is this independence being eroded?

Broadly, central banks are protected by laws that offer long tenures to their leadership, allow them to focus policy primarily on inflation, and severely limit lending

to the rest of the government.

Of course, such legislation cannot anticipate all future contingencies, which may open the door for political interference or for practices that break the law. And sometimes central bankers are unceremoniously fired.

However, laws do keep politicians in line. For example, even in authoritarian countries, laws protecting central banks from political interference have helped reduce inflation and restricted central bank lending to the government.

In our own research, we have detailed the ways that laws have insulated central banks from the rest of the government, but also the recent trend of eroding this legal

Around the world, appointments to central bank leadership are political - elected politicians select candidates based on career credentials, political affiliation and, importantly, their dislike or tolerance of inflation.

But lawmakers in different countries exercise different degrees of political control.

A 2025 study shows that the large majority of central bank leaders about 70% - are appointed by the head of government alone or with the intervention of other members of the executive branch. This ensures that the preferences of the central bank are closer to the government's, which can boost the central bank's legitimacy in democratic countries, but at the risk of permeability to political influence.

Alternatively, appointments can involve the legislative power or even the central bank's own board. In the U.S., while the president nominates members of the Federal Reserve Board, the Senate can and has rejected unconventional or incompetent candidates.

Moreover, even if appointments are political, many central bankers stay in office long after the people who appointed them have been voted out. By the end of 2023, the most common length of the governors' appointment is five years, and in 41 countries the legal mandate was six years or longer. Powell is set to stay on as Fed chair until his term expires in 2026. The Fed chair position has traditionally been protected by law, as Powell himself acknowledged in November 2024: "We're not removable except for cause. We serve very long terms, seemingly endless terms. So we're protected into law. Congress could change that law, but I don't think there's any danger of that.'

In the 2000s, several countries shortened the tenure of their central banks' governors to four or five years. Sometimes, this was part of broader restrictions in central bank independence, as was the case in Iceland in 2001, Ghana in 2002 and Romania in 2004. (AP)

Stronger policies, training, and technology could prevent many breaches

## Data breaches surge despite rising cybersecurity investments

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

#### By Mike Chapple University of Notre Dame

ybersecurity and data privacy are Constantly in the news. Governments are passing new cybersecurity laws. Companies are investing in cybersecurity controls such as firewalls, encryption and awareness training at record levels

And yet, people are losing ground on data privacy.

In 2024, the Identity Theft Resource Center reported that companies sent out 1.3 billion notifications to the victims of data breaches. That's more than triple the notices sent out the year before. It's clear that despite growing efforts, personal data breaches are not only continuing, but

What can you do about this situation? Many people think of the cybersecurity issue as a technical problem. They're right: Technical controls are an important part of protecting personal information, but they are not

As a professor of information technology, analytics and operations at the University of Notre Dame, I study ways to protect personal privacy.

Solid personal privacy protection

is made up of three pillars: accessible technical controls, public awareness of the need for privacy, and public policies that prioritize personal privacy. Each plays a crucial role in protecting personal privacy. A weakness in any one puts the entire system

at risk. Technology is the first line of defense, guarding access to computers that store data and encrypting information as it travels between computers to keep intruders from gaining access. But even the best security tools can fail when misused, misconfigured or ignored.

Two technical controls are especially important: encryption and multifactor authentication. These are the backbone of digital privacy - and they work best when widely adopted and properly implemented.

Encryption uses complex math to put sensitive data in an unreadable format that can only be unlocked with the right key. For example, your web browser uses HTTPS encryption to protect your information when you visit a secure webpage. This prevents anyone on your network - or any network between you and the website - from eavesdropping on your communications. Today, nearly all web

traffic is encrypted in this way. But if we're so good at encrypting data on networks, why are we still suffering all of these data breaches? The reality is that encrypting data in

transit is only part of the challenge.

We also need to protect data wherever it's stored - on phones, laptops and the servers that make up cloud storage. Unfortunately, this is where security often falls short. Encrypting stored data, or data at rest, isn't as widespread as encrypting data that is moving from one place to another.

While modern smartphones typically encrypt files by default, the same can't be said for cloud storage or company databases. Only 10% of organizations report that at least 80% of the information they have stored in the cloud is encrypted, according to a 2024 industry survey. This leaves a huge amount of unencrypted personal information potentially exposed if attackers manage to break in. Without encryption, breaking into a database is like opening an unlocked filing cabinet - everything inside is accessible to the attacker.

Multifactor authentication is a security measure that requires you to provide more than one form of verification before accessing sensitive information. This type of authentication is more difficult to crack than a password alone because it requires a combination of different types of information. It often combines something you know, such as a password, with something you have, such as a smartphone app that can generate a verification code or with something that's part of what you are, like a

fingerprint. Proper use of multifactor authentication reduces the risk of

compromise by 99.22% While 83% of organizations require that their employees use multifactor authentication, according to another industry survey, this still leaves millions of accounts protected by nothing more than a password. As attackers grow more sophisticated and credential theft remains rampant, closing that 17% gap isn't just a best practice - it's a necessity.

Multifactor authentication is one of the simplest, most effective steps organizations can take to prevent data breaches, but it remains underused. Expanding its adoption could dramatically reduce the number of successful attacks each year.

Even the best technology falls short when people make mistakes. Human error played a role in 68% of 2024 data breaches, according to a Verizon report. Organizations can mitigate this risk through employee training, data minimization - meaning collecting only the information necessary for a task, then deleting it when it's no longer needed - and strict access controls.

Policies, audits and incident response plans can help organizations prepare for a possible data breach so they can stem the damage, see who is responsible and learn from the experience. It's also important to guard against insider threats and physical

intrusion using physical safeguards such as locking down server rooms.

Legal protections help hold organizations accountable in keeping data protected and giving people control over their data. The European Union's General Data Protection Regulation is one of the most comprehensive privacy laws in the world. It mandates strong data protection practices and gives people the right to access, correct and delete their personal data. And the General Data Protection Regulation has teeth: In 2023, Meta was fined €1.2 billion (US\$1.4 billion) when Facebook was found in violation

Despite years of discussion, the U.S. still has no comprehensive federal privacy law. Several proposals have been introduced in Congress, but none have made it across the finish line. In its place, a mix of state regulations and industry-specific rules - such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act for health data and the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act for financial institutions - fill the gaps.

Some states have passed their own privacy laws, but this patchwork leaves Americans with uneven protections and creates compliance headaches for businesses operating across jurisdictions.

The tools, policies and knowledge to protect personal data exist - but people's and institutions' use of them still falls short. (AP)

editor's choice



## Features



Seniors solve crimes in 'Thursday Murder Club'

## Murder, she solved: Mirren channels Lansbury in new film

LOS ANGELES, Aug 31, (AP): First of all, is this really what retirement looks like?

If so, perhaps we should all sign up, no matter our age. In "The Thursday Murder Club," an amiable, cozy, pleasantly entertaining adaptation of Richard Osman's mystery novel, the lucky club members live in a retirement home that resembles Downton

The food at this dreamy manor house nestled in the English countryside is scrumptious, with a choice of drinks at lunch. The apartments are huge, the antiques tasteful, the archery and life-drawing classes topnotch. And the emotional support animals are llamas. Yes, llamas.

This is the setting, quaintly called Coopers Chase, in which four retirees, led by Helen Mirren in her nononsense plaid blazers, depart from yoga and Sudoku each week to consider cold cases. Old folks solving cases - and outthinking police - is nothing new in our popular culture. Let's recall "Murder, She Wrote," in which Angela Lansbury's Jessica Fletcher solved cases in tiny Cabot Cove, Maine - where close to 300 murders somehow occurred during the show's 12-year run.

## **Variety**

**ABUJA:** A film screening commemorating the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War has left a strong impression on Nigerian viewers, sparking reflections on the brutality of war and its lessons for today.

The event, hosted on Friday by the Chinese Embassy in Nigeria, drew a large audience of Nigerians and members of the Chinese community. For many, the film Dead to Rights offered a vivid glimpse into a chapter of history they had previously only read about.

Lawal Sale, a global affairs analyst, described Japanese aggression against the Chinese people as "a crime against humanity," adding that he was particularly moved by the Chinese people's courage in risking their lives to preserve photographic evidence of the atrocities committed by the Japanese army.

Ademidun Adewuyi, another attendee, said the film gave her "a clearer picture" of the events than historical accounts she had encountered before, especially in its depiction of civilians and children being killed. She reflected that the suffering endured by the Chinese people had made them stronger, teaching "a profound lesson that they cannot be involved in colonizing other countries.'

Other Nigerians in attendance film, set during the 1937 Nanjing Massacre, prompted reflection on the tragedies of war and the shared responsibility to prevent future conflicts.

Speaking ahead of the screening, Yu Dunhai, Chinese ambassador to Nigeria, called for deeper cooperation between the two nations, stressing the need to safeguard peace, justice, and the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Highlighting China's immense sacrifices during World War II, Yu said the country suffered more than 35 million military and civilian casualties and economic losses exceeding 600 billion U.S. dollars. He noted that China's resistance dealt a decisive blow to fascism and made "historic contributions to global

peace and stability."
Yu described China and Nigeria as "major developing nations and leading voices in the Global South.' calling them vital forces in upholding peace worldwide. (Xinhua)

BERLIN: "Dongji Rescue," a new Chinese blockbuster based on a true story of Chinese fishermen during World War II (WWII), was screened across Germany on Friday.

Directed by Guan Hu and Fei Zhenxiang, the WWII action thriller recounts the heroic efforts of Chinese fishermen who rescued hundreds of British war prisoners during the historic Lisbon Maru

incident. In October 1942, the Japanese military commandeered the passenger-cargo ship to transport more than 1,800 British war prisoners from Hong Kong to Japan. While passing through the waters near Zhoushan Islands in China's Zhejiang Province, the ship was torpedoed by a U.S. submarine.

In a remarkable act of bravery, local Chinese fishermen risked their lives to rescue some 300 survivors. "Dongji Rescue" brings to light

a historical event that was largely unfamiliar to many, said Andrea Schmegel, who traveled hours by train to Berlin for the screening.

For another viewer, Minh Thu T., the film's historical theme was a key takeaway, in addition to its compelling acting and visual effects.

'I think it would be good for everyone to see what happened in the past," she said, adding that such stories encourage a broader and more honest understanding of history.

Distributed in Europe by Trinity CineAsia, "Dongji Rescue" is currently screening in Germany and Austria, following its domestic

release in China earlier this month. The film boasts a cast of major Chinese stars, including Zhu Yilong, Wu Lei and Ni Ni, joined by British actor William Franklyn-Miller. (Xinhua)

The crime-busting seniors in "The Thursday Murder Club," directed by Chris Columbus, are nowhere near that fortunate in terms of body count. But they approach their weekly meetings with gusto. Mirren's Elizabeth has skills from a career in "international affairs" (smells like espionage). Pierce Brosnan's Ron is former trade unionist, and Ben Kingsley's Ibrahim a former psychiatrist. As we begin, the trio is considering a case from the '70s in which a woman fell out a window under mysterious circumstances.

But they need medical expertise, and thus they recruit new resident Joyce (Celia Imrie), an expert baker and former trauma nurse. We meet her as she's showing off the grounds to her haughty daughter, who manages a hedge fund and can't eat Mom's cakes because she's perimenopausal. "Everybody's doing llamas these days, Mum," she says, unimpressed with the surroundings.

