



Kuwait Amir, Crown Prince receive calls from leaders Page 2



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KUWAIT ISSUES CRISIS PROTOCOLS FOR WORKSITES, EVACUATIONS

Security forces fully ready as regional risks escalate



HH the PM during an inspection tour of the national control center of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister checks on those injured in recent Iranian attacks on Kuwait.

- Sirens serve as precaution
Public urged to stay calm
Food price caps imposed
Stockpiles of medicines secure
Cybercrime unit tracks false reports

By Fares Ghaleb, Marwa Al-Bahrawi and Munif Naif Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah on Monday affirmed the full readiness of Kuwait's military and security forces to confront and prevent any hostile act threatening the nation's safety and security.

In a statement by the Ministry of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah said the Kuwait Armed Forces, Police, Kuwait National Guard, and Kuwait Fire Force are fully prepared amid current regional developments, including the repercussions of the US-Israel strike on Iran.

He stressed that all state agencies are performing their duties to ensure the continued operation of public facilities and 24-hour services for citizens and residents.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef called on citizens and residents to remain calm, reassuring them that crises are temporary and challenges strengthen national unity and trust in God and the country's leadership.

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Overseas Filipino worker Norlie Lorenzana waits for updates on her cancelled flight to Kuwait at Manila's International Airport, Philippines on Monday, March 2, 2026. (AP)

Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

It is now time for GCC leaders to meet

THE meeting of foreign ministers in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries was held at the right time. A unified stance is essential, regardless of the individual viewpoints.

among the leaders.

It is best to hold an extraordinary Gulf summit now to make decisions that could break the intransigence of the enemy.

The current phase necessitates setting aside differences of opinion and working together to maintain the stability of our nations and our people.

It is good that the ministerial council meeting hinted at invoking Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. However, much more is needed, because the aggression is still ongoing.

Therefore, it has become imperative to put all plans into action.

The current stage requires not only severing diplomatic relations with Iran, but also activating the joint defense agreement among the GCC states, so the enemy understands that peaceful nations are capable of imposing deterrent punishment, not just a temporary reaction.

The current conflict is not just a passing skirmish, it is a decisive war and its outcome will determine the course of the future.

Over the past few days, the GCC citizens have demonstrated their solidarity with their leaders, forming a solid force to confront the Persian aggression. This is not an unusual behavior for them.

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US, Gulf nations unite in sharp rebuke of Iran's reckless attacks

Kuwait FM echoes heinous Iranian aggression

KUWAIT CITY, March 1, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah reiterated Kuwait's condemnation of the heinous Iranian attacks that targeted the country during the past two days.

In this regard, the Kuwaiti minister thanked all sisterly and friendly countries which have stood by the State of Kuwait against this atrocious Iranian aggression, while stressing the security of all GCC countries.

They discussed coordination of efforts to restore security and stability, as well as achieving peace in the region. The top diplomats strongly condemned the Iranian attacks against the GCC as well as on Jordan, which constituted a grave violation of sovereignty to these countries, good neighborliness and contravened with international law, UN Charter and international humanitarian law.

Sheikh Jarrah made the remarks while addressing the 50th extraordinary videoconference meeting of GCC foreign ministers, stressing his country's commitment to its right to defend itself pursuant to Article 51 of the UN Charter and to take all necessary and legitimate measures that align with the nature and scale of this aggression, according to a Foreign Ministry release.

The Gulf Cooperation Council countries will take all necessary measures to safeguard their security, stability and territorial integrity including the right to retaliate against "unjustified" Iranian aggression, top diplomats of six-nation GCC said.

They voiced joint solidarity and affirmed unity against these assaults, saying the security of the GCC was integrated and an attack on any one member state was an attack on all.

The minister echoed Kuwait's condemnation of the heinous Iranian attacks that targeted the country during the past two days, billing them a flagrant breach of the State of Kuwait's sovereignty and airspace, and a blatant violation of international law, international humanitarian law, and the UN Charter.

Foreign Ministers of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) made their position during a video-conference meeting on Sunday following Iranian attacks on facilities in their countries.