But Joyce is thrilled to join the club, and even more thrilled when, one morning, news comes that an actual murder has occurred - a co-owner of Coopers Chase, actually. "Now we've got a real case to solve!" she gushes, with "Disco Inferno" sud-



This image released by Netflix shows Henry Lloyd Hughes, (left), and Helen Mirren in a scene from 'The Thursday Murder Club.' (AP)

denly playing on the soundtrack (that's a little much), as she pulls Ron from aqua aerobics for a meeting. "Isn't it wonderful!"

But no, it isn't all wonderful - the deceased had promised to protect the retirees from the plans of another co-owner to demolish the home and make an event space. The shady Ian Ventham (David Tennant) also intends to uproot the cemetery. Ron organizes a noisy protest. And then, yet another murder happens.

Naomi Ackie is appealing as a police officer who aches for exciting work, and Daniel Mays very funny as her clueless boss. As for the plot - well, the rather dry storyline is not what brings pleasure here.

No, that pleasure is derived from seeing these veterans strut their

stuff, foremost among them Mirren. (Kingsley, alas, gets almost no good lines). Her most delicious moment is a direct nod to her Oscar-winning role as a different Elizabeth. Heading out on an incognito mission with Joyce, she dons a silk headscarf, a comfy cardigan, a tartan skirt and a walking stick. "You look like the Queen!" notes her husband. "Do I?" she asks, cheekily.

But moments later, on the bus with Joyce, Elizabeth has a scene that rings false. Reading a text message, she asks her friend: "What does ... mean?" Joyce explains, loudly, what it means, saying she learned it from her daughter. A young mother with a child nearby is shocked at the profanity. It's all too cute by half. We're supposed to believe razorsharp Elizabeth doesn't know what "means?

It's a few moments like this that cause some discomfort, raising the question of whether these characters are being, well, caricatured. Columbus seems to acknowledge the issue with an exchange where Joyce tells Elizabeth that she feels like she's in "one of those Sunday night dramas about two bright-eyed, feisty, old lady detectives outsmarting the police at every turn." Annoyed, Elizabeth tells her never to utter the words again.

In any case, there's a sadder undertone that provides some grounding here. Elizabeth's husband - poignantly played by Jonathan Pryce - is in the early stages of dementia, a fact Elizabeth is keeping from him. He has his good days and his bad ones, she explains to a friend. Sometimes he's his old self, and sometimes he's just gone.

It's a message that even if our main protagonists seem healthy and active, they're at a stage in life where every day is a bit more precarious. "Cherish the good moments," the friend tells Elizabeth.

It's a good message, overall, for the movie. The script could certainly be sharper, the comedy more clever. But for two hours on Netflix, Coopers Chase is rather a comfy place to be, with some moments to

"The Thursday Murder Club," a Netflix release, has been rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association "for violent content/bloody images, strong language and some sexual references." Running time: 118 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

Film

'Frankenstein' gets standing ovation at Venice festival

## Jude Law's Putin portrayal shines at Venice

VENICE, Italy, Aug 31, (AP): Jude Law transforms into Vladimir Putin for Olivier Assayas' "The Wizard of the Kremlin," which has its world premiere Sunday at the Venice Film Festival.

Law said Sunday before the premiere that he didn't enter the project naively, and that he also does not fear repercussions for his portrayal.

"I felt safe in the hands of Olivier," Law said. "This is a story that was going to be told intelligently with nuance and consideration. We weren't looking for controversy for controversy's sake."

Law, who wore prosthetics for his transformation, said his Putin is "a character in a much larger story.

"We weren't trying to define anything about anyone," Law added.

The film is an adaptation of Giuliano da Empoli's bestselling book of the same name, an account of the Russian president's rise to power alongside a fictional adviser called Vadim Baranov, who is played by Paul Dano. It's partially set in the early 1990s amid post-Soviet chaos and continues through 2014.

Dano's character was inspired by the real political strategist Vladislav Sourkov, who was considered the architect of the tightly controlled political system created under Putin. In 2013, he resigned his post of deputy prime minister.

Much of the story is centered on Dano's character, recounting his own rise in political maneuvering and the world he helped create.

"The wizard is the person who is in the background, so there's a casting of a spell that is happening," Dano

"The Wizard of the Kremlin" is sure to provoke conversations as Rus-



This image shows Jude Law, as Vladimir Putin, (left), and Paul Dano, as Vadim Baranov, in a scene from 'The Wizard of the Kremlin.' (AP)

"The film is very much about how

sia's three-year war in Ukraine continues. Efforts to stop the fighting with a ceasefire and end Europe's biggest conflict since World War II through a comprehensive peace settlement have made no progress despite intense diplomatic maneuvering.



Marisa Del Toro, (from left), director Guillermo del Toro and Kim Morgan pose for photographers at the red carpet for the film 'Frankenstein' during the 82nd edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, on Saturday, Aug. 30. (AP)

modern politics, 21st-century politics were invented," Assayas said. "What's going on right now is not only terrifying but it's even more terrifying by the fact that we have not found the answer."

The book was written before Russia's full scale invasion of Ukraine, but da Empoli said that even if it's about an earlier period, it was "right."

"It's still relevant today, three years later, under different circumstances,' da Empoli said.

The film marks the English language debut for the French filmmaker best known for films like "Clouds of Sils Maria" and "Personal Shopper," as well as the miniseries "Carlos." Alicia Vikander, who he directed in "Irma Vep," also co-stars in "The Wizard of the Kremlin" as Vadim Baranov's onagain-off-again girlfriend. Her character, the filmmaker said, was supposed to embody "freedom."

"This is a story about a lot of men talking in rooms," Vikander said. "But Olivier told me that we need a world that shows the women who inhabit it also. A female counterpart but a very moral one as well."

Production took place in Latvia as they couldn't film in Russia. Assayas wrote in his director's

statement that it, "is not a film about

the rise of one man - nor is it about the force with which power is imposed, or the reinvention of a nation that is both modern and archaic, once again under the yoke of totalitarianism. Rooted in real, contemporary events, it is instead a reflection on modern politics - or rather, the smoke screens behind which it now hides: cynical, deceptive, and toxic.'

He added: "'The Wizard of the Kremlin' is not so much a political film as it is a film about politics - and the perversity of its methods, which now hold us all hostage."

The film is playing in the main competition, with titles like "Frankenstein,'

"Bugonia," "The Voice of Hind Rajab," "La Grazia" and "No Other Choice" also vying for the top prizes, including acting and directing awards. Winners will be announced on Sept. 6.

"The Wizard of the Kremlin" does not yet have a release date in North America. Actor Jeffrey Wright, who plays the journalist Vadim Baranov is telling his story to, made a plea for why the film needs to be seen, especially in America.

"Even within the time frame of the original sins of America...we had an idea that we could be better. This idea that we could aspire toward some sort of utopian perfectibility," Wright said. "If that is lost, as it is now, than we

become what we see in this film.'

Meanwhile, Oscar Isaac and Jacob Elordi arrived at the Venice Film Festival Saturday for the world premiere of Guillermo del Toro's "Frankenstein," the kickoff to what's expected to be the film's major awards season push. The audience gave it a 13-minute standing ovation, one of the most enthusastic of the 82nd edition of the festival.

Isaac plays Victor Frankenstein and Elordi is the monster in this adaptation of Mary Shelley's classic novel, which del Toro has been dreaming about making for decades.

"It's the movie that I've been in training for 30 years to do," del Toro told The Associated Press.

Speaking in Venice, del Toro said he feels like he's in "postpartum depression" now that he's completed the film, a gothic feast of sets.

Isaac said before they started makng "Frankenstein," del Toro told him, "I'm creating this banquet for you, you just have to show up and eat.'

"This film feels particularly personal," Isaac added. "I think ultimately it is about outsiders.'

Elordi joined the production fairly late in the process, and threw himself into the childlike monster, who he didn't find so hard to relate to.

"It's a vessel that I could put every part of myself into," Elordi said. "In so many ways the creature that is on screen in that movie is the purest form of myself, he's more me than

Outside the red carpet, several hundred anti-war protested gathered peacefully, hoping to turn the spotlight to the war in Gaza.

The last time del Toro was at Venice was with "The Shape of Water" in 2017, which won the festival's top prize that year before going on to pick up the best picture and best director Oscar in 2018. Netflix does not yet have a best picture winner in their arsenal, but is betting big on "Frankenstein." Del Toro's last film, "Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio," won the streamer its first best animated film

Like "The Shape of Water," "Frankenstein" is up for the big awards at Venice, where it will be competing with films like Yorgos Lanthimos's "Bugonia,"

Kathryn Bigelow's "A House of Dynamite," Park Chan-wook's "No Other Choice" and Kaouther Ben Hania's "The Voice of Hind Rajab." Winners will be announced by the Alexander Payne-led jury on Sept. 6.

Netflix plans to release "Frankenstein" in theaters on Oct. 17, before it comes to streaming Nov. 7.

#### A celebration of pop culture in Johannesburg

### Comic-Con Africa draws thousands of fans, cosplayers

JOHANNESBURG, Aug 31, (AP): Tens of thousands of South African comic book fans and cosplayers flocked to Johannesburg on Saturday to celebrate the sixth edition of Comic-Con Africa, the continent's biggest celebration of pop culture and gam-

The four-day festival, which began Thursday, celebrated anime, gaming, comics and cosplay with a variety of entertainment, including vintage arcade games, esports and costume competitions.

Fans dressed up as their favorite comic book heroes and villains, snapping selfies in replicas of famous local sets and donning original character outfits inspired by their

own imagination. "This year's Comic-Con has been big-

ger and bolder than ever before," said Comic-Con Africa Show Director Carla Massmann, adding they anticipate a total of 70,000 fans having walked through the gate by Sunday. Nkosinathi Skhosana, 24, called Comic-

Con Africa "nothing short of amazing" because it was another "safe space" where South Africans of all races and classes could forget their social issues and have fun together.

"Just like Rugby brings people of all races together, Comic-Con is also creating that kind of space for us," said Skhosana.

International celebrities were featured on the main stage, including US actor Jessie T. Usher from the Amazon Prime series "The Boys." Also in attendance were actor, comedian and writer Dan Fogler, known for playing Jacob Kowalski in the Harry Potter spinoff "Fantastic Beasts," and Misha Collins, best known for his role as Castiel in "Supernatural."

Fans were delighted to be treated to autograph and photograph opportunities with international stars, but they also gushed over each other's outfits.

"The first picture I took was with Sailor Moon, my favorite character of all time,' said Owami Sibanyoni, 23, who was dressed as Musa from the animated franchise "Winx Club."

The event, which is usually held at the end of September, was moved to August to make way for the G20 summit, which will be held at the same venue later this year.



People attend the Comic Con Festival in Johannesburg, South Africa, Saturday, Aug. 30, 2025. (AP)









The China Cultural Center in Kuwait hosts 'Qixi Feast: Taste the Romance of China,' to showcase the Chinese culinary culture.

#### Kuwait celebrates Chinese culinary culture with 'dim sum'

## China Cultural Center hosts 'Qixi Feast,' a cultural experience in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: On August 28, the China Cultural Center in Kuwait hosted "Qixi Feast: Taste the Romance of China," the second event in its ongoing series

titled "Chinese Culinary Culture Month."

Coinciding with China's traditional Qixi Festival, the event spotlights the artistry of Cantonese dim sum, offering Kuwait guests an immersive journey into Chinese culinary culture.

Cantonese dim sum is more than food — it embodies

Lingnan culture and stands as one of the iconic symbols of Chinese cuisine worldwide. Today, expressions such as "dim sum" and "yum cha" are widely used in English, reflecting the global reach of this culinary tradition. The event introduces participants to the diversity and cultural symbolism of dim sum and features interactive activities.

Under the guidance of professional instructors, guests will make their own mochi, discovering the delicacy and

enjoyment behind dim sum craftsmanship. Classic dishes such as har gow, siu mai, BBQ buns, and swan-shaped pastry, along with traditional Chinese tea, are also served, allowing attendees to savor the philosophy of Cantonese dining

Beyond flavors, the experience fosters connection and cultural exchange. During the sharing session, several participants will recount personal stories and impressions of Chinese cuisine, underscoring how food is not only a sensory delight but also a bridge that transcends geography and language.

As the second installment of the series of event themed "Chinese Culinary Culture Month", the event combines cultural sharing, hands-on workshops, and interactive exchange. It vividly showcases Chinese gastronomy and traditional festivals, enhancing the Kuwait public's appreciation of Chinese culture while deepening bonds of friendship and understanding.

#### **Variety**

**TILBURG, Netherlands:** The southern Dutch city of Tilburg is seeing more color than usual this weekend, as thousands of redheads from all over the world gather in the Netherlands for a once-a-year festival to celebrate their flaming locks.

The 2025 edition of the Redhead Days festival includes music, food trucks and workshops tailored to particular needs of redheads, from makeup explainers to skin cancer prevention.

Organizers expect the threeday event to draw several thousand attendees from some 80 countries.

Elounda Bakker, a Dutch festival veteran of 15 years, played cards with a group of redheaded friends from across the world who meet together every year at the festival.

"I came out of curiosity mostly, just to see what it would be like not to stand out in the crowd," said Bakker, 29. "It was really an interesting first experience and I just keep coming because I met some really nice friends here."

Magician Daniel Hank traveled six hours from Germany to join the festivities, now proud to flaunt the hair that made him the target of bullying when

"I think it's really easy to recognize me because there are not that many people with a red beard, there are not many guys with long red hair," he said. (AP)

**WASHINGTON:** The agency that oversees Voice of America and other government-funded international broadcasters is eliminating jobs for more than 500 employees, a Trump administration official said. The move could ratchet up a monthslong legal challenge over the news outlets'

Kari Lake, acting CEO of the US Agency for Global Media, announced the latest round of job cuts late Friday, one day after a federal judge blocked her from removing Michael Abramowitz as VOA director.

US District Judge Royce Lamberth had ruled separately that the Republican administration had failed to show how it was complying with his orders to restore VOA's operations. His order Monday gave the administration "one final opportunity, short of a contempt trial" to demonstrate its compliance. He ordered Lake to sit for a deposition by lawyers for agency employees by Sept. 15.

On Thursday, Lamberth said Abramowitz could not be removed without the approval of the majority of the International Broadcasting Advisory Board. Firing Abramowitz would be "plainly contrary to law," according to Lamberth, who was nominated to the bench by Republican President Ronald Reagan. (AP)

**COLUMBUS, Ohio:** Just as it was the first time, Lee Corso's final headgear pick was Brutus Buckeye.

Corso selected the third-ranked Buckeyes to beat top-ranked Texas on his final appearance on ESPN's "College GameDay" on Saturday.

Corso made the prediction on the 50-yard line at Ohio Stadium 16 minutes before kickoff, quite a change from the first time in 1996 when it was done in the parking lot outside the Horseshoe.

"To everyone who has been a part of the journey, thank you," Corso said during the opening segment of Saturday's show.

It is the 45th time Corso donned Brutus Buckeye's head. Ohio State is 31-14 the previous occasions.

Coach Ryan Day gave Corso an Ohio State helmet with a buckeye leaf on it for each time he chose the Buckeyes. Day also gave Corso an additional sticker to put on in case he picked the

Buckeyes.

A local restaurant also made an 85-pound cake of Brutus' head.

(AP)

#### **Tourism**

A regional food hub

## **Kuwait boosts food hospitality** with support from digital influencers



KUNA phot

Kuwait's food and hospitality sector is surging, with bloggers playing a key role in highlighting its culinary scene.

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31, (KUNA): Amid fierce competition, Kuwait is solidifying its role as a leading regional food and hospitality destination, boosted by quality restaurants and enhanced service.

Digital restaurant bloggers have significantly promoted Kuwait's vibrant culinary scene, attracting diverse food enthusiasts and raising the country's culinary tourism.

Restaurant bloggers have also evolved into professional digital media entities, using high-quality tools to provide detailed reviews.

Their influential evaluations have significantly impacted consumer choices, public perception, and restaurant sales.

Recent studies have revealed that consumers heavily rely on bloggers' opinions, making them a strong influence that drives restaurants to enhance service and product quality to avoid losses.

According to Scotts International Research, Kuwait's food service market earned approximately USD 3.25 billion in 2024, with projections to reach USD 4.88 billion by 2029, at a compound annual growth rate of 8.4 percent.

Meanwhile, the global company, Verified Markets, predicted that Kuwait's restaurant, cafe, and cloud kitchen market would reach USD 38 billion by 2032, driven by 10 percent annual growth and rising tourism-related revenues.

According to the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority, the tourism sector is projected to grow from USD 522 million in 2021 to about USD 1.13 billion by the end of this year.

One of the most prominent challenges facing bloggers is maintaining the credibility of their reviews amid rising paid collaborations.

Food bloggers have called for clear professional standards, such as full disclosure of partnerships and objective evaluation criteria, as their role is expected

to expand in supporting Kuwait's tourism and eco-

nomic growth.

In an interview with KUNA, blogger Abdulrahman Al-Qwaiee said that restaurant blogging in Kuwait has evolved significantly, shifting from a hobby to a profession that shapes public taste and contributes to the country's cultural identity.

He stressed that a successful blogger must be able to assess diverse cuisines and ingredients, especially in a country known for its wide range of local and international dining options.

Al-Qwaiee also highlighted the strong appeal of local Kuwaiti restaurants, which preserve and promote the country's authentic culinary heritage.

For his part, blogger Abdulaziz Al-Najjar shared that his blogging began with healthy food tips for friends and followers, later evolving into the concept of an "open meal," where athletes treat themselves after a week of disciplined eating and exercise.

He added that Kuwait has become a key destination for food enthusiasts, driven by the diverse tastes of its people, which motivates restaurants to elevate food quality and service.

Al-Najjar emphasized that bloggers now hold

greater influence, thanks to their credibility and transparency, which strengthen public trust in their recommendations.

Blogger Moath Adnan shared that his journey be-

gan by spontaneously reviewing dishes from various restaurants on social media, which directly impacted some restaurants' sales.

He noted Kuwait's long-standing exposure to inter-

national cuisines since the 1960s, shaping Kuwaitis taste and perception.

Adnan stressed the importance of credibility, reject-

Adnan stressed the importance of credibility, rejecting promotions for products he does not personally endorse, and called for a clear professional framework to guide bloggers' work.

#### **How tech protects livestock**

## AC/DC and Johansson help drones keep wolves away

LOS ANGELES, Aug 31, (AP): For millennia humans have tried to scare wolves away from their livestock. Most of them didn't have drones.

But a team of biologists working near the California-Oregon border do, and they're using them to blast AC/DC's "Thunderstruck," movie clips and live human voices at the apex predators to shoo them away from cattle in an ongoing experiment.

"I am not putting up with this anymore!" actor Scarlett Johansson yells in one clip, from the 2019 film "Marriage Story."

"With what? I can't talk to people?" co-star Adam Driver shouts back.

Gray wolves were hunted nearly to extinction throughout the US West by the first half of the 20th century. Since their reintroduction in Idaho and at Yellowstone National Park in the mid-1990s, they've proliferated to the point that a population in the Northern Rockies has been removed from the endangered species list.

There are now hundreds of wolves in Washington and Oregon, dozens more in northern California, and thousands roaming near the Great Lakes.

The recovering population has meant increasing conflict with ranchers - and increasingly creative efforts by the latter to protect livestock. They've turned to electrified fencing, wolf alarms, guard dogs, horseback patrols, trapping and relocating, and now drones. In some areas where nonlethal efforts have failed, officials routinely approve killing wolves, including last week in

Washington state.
Gray wolves killed some 800 domesticated animals across 10 states in 2022, a previous Associated Press review of data from state and federal agencies found.

Scientists with the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service developed the techniques for hazing wolves by drone while monitoring them using thermal imaging cameras at night, when the predators are most active. A preliminary study released in 2022 demonstrated that adding human voices through a loudspeaker rigged

onto a drone can freak them out.

The team documented successful interruptions of wolf hunts. When Dustin Ranglack, the USDA's lead researcher on the project, saw one for the first time, he smiled from ear to ear.

"If we could reduce those negative impacts of wolves, that is going to be more likely to lead to a situation where we have coexistence," Ranglack said.

The preloaded clips include recordings of music, gunshots, fireworks and voices. A drone pilot starts by playing three clips chosen at random, such as the "Marriage Story" scene or "Thunderstruck," with its screams and hairraising electric guitar licks.

If those don't work, the operator can improvise by yelling through a microphone or playing a different clip that's not among the randomized presets. One favorite is the heavy metal band Five Finger Death Punch 's cover of "Blue on Black," which might blast the lyric "You turned and you ran" as the wolves flee.

USDA drone pilots have continued cattle protection patrols this summer while researching wolf responses at ranches with high conflict levels along the Oregon-California border. Patrols extended south to the Sierra Valley in August for the first time, according to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

It's unclear whether the wolves might become accustomed to the drones. Herders and wolf hunters in Europe have long deterred them with long lines hung with flapping cloth, but the wolves can eventually learn that the flags are not a threat.

Environmental advocates are optimistic about drones, though, because they allow for scaring wolves in different ways, in different places.

"Wolves are frightened of novel things," said Amaroq Weiss, a wolf advocate with the Center for Biological Diversity. "I know that in the human imagination, people think of wolves as big, scary critters that are scared of nothing."

There are also drawbacks to the technology. A drone with night vision and a loudspeaker costs around \$20,000, requires professional training and doesn't work well in wooded areas, making it impractical for many

ranchers.
Ranchers in Northern California who have hosted USDA drone patrols agree that they have reduced livestock deaths

so far.

"I'm very appreciative of what they did. But I don't think it's a long-term solution," said Mary Rickert, the owner of a cattle ranch north of Mount Shasta "What I'm afraid of is that after some period of time, that all of a sudden they go, 'Wow, this isn't going to hurt me. It just makes a lot of noise."

Ranchers are compensated if they can prove that a wolf killed their livestock. But there are uncompensated costs of having stressed-out cows, such as lower birth rates and tougher meat

as lower birth rates and tougher meat.
Rickert said if the drones don't work over the long term, she might have to close the business, which she's been involved in since at least the 1980s. She wants permission to shoot wolves if they're attacking her animals or if they come onto her property after a certain number of attacks.

If the technology proves effective and costs come down, someday ranchers might merely have to ask the wolves to go away.