They said the GCC States reserved the right, in line with Article 51 of the UN Charter, to defend themselves in the case of foreign aggression in order to maintain security and stability.

He further underlined his country's commitment to the right to defend itself as per Article 51 of the UN Charter and to take all necessary and legitimate measures against this aggression in a way that safeguards its sovereignty and territory and the security of its citizens and residents.

The foreign ministers, in a final statement, said they discussed the Iranian rocket and drone attacks on the UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and the State of Kuwait which started yesterday.

The Foreign Ministers commended readiness of the armed and air defense forces for repelling the Iranian rockets and drones thus protect lives and properties. Although the GCC reaffirmed their territories would not be used as a launch pad for any attack on Iran, they said, the Islamic Republic continued their military attacks on the Arab Gulf countries.

Final statement

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The foreign ministers, in a final statement, said they discussed the Iranian rocket and drone attacks on the UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and the State of Kuwait which started yesterday.

They discussed the Iranian attacks on civilian facilities, service center and populated areas as well as the damages caused, which posed a threat to security and safety of the public.

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Kuwait hospitals receive 19 new injury cases, most stable

KUWAIT CITY, March 2, (KUNA): The Ministry of Health announced Monday that 19 new injury cases of varying severity were received, most of them in stable condition, affirming the national health system continues to operate efficiently and steadily.

al health system remains stable, with outpatient clinics fully operational and primary healthcare centers across all governorates delivering services during regular hours.

In a press statement, the ministry's spokesperson Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad said Al-Jahra Hospital received 18 cases, while Al-Adan Hospital received one case.

He added that hospitals are dispensing medication as scheduled, non-urgent elective surgeries have resumed at specialized centers, and non-urgent procedures in general hospitals are being rescheduled, with patients to be notified of new dates soon.

Al-Sanad reiterated that the nation-



Fishermen work in front of oil tankers south of the Strait of Hormuz Jan. 19, 2012, offshore the town of Ras Al Khaimah in United Arab Emirates. (AP)

Oil surges as Hormuz tanker turmoil shakes global supply

FRANKFURT, March 2, (AP): Oil prices rose sharply Monday as disruptions in tanker traffic through the Strait of Hormuz chokepoint raised uncertainty about how U.S. and Israeli attacks on Iran would affect supply to the world economy.

US oil traded 7.4% higher at \$71.97 per barrel, while international standard Brent was up 7.7% at \$78.46 per barrel. Higher oil prices raise the prospect of costlier gasoline prices for U.S. drivers as well as for other goods at a time when people in many countries have been stung by inflation.

A key focus was the situation around the strait at the southern end of the Arabian Gulf, through which 20% of the world's oil supply passes. Tanker traffic dropped sharply amid disruption of satellite navigation systems, data and analytics firm Kpler said on X, while the UK Maritime Trade Operations Centre reported attacks on several vessels in the area on either side of the strait and warned of elevated electronic interference to systems that show where ships are.

A bomb-carrying drone boat struck a Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker in the Gulf of Oman on Monday, killing one mariner on board, Oman said.

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Banks in Kuwait fully operational

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: The Kuwait Banking Association affirmed on Sunday that the country's banking sector remains fully operational and efficient amid the current regional situation.

In a statement sent to Arab Times, the Association emphasized that local banks are committed to maintaining high standards of service, ensuring uninterrupted access to all banking operations. Cash is consistently available in ATMs, which are replenished regularly to meet customer needs without disruption.

Banks continue to serve customers through all branches and digital channels, including mobile apps and online services, operating around the clock to allow safe and convenient transactions.



8 Boursa Kuwait resumes trading

Ramadan Timings

Imsak Tuesday 04:53
Iftar Tuesday 17:48
Imsak Wednesday 04:52

Al-Seyassah foils cyber threat as full data review underway

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: The website of Al-Seyassah daily was recently targeted by a cyberattack. However, the situation was brought under control and necessary security measures were reinforced as soon as the attack was detected by the daily's specialized technical team, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Technical teams are continuing a thorough review to verify the integrity of content and data during the attempted breach and to ensure that all published materials and information were not affected.