#### **Trump pushes for shift in national museum's narrative**

## A walk through Smithsonian reveals American genius, cruelty

WASHINGTON, Aug 31, (AP): In an afternoon's walk through ground zero of Americana - the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History - objects around every corner invite one question: What could possibly be more American than this?

There's the enormous Star-Spangled Banner in all its timeworn glory, Dorothy's ruby slippers from "The Wizard of Oz" and totems of achievement throughout.

There are also testaments to pain and cruelty. What could be more American than a reckoning with the nation's sins, as illustrated by shackles representing slavery and photos of Japanese Americans confined to detention camps in

World War II?

In myriad ways, the museum explores "the complexity of our past," in accord with its mission statement. President Donald Trump wants a simpler tale told. He wants this and the other Smithsonian museums to mirror Amer-

ican pride, power and accomplishment without all the darkness, and he threatens to hold back money if they don't get with that program.

On social media, Trump complained that at the Smithsonian museums, which are free to visit and get most of their money from the government, "everything discussed is how horrible our Country is, how bad Slavery was, and how unaccomplished the downtrodden have been - Nothing about Success, nothing about Brightness, nothing about the Future."

about the Future."

In fact, the history museum reflects bountiful successes, whether on the battlefield, from the kitchens and factories of food pioneers, on the musical stage, in the movies or on other fronts of creativity and industriousness. The American Enterprise exhibit, for one, has a wall filled with the stories of successful

On this wandering tour you can see navigational implements used by



This wall in the 'Great Debate' section of a democracy exhibit at the National Museum of American History, shown Aug. 26, in Washington, reflects some of the issues the nation grapples with. President Donald Trump is pressing for changes in the stories the Smithsonian museums tell about America. He wants US history cast in a more positive light. (AP)

Blackbeard, the terrifying pirate, from his early 1700s raids on the Atlantic coast. You see the hat Abraham Lincoln wore to Ford's Theatre the night of his assassination, George Washington's ceremonial uniform, Warren Harding's fine red silk pajamas from the early 1900s, the first car to travel across the country, and a \$100,000 bill.

You can see the original light bulbs of the American genius, Thomas Edi-

son. A much earlier genius, the founding father Benjamin Franklin, is presented both as a gifted inventor and a slave owner who publicly came to denounce slavery yet never freed his own.

Those nuances and ambiguities may not be long for this world. Still on dis-

Those nuances and ambiguities may not be long for this world. Still on display at the history museum are artifacts and documents of American ingenuity, subjugation, generosity, racism, grit, dishonor, verve, playfulness, corruption, heroism, and cultural appropria-

#### Climate change fueled deadly wildfires in Turkey, Greece: study

## Climate change drives Britain toward hottest summer on record

LONDON, Aug 31, (Agencies): Climate change is increasingly reshaping Britain's weather, with provisional data indicating that this summer is set to be the warmest on record for the country.

According to provisional statistics from Britain's Met Office, the summer of 2025 will "almost certainly" become the warmest summer on record for the country since records

The new figures would move 2018 off the top spot and push 1976 out of the top five warmest summers, the office said in a report released earlier this week.

From June 1 to Aug. 25, Britain's mean temperature stood at 16.13 degrees Celsius, about 1.54 degrees above the longterm meteorological average and well above the current record of 15.76 degrees set in 2018.

Met Office scientist Emily Carlisle said that unless temperatures fall by 4 degrees below average for the remainder of August, which the forecast does not suggest, it looks like the current record will be exceeded.

"Of course, there are still a few days left of meteorological summer to go, but it's very unlikely anything will stop summer 2025 from being the warmest on record," said Carlisle.

The summer of 1976 is still one of the most memorable in British weather history. That year, multiple locations across England experienced heatwave-like conditions for more than two weeks. There were 16 days in which temperatures exceeded 32 degrees Celsius, compared with nine such days during the summer of 2025.



A man takes away goats during a wildfire in Vounteni, on the outskirts of Patras, western Greece, Aug. 13. (AP)

While this year has not seen as many intense spikes in extreme heat, what sets 2025 apart is the consistency of the

Meteorologists explained that this persistent warmth is driven by a combination of factors, including dry ground from spring, dominant high-pressure systems, and unusually warm seas around the country, creating an environment where temperatures rise quickly and linger.

Both maximum and minimum temperatures have been

significantly above average, with minimum temperatures rising especially sharply, the report noted.

Between 1991 and 2020, Britain's mean summer temperature was 14.59 degrees Celsius, over 0.8 degrees higher than the period from 1961 to 1990, it added.

Climate projections show that future summers in Britain are set to become hotter and drier, a trend already evident in recent years.

Experts noted that climate change has the power to turn previously unremarkable years into record-breaking ones, as baseline conditions steadily rise.

They added that the four heatwaves observed this summer, which in the past might have been seen as pleasant spells of warm weather, are made more prominent against a backdrop of global warming.

Climate change that has driven scorching temperatures and dwindling rainfall made massive wildfires in Turkey, Greece and Cyprus this summer burn much more fiercely, said a new study released Thursday.

The study by World Weather Attribution said the fires that killed 20 people, forced 80,000 to evacuate and burned more than 1 million hectares (2.47 million acres) were 22% more intense in 2025, Europe's worst recorded year of wildfires.

Hundreds of wildfires that broke out in the eastern Mediterranean in June and July were driven by temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius (about 104 Fahrenheit), extremely dry conditions and strong winds.

WWA, a group of researchers that examines whether and to what extent extreme weather events are linked to climate change, called its findings "concerning."

"Our study finds an extremely strong climate change signal towards hotter and drier conditions," said Theodore Keeping, a researcher at Centre for Environmental Policy at Imperial College in London.

Today, with 1.3 degrees C of warming, we are seeing new extremes in wildfire behaviour that has pushed firefighters to their limit. But we are heading for up to 3 degrees C this century unless countries more rapidly transition away from fossil fuels," Keeping said.

The study found winter rainfall ahead of the wildfires had dropped by about 14% since the pre-industrial era, when a heavy reliance on fossil fuels began. It also determined that because of climate change, weeklong periods of dry, hot air

that primes vegetation to burn are now 13 times more likely. The analysis also found an increase in the intensity of high-pressure systems that strengthened extreme northerly winds, known as Etesian winds, that fanned the wildfires.

Gavriil Xanthopoulos, research director at the Institute of Mediterranean Forest Ecosystems of the Hellenic Agricultural Organization in Greece, said firefighters used to be able to wait for such winds to die down to control fires.

"It seems that they cannot count on this pattern anymore," Xanthopoulos said. More study is needed to understand how the wind patterns are reaching high velocities more often, he said.



A couple float along Poe Spring amid an algae bloom July 15, 2025, in Alachua County, Fla. (AP)

#### Freshwater springs face crisis

### Florida's pristine springs threatened by pollution, development, climate change

ZEPHYRHILLS, Fla., Aug 31, (AP): Seen from the air, a Florida freshwater spring is a bit of liquid heaven, luring humans and wildlife to enjoy its aquamarine cool. With at least 1,000 of them - more than any other state the springs serve as beaches for large swaths of central and northwestern Florida far from the ocean, with teenagers backflipping from docks and snorkelers peering into the crystalline

But these treasures are under threat from agricultural pollution, rapid development and climate change.

Some places, such as fast-growing Zephyrhills in west-central Florida, have paused some construction as it struggles to stay within limits on the drinking water it can withdraw from a vast underground aquifer. Zephyrhills is home to Crystal Springs, source of the bottled water named after the town and several other brands.

"We really had to do something," said Steven Spina, a member of the town council. "A lot of residents thought it was a good thing. People were happy to see us take a breath.

Covering an estimated 100,000 square miles (250,000 square kilometers), the underground Floridan Aquifer is the source of 90% of Florida's drinking water. Because of the porous nature of the state's bedrock, millions of gallons of water find their way to the surface in the form of clear, clean

springs that, in turn, feed into rivers. The highest concentration of springs are in central and northern Florida, including most of the 30 "first magnitude" springs - those that discharge at least 65 million gallons (246 million liters) of water every day. All but four of them are considered polluted.

"We just have too much pollution going into the ground and too much water coming out of the ground," said Ryan Smart, executive director of the nonprofit Florida Springs Council. "And when you get that combination, you end up with springs that are no longer blue and vibrant and full of

In rural Florida, runoff from fertilizers and pesticides used in farm fields is a major part of the problem. Fertilizers containing phosphates and nitrogen promote algae blooms that can suffocate a spring. Livestock waste contrib-

"When that algae covers everything, then you lose all of the seagrasses. The seagrasses are the forests of the water," Smart said. "Then you begin to lose the biodiversity. And it even puts our drinking water at risk."

Elsewhere in Florida, rampant development is the threat. With over 1,000 people moving to Florida every day, more housing subdivisions are sprouting, along with the roads, strip malls, restaurants, golf courses and everything else that comes with them.

That means more paved surfaces that keep rainwater from percolating down into the aquifer and more pollutant-laden runoff from lawn fertilizers, parking lots, ever-widening roads and sometimes septic tanks. It also means more and more people, many of whom enjoy tubing, paddleboarding, kayaking and swimming in the springs.

It gets so busy in summer at some springs located in state and local parks that entry is halted by late morning. At Ichetucknee Springs State Park north of Gainesville, the daily limit of 750 tubers on the upper river is often reached within an hour after the park opens.

Kaelin Gibbs, on vacation in June with his family from Georgia, was swimming in the Blue Hole Spring along the Ichetucknee River.

"This is simply incredible; the water is cool and clear," said Gibbs. "We've been to Florida's beaches and to Orlando. There is no comparison to how beautiful this spring is.'

#### Hunger claims more lives in Gaza

## **UK** announces new life-saving aid to improve maternal care in Gaza

LONDON, Aug 31, (Agencies): UK has announced new life-saving support for pregnant women and new mothers, and menstrual hygiene kits for thousands of women and girls the UK has pledged vital funding to deploy midwives and deliver emergency medical supplies for new mothers in Gaza.

The aid could reach thousands, but only if the Israeli occupation allowed a substantial increase in vital humanitarian access, said a statement by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office.

The Foreign Secretary David Lammy said, "The humanitarian situation in Gaza remains catastrophic, with famine in Gaza City and women and girls bearing the brunt of the suffering. The UK is doing all we can to improve the situation but we remain crystal clear: for aid to have impact, Israel must ensure it is allowed in and delivered safely and securely to civilians in desperate need.'

Gaza's healthcare system has been decimated. With ongoing strikes on healthcare centres and most hospitals no longer functioning at all, pregnant women will be extremely anxious about giving birth safely," he added.

"That's why we're announcing this support today as part of our sustained humanitarian assistance to the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

"This new funding will help improve midwifery provisions and make giving birth safer. It is critical to improving the situation for mothers and their new-born babies," Lammy said.

But this funding can only have maximum impact if the Government of Israel allows it. Israel must ensure protection of civilians including healthcare staff and health infrastructure, and enable the delivery of life saving medicines, medical equipment and



A Palestinian girl waits at a community kitchen before donated food is distributed in Gaza City, Friday, Aug. 22. (AP)

healthcare supplies into Gaza. 'We need an immediate ceasefire, the release of all hostages, a surge in aid and a framework to deliver long-

term peace.' UK funding is set to support some of the 130 women who give birth every day against the backdrop of conflict in Gaza. This Pound Sterling three million funding, delivered through the UN's sexual and reproductive health agency (UNFPA) is supporting midwives to provide essential lifesaving care for mothers and newborn babies in conflicts and crises.

The announcement comes after the Famine Review Committee confirmed famine in parts of Gaza.

The UK reiterated that the Israeli occupation government's refusal to allow sufficient aid into Gaza has caused this man-made catastrophe and urges it to take action to improve the situation

Laila Baker, UNFPA Arab States Regional Director said, "Women and girls are enduring increasingly horrific conditions in Gaza - with widespread

malnutrition and disease putting the lives of pregnant and breastfeeding women and their babies at particular "This vital contribution from the

United Kingdom will support UNF-PA in providing lifesaving medicines, deploying mobile maternity units, and supporting midwives across the Occupied Palestinian Territory," she

"With one in five babies in Gaza born prematurely or underweight, and maternal and neonatal services collapsing from fuel and supply shortages, UNFPA also reiterates its urgent call for unimpeded, sustained and demilitarized humanitarian aid into the Occupied Palestinian Territory."

The FCDO is also working with Oxfam GB to distribute Reemi's zero waste menstrual hygiene products that are suitable for women and girls with limited access to clean water. In incredibly difficult circumstances, Oxfam and local partners distributed over 5,000 Reemi kits in Northern Gaza in early 2025.

New guidelines add complexity

## **Getting a COVID shot more complicated**

get a COVID-19 vaccine? That has become a complicated question for many

The answer may depend on your age, insurance coverage, health and finding a health care professional who will give you the shot.

A once-straightforward seasonal vaccine process has become muddled this year because of new federal guidance on who the shots are approved for. It raises questions about whether pharmacists will provide the shots and if insurers will cover them.

The US Food and Drug Administration has OK'd new shots from Pfizer, Moderna and Novavax, but the approvals came with some new caveats. And it's not clear yet how that will

The shots were approved for people who are 65 and older and those who are younger and have a health condition that makes them vulnerable to severe COVID-19.

That includes people with asthma, cancer, heart or lung problems, obesity, depression, a history of smoking or

physical inactivity.
"A high proportion of people would qualify for these vaccines even if they're not over 65," said Dr. Paul Sax, clinical director of the Division of Infectious Diseases at Brigham and

Women's Hospital in Boston. Until now, the US - following guidance from independent experts who advise the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - has recommended



This photo provided by Pfizer in August 2025 shows boxes for the updated COVID-19 vaccine Comirnaty. (AP)

yearly COVID-19 vaccinations for everyone age 6 months and older.

But Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. fired every member of that Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices earlier this year. The replacements he selected have yet to make new recommendations

Most Americans visit drugstores to get their COVID-19 vaccines, according to the CDC. It's not clear yet how easy that will be this fall, depending on where you live.

Nineteen states have laws or regulations that only let pharmacists administer vaccines recommended by ACIP, according to the American Pharmacists Association.

In those states, pharmacies may not be able to dole out shots even for people who fit the FDA's narrowed range until the committee makes its recom-

Plus some pharmacists may be reluctant to give shots to customers who fall

outside the FDA's approval range, said Brigid Groves, a pharmacist and vice president with the American Pharmacists Association. For people age 65 and older, the

FDA's decision means Medicare will cover the shots. For everyone else, the answer is still

evolving. Check with your insurer or the employer that provides coverage. Employers and insurers have been

covering the full bill for the shots because they have been recommended by ACIP. Some may continue to do so. Walmart will cover the shots for em-

ployees and the health system Kaiser

Permanente, which provides coverage

for more than 12 million people, says it will keep covering them too. They can save money by preventing expensive medical care like hospital

stays.

The vaccines can keep workers from getting sick and spreading the virus to colleagues. Companies also are concerned about health care affordability, especially for their lower-paid workers, said Beth Umland, director of health and benefits research for the benefits consultant Mercer.

The shots can cost \$150 or more without insurance.

Insurers say they look at more than just that CDC committee's recommendation when deciding coverage. Some also may consider the opinions of doctor groups like the American Medical Association, which strongly encourages vaccinations.

## Japan uses AI to predict Mount Fuji eruption, safeguard Tokyo

The top of Mount Fuji is seen in Fujikawaguchiko town, about 110 kilom-

eters (68 miles) west of Tokyo, June 14, 2024. (AP)

TOKYO, Aug 31, (AP): Mount Fuji hasn't erupted since 1707. But for Volcanic Disaster Preparedness Day, Japanese officials have released computer- and AI-generated videos showing a simulation of a potential violent eruption of the active volcano.

The videos, released this week, are meant to prepare the 37 million residents in the greater Tokyo metropolitan area for potential disasters.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government's video warns an eruption could strike "at any moment, without warning," depicting volcanic ash shrouding central Tokyo, about 100 kilometers (60 miles) away, within hours, paralyzing transportation, disrupting food and power, and causing long-term respiratory problems.

The video ends with the message: "We need to arm ourselves with facts and prepare for disaster in our daily lives." It shows a family's pantry stocked with canned food and a first-aid kit.

The Tokyo government said in a statement that there are currently no signs of Fuji erupting. "The simulation is designed to equip residents with accurate knowledge and preparedness measures they can take in case of an emergency," it explained.

But the videos have caused anxiety and confusion among some residents. "Are there actually any signs of eruption?" said Shinichiro Kariya, a 57-year-old hospital employee. "Why are we now hearing things like '10 centimeters of ash could fall,' even in Tokyo? I'm wondering why this is happening all of a sudden. Hiromi Ooki, who lives in Mishima

said she planned to buy emergency supplies the next day. "Nature's power is so great that maybe it's better if it scares us a little," she said. Representatives of both the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Japan's

Cabinet Office Disaster Prevention Di-

City, which has prime views of Fuji,

vision said they had not received complaints from Tokyo residents about the University of Tokyo professor and risk communication expert Naoya Sekiya said the government has for years modeled scenarios for volcanic erup-

tions and earthquakes, but added that does not mean Fuji is about to erupt.

"There's no particular significance to the timing," Sekiya said. Japan is highly vulnerable to natural disasters because of its climate and topography and is known for its meticulous disaster planning which spans earthquakes, typhoons, floods, mud-

slides and volcanic eruptions. The Japan Meteorological Agency last August issued its first-ever "megaquake advisory" after a powerful quake struck off the southeastern coast of the southern main island of Kyushu.

Safeguard kids

#### **Zanzibar ups** 'schisto' tests

DAR ES SALAAM, Aug. 31, (Xinhua): Tanzania's Zanzibar on Saturday launched a major initiative to strengthen the fight against urinary schistosomiasis among school-age children, with the third batch of Chinese experts for the second phase of the China-aided schistosomiasis control project conducting a training session on Pemba Island

More than 80 participants, including education officials, school heads, health volunteers, and disease control experts, attended the session, which focused on preparations to screen over 30,000 children in all 31 primary and secondary schools on the island.

Wang Wei, leader of the expert team, presented the 2025-2026 work plan and called for closer cooperation with local education authorities, noting that the training covered sample collection, feedback mechanisms, and treatment procedures, with a coordinated action plan developed to ensure effective implementation.

Vaccine: Zambia and the International Vaccine Institute have signed a landmark memorandum of understanding to boost local vaccine manufacturing, according to a statement released on Friday.

Zambia's commitment to building a robust vaccine ecosystem, said the Zambia National Public Health Institute (ZNPHI), a government agency.
ZNPHI Director-General Roma

The agreement formalizes

Chilengi described the partnership as "a strategic leap forward."

"This initiative is not merely technical; it is foundational to create an enabling environment for producing a wide array of vaccines tailored to national and continental health needs. This is a first for Zambia, and it sets us apart as a pioneer in Africa's health manufacturing landscape,' he said.

#### **Ayub and Nawaz hit half centuries**

## Pakistan's batting firepower too strong for UAE in T20 tri-series

SHARJAH, United Arab Emirates, Aug 31, (AP): Saim Ayub and Hasan Nawaz hit blistering half centuries to lead Pakistan to a 31-run victory against

United Arab Emirates in the Twenty20 Tri-series in Sharjah Left-handed batter Ayub made 69 off 38 balls and Nawaz smashed six sixes

Pakistan scored a total of 207 in 20 overs after captain Salman Ali Agha won his second successive toss and chose to bat.

Middle-order batter Asif Khan celebrated his 50th T20 appearance for UAE with an aggressive innings of 77 off 35 balls but Pakistan kept chipping away with wickets to restrict UAE to 176-8.

Both teams will face off at least once more in the tri-series before competing in the Asia Cup, starting from Sept. 9 where UAE is placed alongside India, Pakistan and Hong Kong.

Pakistan didn't tinker with its long batting line-up - with all-rounder Faheem Ashraf slotted at No. 8 - but rested two premier fast bowlers Haris Rauf, who bagged a four-wicket haul in Pakistan's win against Afghanistan on Friday, and Shaheen Shah Afridi.

Hasan Ali, who replaced Rauf, was expensive at 3-47. Left-arm spinner Mohammad Nawaz (2-21) again bowled economically with fast bowler Sal-

man Mirza and Ayub sharing one wicket apiece.

UAE captain Muhammad Waseem (33 off 18) provided the team with a strong start before the hosts slipped to 54-3 in the powerplay. Waseem was run out while going for a third run and, on the next ball, Ethan D'Souza gloved a leg-side catch off Ali.

Khan didn't hold back against pacers and left-arm spinner Sufiyan Muqeem (0-44) as he smacked six fours and six sixes before Sahibzada Farhan grabbed a one-handed diving catch at square leg in Ali's final over.

Earlier, Ayub played the UAE spinners cautiously in the powerplay, but was aggressive against the pace of Junaid Siddique, who conceded 22 runs in his second over.

Pakistan lost Farhan (8) in the first over when Siddique clipped the top of his off stump and Fakhar Zaman (6) got deceived by spinner Haider Ali's ball as he was clean bowled while attempting a sweep shot.

But Ayub raised his half century off 25 balls before fast bowler Saghir Khan (3-44) had him caught down the legside in the 12th over. Ayub wasn't happy with the umpire's decision, but there was no review avail-

Hasan Nawaz and Mohammad Nawaz (25) accelerated with a breezy 57run partnership off just 25 balls before Hasan, who reached his fifty in 24 deliveries, was caught behind while trying to pull left-arm spinner Ali (2-

Siddique grabbed two wickets in Pakistan's final over and No. 11 batter Mirza was run out off the final ball of the innings.

Afghanistan will take on UAE on Monday after Sunday's rest day. The final is on Sept. 7.

## Lynx clinches home court for playoffs with record 31st win



Golden State Valkyries guard Carla Leite attempts a lay-up against Washington Mystics guard Sug Sutton (1) in the second quarter of a WNBA basketball game at Chase Center in San Francisco. (AP)

#### Valkyries well positioned in the playoff chase

UNCASVILLE, Conn., Aug 31, (AP): Alanna Smith and reserve DiJonai Carrington scored 18 points apiece and the Minnesota Lynx clinched the regular-season title with a 94-70 win over the Connecticut Sun.

Minnesota (31-8) also set a franchise record for wins. The Lynx won 30 games last season in a 40game schedule - four fewer than this year.

Napheesa Collier added 17 points and nine rebounds for the Lynx, Courtney Williams had 15 points and eight boards and Kayla McBride had 15 points and six assists.