The daily affirmed its commitment to transparency, and highlighted its dedication to continuing its journalistic mission with professionalism and integrity.

ounce level, an important psychological and technical barrier supporting the upward trend.

Trading above \$5,250 in recent sessions has reinforced a positive short-term and medium-term outlook, with the next resistance around \$5,300. Breaking this level could pave the way for higher prices in the coming period.

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Mideast tensions drive gold in Kuwait above KD 53 per gram

KUWAIT CITY, March 2, (KUNA): Gold prices in Kuwait showed strong local demand amid market volatility, with 24-carat gold reaching about KD 53.2 (around \$162) per gram, 22-carat gold at about KD 48.7 (around \$149), and silver stable at KD 1,013 per kilogram (around \$3,323).

According to a report by Dar Al-Sabaek Kuwait, gold continues to maintain stability above the \$5,000 per

Prayer Timings

Fajr	04:53	Asr	15:20
Sunrise ..	06:12	Maghrib ..	17:48
Zohr	12:00	Isha	19:05

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Warm with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speed of 12-45 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

By Night: Rather cold with light

Weather

to moderate freshening at times over coastal areas northwesterly wind to northerly wind, with speed of 10-40 km/h.

Station Max Exp Min Rec
Kuwait Airport 25 14

Abdaly	24	12
Jahra	25	15
Salmiyah	22	17
Jalaliyah	23	11
Nuwaisib	22	15
Wafra	24	14

Kuwait Amir receives calls from leaders

KUWAIT CITY, March 2, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, received a phone call Sunday from the President of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

During the call, the UAE President inquired about Kuwait, its leadership, and its people, while His Highness the Amir also expressed concern for the UAE and its citizens, following the recent Iranian attacks targeting both Kuwaiti and Emirati territories.

Both leaders strongly condemned the aggression, describing it as a blatant violation of the sovereignty of both countries, international law, and the United Nations Charter.

They emphasized that the attacks on Kuwait, the UAE, and other sisterly nations represent a serious escalation threatening regional security and stability.

Oman's Sultan

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday a phone call from Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tariq who reassured about Kuwait, its leadership and people following the heinous Iranian attack on the country's territory.

During the call, the Sultan expressed Oman's strong condemnation and denunciation of this blatant aggression which is a violation of Kuwait's sovereignty and its airspace as well as international law and the United Nations Charter.

Sultan Haitham affirmed his country's standing with Kuwait and support for all measures and decisions made by the country to maintain its sovereignty, stability and security.

Syrian President

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Sunday received a call from Syrian President Ahmad Al-Sharaa following the heinous Iranian attack on Kuwait.

During the phone conversation, the Syrian president voiced vehement condemnation and denunciation of this atrocious aggression as a violation of Kuwait's sover-



HH the Amir

eignty, international law and the UN Charter.

He also reiterated Syria's support for the State of Kuwait and all measures it is taking to maintain its sovereignty and security.

His Highness the Amir voiced much thanks and appreciation to the Syrian president for his support for the State of Kuwait.

Algerian President

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Sunday received a call from Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune following the heinous Iranian attack on Kuwait.

During the phone conversation, the Algerian president voiced strong condemnation and denunciation of this atrocious aggression as a breach of Kuwait's sovereignty, international law and the UN Charter.

He also reaffirmed his country's support for the State of Kuwait and all measures it is taking to maintain its sovereignty and security.

Turkiye

His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, received a phone call Sunday from the President of the friendly Republic of Turkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

During the call, President Erdogan inquired about Kuwait, its leadership, and its people following the recent Iranian attack on Kuwaiti territory.

He expressed Turkiye's strong condemnation of the blatant aggression, describing it as a grave violation of Kuwait's sovereignty, international law, and the United Nations Charter.

President Erdogan affirmed Turkiye's solidarity with Kuwait and its people, supporting all measures taken to protect Kuwait's sovereignty and security, and expressed readiness to deploy all available resources to assist the country.

Crown Prince receives calls from leaders

KUWAIT CITY, March 2, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday a telephone call from Iraq's Prime Minister Mohammed Al-Sudani.

During the call, Al-Sudani got reassured about Kuwait, its leadership and people, stressing Iraq's strong condemnation and denunciation of any harm to Kuwait.

He underlined the importance of co-operation to overcome this crisis and reaching a truce between all parties.

Iraq's Premier also underlined the need of giving priority to dialogue and called for preserving the region's security.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed the greetings and deep thanks of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Iraq's President Abdullatif Rashid.

Ethiopia

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday a telephone call from Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmad Ali.

During the call, Abiy stressed Ethiopia's strong condemnation and denunciation of the atrocious attack as a violation of Kuwait's sovereignty and its airspace, as well as international law and the UN Charter.

He underlined the rejection of any assaults affected Kuwait's civil facilities.

Abiy affirmed support for Kuwait, its leadership, government and people to all measures and decisions made to maintain the country's sovereignty, stability and security.

Libya

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday a telephone call from the president of the Libyan Presidential Council Dr. Mohammad Al-Menfi.

During the call, President Al-Menfi reassured about Kuwait, its leadership and people in the wake of the heinous Iranian attack on the country's land.



HH the Crown Prince

Al-Menfi expressed his country's strong condemnation and denunciation of this blatant attack, a flagrant violation of Kuwait's sovereignty and its airspace, along international law and the UN Charter.

He also underlined full support for Kuwait, its leadership and people in all measures and decisions made by the country to maintain its sovereignty, security and stability.

Mauritania

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday a telephone call from Mauritanian President Mohammad Ould Cheikh El Ghazouan.

During the call, the Mauritanian President reassured about Kuwait, its leadership and people following the heinous Iranian attack targeted the country's land.

President Ould Cheikh El Ghazouan expressed his country's strong condemnation and denunciation of this blatant attack, a flagrant violation of Kuwait's sovereignty and its airspace, as well as international law and the UN Charter. The president also underlined full support for Kuwait, its leadership and people in all measures and decisions made by the country to maintain its sovereignty, security and stability.

Swiss President

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Sunday evening received a call from Swiss Confederation President Guy Parmelin, who condemned the heinous Iranian attack on Kuwait's territory.

During the phone conversation, the Swiss President voiced his country's strong condemnation and denunciation of the atrocious Iranian aggression on Kuwait as a blatant violation of its sovereignty, security and airspace, and a breach of international law and the UN Charter.

He also underlined utter solidarity with the State of Kuwait, its leadership, government and people, while backing all measures and decisions it is taking to maintain the country's sovereignty, stability and security.

Sheikh Duaij and Sheikh Faisal Ramadan reception



Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad



HH the Crown Prince



Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times Ahmed Al-Jarallah and the hosts with colleague Saud Al-Farhan. Photos by Rizk Taufiq



Indian and Tajik ambassadors



British and other ambassadors.

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: Sheikh Duaij Al-Khalifa Al-Malik and Sheikh Faisal Al-Khalifa Al-Malik hosted a Ramadan reception at their diwaniya in Jabriya, welcoming well-wishers for the holy month, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Attendees expressed their congratulations and exchanged blessings for this significant Islamic occasion.

Among those who joined the hosts in welcoming the guests were His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, along

with various members of the ruling family, and a select group of diplomatic and public figures. Their presence underscored the desire to share the joy of the blessed month.

The gathering was a clear expression of the profound social bond characteristic of Kuwaiti society. The diwaniya provided a setting for friendly discussions that highlighted the humanitarian and religious values embodied by Ramadan, particularly brotherhood, compassion and solidarity.

Attendees emphasized the importance of these

annual gatherings as opportunities to strengthen community ties, reinforce affection, and foster communication among the people.

This tradition reflects the core role of the Kuwaiti diwaniya as a platform for social gathering and connection, illustrating a vibrant image of national cohesion.