Minnesota was 15 for 28 on 3-pointers with McBride hitting five and Smith four. The Lynx had 27 assists on 34 baskets with 10 different players getting at least one.

Tina Charles and Marina Mabrey had 14 points apiece for the Sun (10-28) and Aaliyah Edwards 11.

#### Valkyries 99, Mystics 62

In San Francisco, Carla Leite came off the bench to contribute 19 State ran away from Washington to snap a two-game home losing streak and stay well positioned in the playoff chase.

Veronica Burton had 15 points, Janelle Salaun added 20 points and six rebounds and Kaila Charles scored 16 points as Golden State (20-18) tries to secure the eighth and final berth in the WNBA playoffs.

Coach Natalie Nakase had an opportunity to mix and match with her team up big, even with several players still sidelined.

Burton criss-crossed through the key for a layup and three-point play late in the first half as the Valkyries built their lead to 45-16.

Sug Sutton scored 17 points while Lucy Olsen added 13 as the Mystics lost their sixth straight game.

#### Storm 79, Sky 69

In Seattle, Nneka Ogwumike scored 20 points to lead six Seattle players in double figures and the

Storm beat Chicago to sweep the three-game regular-season series.

Seattle (22-19) has won five of its last six overall and four in a row against the Sky.

Ezi Magbegor had 13 points and Skylar Diggins and Gabby Williams each scored 12 for the Storm. Erica Wheeler and Brittney Sykes each added 11 points.

Angel Reese had 20 points and 10 rebounds to lead Chicago (9-30), which has lost four straight and 17 of its last 19. Michaela Önyenwere scored 11 points and Kamilla Cardoso had 11 rebounds to go with nine points.

Reese made two free throws to trim the Sky's deficit to 57-52 with 9:36 left in the game but Diggins responded with a three-point play that sparked a 7-0 run and Chicago got

#### Mercury 80, Liberty 63

In Phoenix, Kahleah Copper hit five 3-pointers and finished with 22 points, Alyssa Thomas had 14 points and nine assists, and Phoenix beat defending WNBA champion New York

Phoenix (25-14) has won four in a row and six of seven to move into a tie with Atlanta for third in the WNBA standings, one-half game behind second-place Las Vegas and 1 1/2 games ahead of the Liberty.

Satou Sabally also scored 14 points for the Mercury. Natasha Mack had 10 rebounds - including a career-high seven offensive boards - to go with eight points and four blocks. DeWanna Bonner added nine points and seven rebounds.

There were nine lead changes and nine ties before Kathryn Westbeld and Copper hit 3-pointers 29 seconds apart to take the lead for good at 51-48 and spark a 15-1 run. Bonner stole a pass and went the other way for a layup, then hit 3 to cap the spurt and make it an 11-point lead almost a minute into the fourth quarter.

The Mercury made 10 of 14 from the field in the fourth and scored 17 of the final 20 points. New York missed five consecutive field-goal attempts and committed three turnovers before Isabelle Harrison made a layup to cap the scoring with 16.8 seconds left.

#### DC United snap 11-game winless skid

## Union seals playoff berth

CINCINNATI, Aug 31, (AP): Bruno Damiani scored a goal in the 49th minute and Andrew Rick had five saves to help the Philadelphia Union beat FC Cincinnati 1-0 in a battle of the toptwo teams in the Eastern Conference on Saturday night and clinch a spot in

the 2025 MLS Cup playoffs.

Philadelphia (17-6-6) leads all of MLS with 57 points. Cincinnati (16-9-4) is second in the Eastern Conference with 53.

Olwethu Makhanya was shown his second yellow card in the 60th minute and the Union played a man down the

rest of the way.

Damiani flicked a header that skipped inside the back post to open the scoring. Milan Iloski, near the bottom corner of the penalty box, played an arcing entry to the near post, where Damiani slipped around a defender for the finish.



Damiani

Tbe Union's plus-23 goal differential this season is the best in MLS. Philadelphia has conceded a league-low 26 goals and is the only team in MLS with fewer goals allowed

played.

Cincinnati is 4-7-3 all-time against the Union in the regular season. Tai Baribo had a hat trick to help the

Union beat Cincinnati 4-1 on March 1 to snap a five-game winless streak against the club in the regular season. Gabriel Pirani scored two goals, Luis Barraza had three saves and D.C. United beat New York City FC 2-1to snap an 11-game winless streak.
D.C. (4-15-9), which last week be-

came the first team to be eliminated from MLS Cup playoff contention, won for the first time since it beat Cincinnati 2-1 on May 31. New York (13-9-5) had its string

of three consecutive wins, and a five-

game unbeaten streak, snapped. Pirani stopped a clearance attempt just outside the 18-yard box and then red a shot off the right post to mak it 1-1 in the 43rd minute. On the counter-attack, Pirani outraced the defense to a first-touch pass played ahead by Christian Benteke and then flicked a shot inside the back post to give D.C. a 2-1 lead in the 77th minute.

Justin Haak rolled a first-touch shot from the edge of the penalty area inside the right post to make it 1-0 in the 19th minute. Haak, a 23-year-old defender in his seventh MLS season, scored his second career goal and his first since 2023.

Rookie Idan Toklomati scored late in the second half and Charlotte FC beat the New England Revolution 2-1 to extend its club-record win streak to eight and its unbeaten run to nine.

Toklomati used an assist from Ashley Westwood to score the winner in the 87th minute for Charlotte (16-11-2). It was his eighth goal of the season and his seventh goal contribution in his last nine appearances. Westwood's assist was his fourth.

Charlotte jumped in front early on Brandt Bronico's second goal of the season - unassisted in the 12th minute. New England (8-13-7) tied it in

the 24th minute on Ignatius Ganago's third goal, also unassisted. It was the first goal scored off Char-

lotte keeper Kristijan Kahlina since July 19 in a 3-2 road win over Atlanta United. Kahlina followed with four straight clean sheets.

Kahlina finished with five saves to

help Charlotte extend the league's longest win streak this season. Dejan Joveljic scored a goal in each

half and Sporting Kansas City ended a six-match winless streak with a 4-2 victory over the Colorado Rapids.

Joveljic used passes from Khiry Shelton and defender Tim Leibold to score four minutes into the match and give Sporting KC (7-15-6) the lead. Shelton's assist was his first of the season and Leibold notched his third.

Colorado (10-13-6) answered with goals from Rafael Navarro in the 22nd minute and defender Keegan Rosenberry in the 31st to take a 2-1 lead into halftime. Navarro scored for the 12th time with assists from Cole Bassett - his fourth - and defender Rafael Santos - his second in his second appearance with the Rapids since coming over from Orlando City where he didn't have a goal contribution in 17 appearances. Rosenberry scored unassisted for his second netter this season.

Dániel Sallói scored his seventh goal of the season, unassisted for the equalizer in the 73rd minute. Mason Toye subbed into the match in the 61st minute and scored the go-ahead goal in the 75th. Joveljic capped the scoring in the 81st minute with his team-high 16th goal.

Rookie Santiago Muñóz collected his second assist on Toye's third goal. Osman Bukari and Myrto Uzuni scored first-half goals to lead Austin FC to a 3-1 victory over the San Jose Earthquakes.

Bukari used an assist from Owen Wolff to give Austin (10-9-8) the lead in the 12th minute. It was the third goal this season for Bukari and his fourth in 36 career appearances. Wolff's assist was his career-best sixth of the season.

Uzuni gave Austin a two-goal lead in the 33rd minute when he scored unassisted. It was his fourth goal in his first season in the league. Defender Daniel Munie scored un-

assisted in the 53rd minute to get San Jose (9-12-8) within 2-1. It was his second goal of the season and career. Austin regained a two-goal lead on

an own goal by San Jose defender Bru-Brad Stuver finished with four saves for Austin.

Duane Holmes scored his first goal in MLS, Ezequiel Ponce added a goal and the Houston Dynamo beat St. Louis City 3-2 on Saturday night to snap a six-game winless skid.

Holmes subbed on and scored moments later to make it 3-0 in the 72nd minute. Ondej Lingr ran onto a misplayed ball by Fallou Fall on the right side and fed Holmes at the back post for a first-touch finish into a wide-open

Jonathan Bond had two saves for Houston (8-12-8).

Jonathan Osorio scored a goal Toronto FC in the 89th minute of a 1-1 tie with CF Montreal.

Montreal (5-13-9), which in unbeaten in five consecutive games, was eliminated from playoff contention. Toronto (5-13-10) is unbeaten in a

season-high four straight. Patrick Schulte had four saves Columbus and Carlos Coronel saved the

only shot he faced as the New York Red Bulls and Crew played to a scoreless draw. Schulte earned his third clean sheet

of the season for Columbus (12-6-10) with three saves coming in the first Coronel notched his ninth shutout of

the season for the Red Bulls (11-11-7) with his lone save coming after half-

## Kiros and Hassan smash records at Sydney Marathon

**Zhengyue and Jepkosgei claim victories at Urumqi Marathon** 

SYDNEY, Aug 31, (Agencies): Ethiopa's Hailemaryam Kiros and Sifan Hassan of the Netherlands have surged to record-breaking victories in the men's and women's races at the debut of the Sydney Marathon as a world major.

Kiros won a thrilling men's race in two hours six minutes and six seconds to run the fastest marathon ever in Australia, more than a minute quicker than the previous record on the hilly harborside course which attracted 35,000 competitors from around the world.

The 28-year-old Ethiopian finished 10 seconds clear of compatriot Addisu Gobena with Lesotho's Tebello Ramakongoana third.

Kiros was part of a lead pack of seven runners and then surged off the front with Gobena to make it a duel for the remaining five kilometers. Kiros then handled better the downhill gradient to the finish line at the Sydney Opera House to claim an impressive victory on a brisk winter's

It was the Sydney Marathon's first year as a major, joining a list of elite events that includes New York, London, Berlin, Boston, Tokyo and Chi-

Dutch multi-distance star Hassan was also in record-breaking form as she dominated the women's race to win in 2:18:22, almost three minutes quicker than Ethiopia's Workenesh





Left: Sifan Hassan of the Netherlands reacts as she crosses the finish line to win the women's division of the Sydney Marathon in Sydney. Right: Ethiopian Hailemaryam Kiros reacts as he crosses the finish line to win the men's title. (AP)

Edesa record time set last year. Kenyan runner Brigid Kosgei was 34 seconds behind with Edesa third in

Dual Olympic gold-medalist Eliud Kipchoge, the headline attraction in the men's field, was warmly embraced by his competitors as he crossed the line in ninth place, more than two minutes behind, and was enthusiastically cheered by the thousands of fans along the finish-line enclosure.

Kipchoge, who won gold at the 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games, fell off the lead pack with 10 kilometers to go and couldn't find his way back into the contention.

I'm happy to go across the finish line. I have nothing to prove," the 40-year-old said. "My mission is to bring all the people together. Let us surpass 55,000 (from 35,000 this year), actually, next year to run here.

"It's a beautiful course. It's a course whereby there is no other in this world." A heavy favorite coming into the race, it was the 34-year-old Washington state resident's, first major win outside of the U.S. "It shows that sport movement is for every human being and it makes every human being better," Scaroni said to reporters

Switzerland's Marcel Hug won the men's event in a record time of 1:27:15, smashing by more than 11 minutes the Sydney record held by Canada's Josh Cassidy's from 2024.