The hosts and guests concluded the event by praying to Almighty Allah for the return of the holy month to Kuwait, its leadership and its people with continuous security, prosperity and blessings.

Ukrainian envoy vows support for Kuwait, Gulf

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: Ukrainian Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Maksym Subkh affirmed that his country supports the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states and other nations targeted by Iran recently.

These countries include Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab

Emirates (UAE).

Ambassador Subkh pointed out that "for every Ukrainian, seeing the deadly drones striking residential buildings brings to mind the scenes we witnessed in our own cities."

He asserted that the Iranian regime is "repeatedly demonstrating its criminal policy of vio-

lence, terrorism and aggression both within and beyond its borders.

"This must end. We condemn these attacks, reiterate our unwavering support for the Iranian people, and urge all countries to uphold their right to live in security, peace and prosperity, free from oppression."

Amir receives Crown Prince, PM

KUWAIT CITY, March 2, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Monday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah as well as Deputy Prime Minister and State Minister for Cabinet Affairs, Shereedah Al-Mousherji.

Amiri Diwan thanks mourners

KUWAIT CITY, March 2, (KUNA): On behalf of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Al-Sabah Family, the Amiri Diwan extended on Sunday gratitude to all citizens and residents who offered condo-

lences over the demise of Sabeeka Duaij Al-Salman, widow of Sheikh Jaber Al-Ali Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

The Amiri Diwan prayed to Allah the Almighty to bestow mercy upon the deceased's soul.

Rumor-mongers face 3 yrs in jail

'National security top priority'

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: Deputy Attorney General Ahmed Al-Kandari affirmed that Kuwaiti law takes a firm stance against those who spread rumors or circulate false news that could harm national security or affect the country's stability.

During a televised interview on NEWS TV, he emphasized that penalties for such offenses include imprisonment for a minimum of three years.

Al-Kandari explained that some individuals may casually share rumors on social media, but such actions are not considered harmless. Spreading false information can constitute a serious criminal offense subject to legal accountability. Publishing or republishing false news that harms national interests or national security exposes the perpetrator to severe penalties.

He affirmed that the Public Prosecution will not hesitate to enforce the law against anyone proven to be involved in

such acts.

Al-Kandari emphasized that the danger of rumors extends beyond the dissemination of false information, as they can incite panic among citizens and residents, create confusion in public opinion, and threaten the stability of the state.

He stressed the need for accuracy when handling news and to seek information only from official sources.

□ □ □

Liquor peddler nabbed: An Asian expatriate was referred to the Drug Control General Department after being caught red-handed selling liquor by Hawally patrols, reports Al-Anba daily.

The arrest followed intelligence regarding his involvement in the local liquor trade. An undercover agent coordinated with the suspect at the agreed delivery location in Hawally. At the designated time, the suspect was seen handing over 35 plastic water bottles containing locally made liquor to the agent. Following a prearranged signal, security forces apprehended the suspect without resistance.

The suspect is expected to disclose the source of the liquor, after which authorities plan to conduct a raid on the manufacturing site.

'Avoid open areas in desert'

Spring camping season ended

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: The Spring Camping Committee of Kuwait Municipality has decided to suspend and cancel the spring camping season in light of the current circumstances in the country and the region, in the interest of public safety and to avoid any potential risks.

Committee Chairman Faisal Al-Otobi stated that the municipality will begin sending text notifications to campers via the "Sahel" application, informing them

of the end of the camping season and the necessity of removing their camps within the specified period, in compliance with the issued instructions.

Ministry of Interior had urged desert campers to avoid open areas during this period, calling for avoiding the holding or organization of any events outside their homes, in order to protect their safety and the safety of their families.

It is worth noting that the spring camping season was scheduled to continue until mid-March before the decision to cancel it was made as an exceptional measure this year.

National Day & perpetual battle against corruption

"THIS year, National Day coincided with the holy month of Ramadan, creating a scene where the joy of the nation blended with the spirit of faith, enhancing the significance and impact of the occasion." Kuwaiti writer **Sheikha Hessa Al-Hamoud Al-Salem Al-Sabah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Ramadan renews in our hearts the values of purity, piety, and compassion, while National Day revives the meaning of patriotism and loyalty to our beloved homeland. I pray to God to grant us continued security and safety. National Day is not merely a celebratory occasion, but a national milestone where we remember a history of resilience and reflect on a present focused on correcting our course and strengthening the state's prestige."



Sheikha Hessa

"The history of nations is not measured by the number of years, but by their ability to preserve their identity. Kuwait faced the brutal Iraqi invasion, and its people stood firm, upholding their legitimacy and leadership, setting the finest examples of sacrifice and loyalty. True belonging is proven through actions, not slogans. A nation progresses only through the efforts of its loyal sons and daughters."

"Today, Kuwait is facing a battle no less important than the battle for liberation. It is a struggle to safeguard national identity from manipulation, confront corruption in all its forms, and correct the imbalances that have accumulated over the years. Citizenship is not a document obtained through fraud, but it is a true belonging that carries both rights and responsibilities."

"When the state acts to address the issue of forged citizenship documents, it is not targeting specific individuals, but rather upholding justice in society and protecting the rights of its original citizens. For years, I have written about national identity as a safeguard and about the dangers of demographic imbalance and the importance of social justice. At times, my views seemed like swimming against the tide. But time has shown that honest words are never lost, and that reform requires clarity and decisiveness."

"The decision to dissolve the National Assembly was a reformist step that places the nation's interest above all else. Institutions exist to promote stability and achieve progress, not to obstruct it or prioritize personal interests. Correcting the political course is not an act of antagonism, but a necessity dictated by the public interest. Confronting corruption is no longer just a slogan to be raised, but a clear path that must be implemented. Corruption not only wastes public funds, but also undermines citizens' trust in state institutions. When the rule of law is applied fairly, it restores balance and sends a clear message that Kuwait is a state of order and justice without exception."

"All of this takes place under the leadership of His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (May God protect him), who has exemplified responsible resolve during this period, supported by His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah (May God protect him). I commend the efforts of the Ministry of Interior, under the leadership of Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Saud Al-Sabah, in upholding the prestige of the state and confronting any transgression that threatens the nation's identity or security."

"National Day is not merely a time for celebrations and events, but it is a renewal of the covenant between the leadership and the people. Kuwait will remain a nation preserved by its identity, protected by the law, and strengthened by the unity of its people and their support for their leadership. May God protect Kuwait, return the blessed month of Ramadan with goodness, prosperity, and blessings, and perpetuate the blessings of security and stability upon it."

Also:

"This year's National Day and Liberation Day were unlike previous years due to the sensitive circumstances the region is facing, which require solidarity and national unity in response to the ongoing changes," columnist **Sheikh Eng. Fahad Da-wood Al-Sabah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"In recent days, Kuwait has been subjected to attacks from Iran, which appears to have lost its way and failed to uphold the principles of good neighborliness. The anniversary of Kuwait's liberation is an

occasion from which we must learn lessons and draw wisdom from the past, so that we may strengthen our unity in the face of the many emergencies affecting the world, and the region in particular. We must maintain the highest levels of vigilance and awareness, trusting that the future will be better as long as we act in accordance with the directives of our political leadership, His Highness the Amir, and His Highness the Crown Prince.

"Undoubtedly, the future demands a deep understanding that changing circumstances can become opportunities if handled wisely. Kuwait occupies a geographically important position in the region and possesses huge potential that enables it to play a far greater economic and political role than is currently realized. It also has a rich cultural heritage built on solid foundations over the past four centuries, allowing it to assume a leading role both regionally and internationally."

"The National Day anniversary offers an opportunity for Kuwaitis to reflect on the meaning of independence and to strengthen their free will under the leadership of His Highness the Amir, who is working diligently to restore Kuwait to its pioneering position. The political leadership follows a progressive vision that balances the nation's best interests with the aspirations of its people. Therefore, all efforts are focused on achieving the desired future that fulfills the people's hopes."