Hug has seven Paralympic gold

medals to go with 23 other major marathon victories. Chinese runner Li Zhengyue and Kenya's Philis Kirop Jepkosgei

claimed victories in the men's and women's races respectively at the 2025 Urumqi Marathon on Sunday. Li, who finished third at the 2025 Nanjing Pukou Marathon in March, staged a strong comeback to cross the

utes and 54 seconds. Xinjiang natives Dosbol Kabiljan and Bahdar Orazali took second and third places respectively in the men's

finish line first in two hours, 19 min-

full marathon. In the women's race, Jepkosgei clocked 2:45:16 to take the title, while Chinese runners Ao Pingping and Zhang Jingxia finished second and

This year's event featured a full marathon, a half marathon and a 6km fun run, attracting more than 28,000 registrations from across China and abroad. Close to 60 percent of the 14,000 runners who secured entries are from outside Xinjiang.



Toronto FC's Richie Layrea, right, tackles CF Montreal's Aleksandr Gubo-glo (39) while fighting for possession during second half MLS soccer action in Toronto. (AP)

Roma extends unbeaten streak

## **Unbeaten Napoli leaves it late against Cagliari**

ROME, Aug 31, (AP): Antonio Conte jumped up and down and whirled his arms like a child as he

ran around in delirium. The fans inside the Stadio Armando Diego

Maradona also erupted in joy. Three months after beating Cagliari to secure its fourth Serie A title, Napoli was again celebrating a victory over the Sardinian club.

What made it so dramatic this time was that Frank Anguissa scored five minutes into stoppage time for a 1-0 win after Napoli had wasted chance after chance in its home opener.

Moments before the goal there had been gasps of despair as Scott McTominay attempted an unsuccessful bicycle kick near the goal.

Turned out, nothing so complicated was necessary as Anguissa was left unmarked in the center of the area to calmly redirect in a cross from Alessandro Buongiorno.

"I would have been happy with a 0-0. There are matches where you get the ball and score easily. Today it seemed like there was a curse on the goal," said Conte, who is in his second season coaching Napoli. "But the team believed until the end and the final result was deserved.'

Injured striker Romelu Lukaku was also overcome with emotion, posting a photo on Instagram of himself holding his head in apparent disbelief with a caption that read, "Pffffff wow wow wow. These wins are the best.'

Napoli joined Roma - which won 1-0 at promoted Pisa - and Cremonese with a full six points through two rounds.

Inter hosts Udinese and Juventus visits Genoa. While Napoli midfielders McTominay and Kevin De Bruyne have been its most dangerous players in the opening two rounds, help in attack is on the way after the international break with the southern club close to signing Rasmus Hojlund from Manchester United to fill in for Lu-

Gian Piero Gasperini is picking up right where Claudio Ranieri left off at Roma.

Roma went unbeaten last season from mid-December to mid-May under Ranieri, who then retired from coaching and selected Gasperini to succeed him as part of his new advisory role.

The Giallorossi also won their opener against Bologna 1-0. At Pisa, Matías Soulé scored in the 55th min-

ute with a textbook goal that involved all three of Roma's forwards. Substitute Paulo Dybala crossed to newly

signed Ireland forward Evan Ferguson, who laid

the ball off for Soulé to shoot into the far corner. Pisa, which hosted a Serie A match for the first time in 34 years, had a couple of chances in quick succession early on. The Arena Garibaldi sits practically in the shadow of the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

Italian Cup winner Bologna bounced back from an opening defeat by beating big-spending

Riccardo Orsolini scored near the hour mark with a deflected shot after also threatening early

Bologna, which lost its opener at Roma, earned its first points of the season. For Como, it was a setback after impressing in a 2-0 win over Lazio.

Owned by Indonesian tobacco billionaire brothers Robert Budi Hartono and Michael Bambang Hartono, Como has spent 104 million euros (\$121 million) in the current transfer market - the fifth most in the league.

Bologna was without Ciro Immobile, the fourtime Serie A scoring leader it recently signed, who is out for an estimated two months after injuring his right leg last weekend.

With Gasperini gone after a nine-year tenure, Atalanta again struggled in a 1-1 draw at Parma. Mario Pasalic put Atalanta ahead with a long shot in the 79th but newly signed Patrick Cutrone came off the bench to equalize on debut for Parma six minutes later by tapping in a rebound.

Atalanta, which also drew its opener against Pisa, has two points under new coach Ivan Juric. Parma, which lost its opener at Juventus, has one

Atalanta striker Gianluca Scamacca lobbed a shot off the post in the first half.



Napoli's Giuseppe Ambrosino during the Serie A soccer match between Napoli and Cagliari at the Diego Armando Maradona Stadium in Naples,

## Gauff, Osaka set for 4th-round Flushing Meadows blockbuster



ships, Saturday in New York. (AP)

#### Sinner keeps alive US Open title bid

NEW YORK, Aug 31, (AP): Coco Gauff and Naomi Osaka set up high-profile showdown between two past title winners in the U.S. Open's fourth round with victories Saturday.

"Everyone will be watching," Venus Williams said. "That's what tennis needs." Their meeting on Monday, with a quarterfinal berth at stake, is a rematch from 2019, when Gauff was a 15-year-old making her maindraw debut at Flushing Meadows and Osaka was the reigning champion.

Osaka won that one in straight sets, then consoled a teary Gauff on the sideline and encouraged her to speak to an Arthur Ashe Stadium crowd that was pulling for the young American.

She advanced to her first fourthround match at any major since the 2021 Australian Open by eliminating No. 15 seed Daria Kasatkina 6-0, 4-6, 6-3 at Louis Armstrong Stadium, after Gauff made it that far at the U.S. Open for the fourth consecutive year with a 6-3, 6-1 victory over No. 28 Magdalena Frech at Ashe.

So much has happened to both Osaka and Gauff since that headline-worthy encounter six years ago in New York.

The No. 3-seeded Gauff, 21, is now a two-time Grand Slam champ, including at the U.S. Open in 2023,



Iga Swiatek, of Poland, reacts after winning match point against Anna Kalinskaya, of Russia, during the third round of the U.S. Open tennis championships in New York. (AP)

and a real star.

No. 23 Osaka, 27, owns four major titles - including at the U.S. Open in 2018 and 2020 - and has been ranked No. 1. She was among the athletes at the forefront of conversations about mental health, opening up at the 2021 French Open about dealing with anxiety and depression, then taking a series of breaks

from the tour. Williams and Leylah Fernandez reached the third round of women's doubles with a 7-6 (1), 6-1 win over Ulrikke Eikeri and Eri Hozumi. The 45-year-old Williams is playing doubles at a Grand Slam tournament for the first time since 2022.

No. 1 Jannik Sinner dropped a set in New York for the first time since last year's quarterfinals but righted himself for a 5-7, 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 victory over No. 27 Denis Shapovalov. Other men moving on included Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime, who knocked off third-seeded Alexander Zverev, and No. 10 Lorenzo Musetti, whose opponent in an all-Italian match, No. 23 Flavio Cobolli, stopped because of a painful right arm. Women into the fourth round included No. 2 Iga Swiatek, who rallied from down 5-1 in the first set to win, and No. 11 Karolina Muchova - a U.S. Open semifinalist in 2023 and 2024 and the woman who beat Williams in the first round this year.

Jannik Sinner drops a set in a US Open win and then reminds folks that he's not a machine Jannik Sinner got broken for the first time in Week 1 of the U.S. Open. Dropped the opening set, even. Fell way be-

hind in the third set, too. Sinner is the No. 1-ranked player in men's tennis and has won the past three Grand Slam tournaments played on hard courts, so no one was surprised when he set aside some lapses and emerged to beat No. 27 Denis Shapovalov 5-7, 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 Saturday to take his title defense at Flushing Meadows to the fourth round.

On Monday, Sinner will face No. 23 Alexander Bublik of Kazakhstan for a place in the quarterfinals. Bublik beat No. 14 Tommy Paul of the United States 7-6 (5), 6-7 (4), 6-3, 6-7 (5). 6-1 in a 3 1/2-hour match that ended at 1:16 a.m. Sunday.

#### Kuwait Modern Pentathlon Association celebrates hosting the '28 Youth Worlds

VILNIUS, Aug 31: The International Modern Pentathlon Union (UIPM) has announced that Kuwait will host the U19 and U15 Modern Pentathlon World Championships in 2028, a decision made during the UIPM meeting in Lithuania held alongside the World Championships.

Nasser Al-Waleed, President of the Kuwait Modern Pentathlon Federation, said Kuwait's bid received full approval and praise from all UIPM members and committees, noting that the country is the only Asian nation entrusted with hosting these prestigious events.

Al-Waleed expressed pride in representing Asia through this opportunity and emphasized Kuwait's readiness to organize the championships in an "exceptional" manner befitting the nation's sporting reputation.

He also extended his gratitude to the UIPM for its support and confidence in Kuwaiti staff, and thanked the Kuwait Olympic Committee and the Public Authority for Sports for their ongoing support of Kuwait's young athletes, describing them as key partners in achieving this milestone.

Al-Waleed added that Kuwait's



Nasser Al-Waleed, President of the Kuwait Modern Pentathlon Association

selection to host the championships reflects the country's outstanding presence in past Modern Pentathlon World Championships, the significant development of its pentathlon system, and the notable progress of Kuwaiti athletes in international competitions.

#### **Kuwait heads to Beirut for Arab Championship**

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: Kuwait's naand women have departed for Beirut, Lebanon, to compete in the Arab Beach Volleyball Championship from September 1 to 6, followed immediately by the West Asia Championship running from September 6 to 12.

The delegation is led by Issa Al-Saleem and coached by Ahmed Abdulrazzaq. Men's Team A features Abdulwahab Talib and Taha Al-Kaabi, while Team B includes Nawaf Al-Rashidi and Ibrahim Diaa. The women's team, known as the Blue Beach Volleyball Team, includes manager Reem Al-Zaabi and players Halima Al-Rashed and Alaa Al-Bahwah.

Earlier this year, Kuwait's men's team competed in the 3rd GCC Beach Games in Muscat, Oman, in April. Both men's and women's teams also took part in the West Asia Championship in Qatar last May, after intensive local training



Kuwait Volleyball Association logo.

sessions on the beaches of Al-Jeeza Al-

The teams aim to build on their previous regional experiences and deliver strong performances in both tourna-



## Morocco makes history as three-time CHAN champion

NAIROBI, Aug 31, (Xinhua): Morocco won the 2024 African Nations Championship (CHAN) for a record third time on Sunday, defeating Madagascar 3-2 in a dramatic final at Kasarani Stadium in Nairobi, Kenya. The Atlas Lions, champions in 2018 and 2020, sealed the title through striker Oussama Lamlioui, who struck twice and scored the winner in the 80th minute with a spectacular long-range effort from near the center circle.

"I thank the Moroccan supporters immensely. We told them to trust us, and we have proved now that we were worthy of that trust," Lamlioui said after the match.

CHAN 2024, which was delayed from last year and contested only by domestic-based players, began on August 2 with matches staged in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Zanzibar, and Uganda's capital Kampala before concluding in Nairobi.

FIFA President Gianni Infantino, Confederation of African Football (CAF) chief Patrice Motsepe and Kenyan President William Ruto were among more than 48,000 spectators who watched the final.

Madagascar stunned Morocco in the ninth minute with a strike from Felicite Manohantsoa, but

Youssef Mehri leveled with a header in the 27th minute. Lamlioui then put Morocco ahead just before halftime.

The Barea hit back in the second half when Toky Rakotondraibe capitalized on a defensive lapse to make it 2-2. But Lamlioui's stunning 40yard strike ensured Morocco's place in history.

"This is thanks to the efforts of my teammates. Without them, I would never have reached this stage. We have entered history after winning three CHAN titles. We dedicate this trophy to His Majesty King Mohammed VI," the 29-year-old said.

16



McLaren driver Oscar Piastri of Australia leads at the start of the Formula One Dutch Grand Prix in Zandvoort, Netherlands. (AP)

# Sports

## Kuwait Olympic team gears up for the AFC U-23 qualifiers in Myanmar

#### By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

MYANMAR, Aug 31: Kuwait's Olympic soccer team is set to kick off its campaign in the AFC U-23 Asian Cup qualifiers, which runs through September 9.

The delegation departs Thailand today en route to Myanmar, where Al-Azraq has been drawn into Group B alongside Japan, Afghanistan, and the

Preparations for the qualifiers began on June 17 at the Jaber Stadium training ground under Croatian coach Dario Basic. The squad then traveled to Egypt for a camp from July 7 to 21, playing four friendlies: a 1-3 loss to Maleya Kafr El-Zayat, a goalless draw against Ra, a narrow 2-3 defeat to Egypt's Olympic side, and another 0-0 draw in the return match.

Back in Kuwait, the team continued its build-up with three victories in friendlies against Kazma (3-1), Al-Fahaheel (1-0), and Al-Yarmouk (3-0). The third phase of preparation took place in Thailand from August



Players intensify training for the qualifiers.

12, where Kuwait played three more warm-ups — defeating Nonthaburi (2-0), edging Malaysia (1-0), and drawing 1-1 with Oman.

Kuwait will open its qualifying campaign against Myanmar on Wednesday, followed by a clash with Afghanistan on September 6, before wrapping up against regional powerhouse Japan on Septem-

This marks Kuwait's seventh over-

all participation and sixth consecutive appearance in the continental qualifiers, as the squad aims to reach the Asian Cup finals for the fourth time.

The tournament, scheduled for January 2026 in Saudi Arabia, will feature the winners of each group along with the four best second-placed teams, in addition to the host nation, which is organizing the event for the first time

## **Excitement builds, Arab Handball Clubs Championship draw kicks off in Kuwait**

#### By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 31: The draw for the 40th Arab Handball Clubs Championship for League and Cup Winners will take place this evening at 7:00 p.m. at Al-Raya Hotel. The tournament, hosted by Kuwait from September 12 to 22, will feature leading clubs including Kuwait SC, Salmiya, Sulaibikhat, Shabab Al-Riyadi, Al-Nawaeir and Al-Talia (Syria), Al-Ahli Bank of Egypt, Al-Ahli and Qatar SC (Qatar), and Al-Hashd (Iraq). The event will be overseen by the Arab Handball Federation.

Kuwait Club, the reigning champion, will be chasing a third consecutive title, having won the last two editions — first against Egypt's Zamalek in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, and most recently against Salmiya in Kuwait.



A file photo of players in action.

To prepare for the championship, the Kuwaiti clubs organized overseas training camps: Kuwait Club and Sulaibikhat trained in Bosnia, while Kazma held its camp in Izmit, Turkey.

The teams also boosted their rosters with international signings. Kuwait Club added Montenegrin Vladan Lipovina and Portuguese Victor Iturriza, joining Qatari star Frankis Marzo, under the guidance of Algerian coach Said Hejazi.

Salmiya, coached by Serbian Bozo, strengthened its squad with Slovenian Lapajne Ganos, alongside Tunisian duo Anouar Ben Abdallah and Mohamed Farad.

Sulaibikhat, led by Kuwaiti coach Waleed Salmin, brought in French-Algerian Nouri Ben Halima and Portuguese Goncalo Ribeiro.

Meanwhile, Salmiya has returned from its training camp in Doha, while Al-Arabi concluded preparations in Bosnia. Both teams are now shifting focus to the 58th edition of the Premier League, which kicks off tomorrow.

### Meysan Elite dominates Turkey squash tourney with four titles

ISTANBUL, Aug 31: Meysan Elite squash team delivered a dominant performance at the Turkey Junior Championship in Istanbul, capturing four gold medals in a remarkable display of talent and determination.

Despite fielding a smaller squad of just six players from the UAE, the team outclassed their opponents and showcased their rising stars on the international stage. In the Under-11 category, Ali Fathi triumphed over the older Turkish contender Mehmet Yaman Oter to secure the title.

The Under-13 final saw Ammar Adel make a dream debut in European Squash Federation competitions, claiming the gold after a thrilling battle with Russia's Arseniy Alekseev.

Meanwhile, Adv Guli used his international experience to dominate the Under-15 category and bring home gold.

The standout moment of the tournament came from Rohan Roy, just 16 years old, who competed in the Under-19 category and clinched gold by defeating Jordan's Mohammed Al-Bataineh.

In the Under-17 division, Nasser Al-Jiaan (14 years old) impressed by finishing sixth against a field of much older and more experienced players — a result that earned admiration and respect.

Also in the Under-15 category, Zain Fathi showed grit despite an early setback against top-seeded Russian Nikita Smirnov, eventually finishing 17th overall. Meysan Elite's performance in Turkey underscored the depth of its junior pro-



The Meysan Elite team poses with an official.

## Real keeps perfect record



Mallorca's Mateu Morey, left, challenges Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Mallorca in

#### **Piastri wins Dutch Grand Prix**

ZANDVOORT, Netherlands, Aug 31, (AP): Oscar Piastri steered clear of trouble to win the Dutch Grand Prix on Sunday after teammate Lando Norris' Formula 1 title chances took a heavy blow when his McLaren broke down.

Norris was chasing Piastri late in the race when the British driver reported a "funny" smell in his cockpit. "I don't know if I'm on fire or not," Norris said. Smoke poured from the

back of the car and he had to stop. Norris ended the race standing behind a barrier at the side of the track with race marshals and his brokendown car. Norris' race engineer tried to console him by telling him how good his pace had been.

"Doesn't matter," Norris responded.

Max Verstappen passed the

stricken Norris to cheers from the crowd for second place at his home Grand Prix, while Isack Hadjar of Racing Bulls took his first-ever podium finish in third.

Piastri's lead over second-placed Norris increased from nine points to 34 with nine races remaining. The Australian's win required

him to manage three safety car restarts, holding off Norris twice and then keeping Verstappen behind him after Norris' breakdown.

"Nicely done, everybody, nicely done," Piastri told the team. "Obviously sorry for Lando for what happened.'

Hadjar was lifted off the ground and slapped on the back by a crowd of jubilant team members as they celebrated the squad's first podium result for four years.

#### Atletico's winless woes continue

BARCELONA, Spain, Aug 31, (AP): Vinícius Júnior and Arda Güler scored back-to-back goals to help Real Madrid rally for a 2-1 win over Mallorca and make it three wins in as many games in the Spanish league. Xabi Alonso's team saw three newcomers make key plays in the victory at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium. Mallorca struck first when Vedat Muriqi muscled Dean Huijsen out of the way to reach a corner kick by Pablo Torre, redirecting the cross with the back of his shoulder past Thibaut Courtois in the 18th minute.

The 20-year-old Huijsen played a part in leveling in the 37th. The new Madrid central defender headed a cross from a set piece across the goalmouth for Güler to smash home. Vinícius only needed another minute to put Madrid in front after Mallorca lost the ball in midfield. The Brazil forward had room to roam forward before cutting back to his left foot and firing in his second goal of the campaign.

Mallorca pressed for the equalizer in an open second half. Midfielder Sergi Darder came close to delivering a ball for a teammate in front of the goal, only for Trent Alexander-Arnold, who joined Madrid in June, to slide in and disrupt his pass. Madrid's new left back, Álvaro Carreras, then did well to turn toward the goal and stretch his leg to block a blistering, goal-bound strike by Samu Costa.

Kylian Mbappé, who had scored three goals in the first two rounds, had two goals waived off for offside. Alexander-Arnold started as right back for Madrid after he had been replaced in the starting 11 by Dani Carvajal in the last round of games.

Rodrygo, rumored to possibly be on the move to the Premier League, came on for Vinícius in the second half. Atletico Madrid's frustration deepened after Diego Simeone's side drew 1-1 at Alaves to remain winless this season.

Atletico was already having its worst start to La Liga in 14 seasons under Simeone after it lost 2-1 at Espanyol and drew 1-1 at home with promoted Elche. The stumble at Alaves will send Atletico into the international break with two points out of a possible nine, and that after the club spent big this summer to revamp a squad with hopes of challenging for tro-

Giuliano Simeone scored for Atletico in the seventh minute, using his speed to scramble the ball past two defenders and fire home a deflected shot. But Atletico's usually vaunted defense again let the lead slip. Carlos Vicente equalized for host Alaves in the 14th minute from the penalty spot after Alexander Sorloth fouled Nahuel Tenaglia in the area. Oviedo beat Real Sociedad 1-0 for its first victory since returning to the first division, with Leander Dendoncker scoring in the first half. Sevilla beat Girona 2-0 to keep the Catalan team bottom of the table with three

## Rodri concerned after Man City slumps to second straight Premier League loss

LONDON, Aug 31, (AP): New season, same issues for Manchester City. Pep Guardiola's once-dominant team slipped to a second straight loss in the Premier League after collapsing to a 2-1 defeat at Brighton on Sunday.

After a 2-0 home loss to Tottenham last weekend, City is demonstrating the same vulnerabilities and brittleness it showed last season when surrendering the title to Liverpool after four consecutive years as champions. 'This is the reality - we are not at the level from a long time (ago)," said

City midfielder Rodri, the reigning Ballon d'Or winner who was starting in the league for the first time since September last year following a serious knee

Brajan Gruda surged through an open defense, rounded goalkeeper James Trafford and slotted into an empty net for the 89th-minute winner for Brighton, which trailed to Erling Haaland's first-half strike - his 88th goal in 100 Premier League appearances since moving to England

City conceded an equalizer in the 67th minute after Matheus Nunes raised his arm in the area to block a shot, with James Milner converting the penalty for Brighton to become - at age 39 years and 239 days - the second-oldest



Brighton's James Milner, left, shoots to score from the penalty spot during the English Premier League soccer match between Brighton and Hove Al bion and Manchester City at the Falmer stadium in Brighton, England. (AP)

scorer in Premier League history. He is also the second youngest, having netted as a 16-year-old for Leeds.

With City noticeably fading, Brighton created a succession of chances be-

fore Gruda converted one to seal a repeat of his team's come-from-behind 2-1 win over City last season.

City's only points so far this season have come from a 4-0 opening-round win at Wolverhampton, after which pundits were saying Guardiola's team was back. Now, it has fewer points than Manchester United.

West Ham eased the pressure on manager Graham Potter with a 3-0 win at Nottingham Forest, secured by late goals by Jarrod Bowen, Lucas Paqueta from the penalty spot - and Callum Wilson. West Ham lost its first two games in the league, conceding eight goals

in the process, and also was eliminated from the English League Cup in Paqueta, the Brazil midfielder, celebrated his successful penalty kick by

pretending to answer a call, throw away a phone before kissing the badge on his jersey - perhaps a nod to being linked over the past 24 hours with a move to Aston Villa.

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