"This stage requires Kuwaitis and residents to adhere to the instructions issued by the relevant authorities. Everyone must act responsibly and avoid engaging in reckless political or military analyses. Social media is filled with misinformation, driven by a pursuit of fleeting fame that only leads to further problems."

□ □ □

"Years ago, I wrote an article, actually, several articles, proposing the regulation of taxi services through the creation of joint-stock companies supported by the government. The taxi drivers themselves would own the shares in these companies, with multiple companies operating separately in each governorate," Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Unfortunately, neither the government nor those who read the articles brought the proposal to the attention of officials. The plan for Kuwaiti taxi companies was shelved, and the deplorable state of taxi services persisted, solely because the people running the services are expatriates. I suspect, and I would even wager, that no official at the ministerial, undersecretary, or director level, and perhaps not even a low-level employee, has ever considered taking a taxi from their home to the ministry, or vice versa."

"I say this without shame, and I am proud to admit that I often take a taxi for errands from the market to home when my driver is unavailable or my car breaks down. This is neither shameful nor a sign of weakness, as taxis have been part of our lives for decades, back when they used to line up at the market. Unfortunately, Kuwaitis have been forced to abandon taxis due to unjust government policies. The government allowed expatriates to dominate taxi services, roaming the streets and alleys of Kuwait, with some of whom even being involved in illegal or corrupt activities."

"Public transportation in Kuwait is chaotic. Private company buses race each other on the streets, clandestine ride-hailing services have emerged where car owners transport people between homes and workplaces, and others offer paid rides... and the list goes on. In the 1950s and early 1960s, taxis were driven by expatriates. They were later banned from working as taxi drivers following protests from Kuwaiti citizens who objected to seeing expatriates transporting Kuwaiti families."

"The taxi service should be returned to Kuwaitis with government support. Many young Kuwaitis are unemployed, with limited options beyond government ministries, which are already overcrowded. It is time for the government to create new opportunities for unemployed citizens. Ride-hailing apps are neither an effective nor sustainable service, nor are they a legitimate way for young people to earn a decent living. There are many other job opportunities available, and the government simply needs to move beyond outdated thinking."

- Compiled by Simi K. Kutty

'Rely only on official sources for info'

KFF on full alert throughout Kuwait: Al-Gharib

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: Official spokesperson of Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) Brigadier General Mohammad Al-Gharib said KFF is currently operating at full alert in all of its land, sea and airport fire stations.

Al-Gharib confirmed that his heightened state of readiness is in line with the approved emergency response plans designed to guarantee round-the-clock preparedness for any incident. He revealed that KFF established deployment points in areas identified as vulnerable to falling shrapnel or possible missile strikes. He added that rapid response and intervention teams are strategically positioned in the designated areas to



Al-Gharib



Omar Bouresli

ensure immediate action whenever required.

He also affirmed the activation of the Major Incidents Operations Room, which has been functioning since the early morning hours with the presence of the KFF chief and his deputies who are overseeing developments. He

disclosed that KFF has already responded to several reports about falling shrapnel.

He underscored the importance of raising public awareness under such circumstances. He urged the citizens and expatriates to rely on official and authorized sources for accurate information, emphasizing the need to refrain from circulating or relying on information disseminated through unofficial channels in order to avoid the spread of panic and fear.

Acting Deputy Chief for Civil Protection at Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) Brigadier General Omar Bouresli conducted on Sunday an inspection visit to Doha Port security point.

The visit aimed to review all preparations and ensure the readiness of the force participating in securing vital sites across the country under the current circumstances, KFF said in a press statement.

'Kuwait stands with UAE'

We stand in support of Kuwait: Italy minister

KUWAIT CITY, March 2. (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Defense, Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah held a telephone call on Monday with Italy's Minister of Defense, Guido Crosetto.

In a statement, the Ministry of Defense said the two sides discussed current developments, during which the Italian minister expressed his country's solidarity and support for the State of Kuwait.

Sheikh Abdullah commended Italy's supportive stance, praising the depth of the longstanding relations between Kuwait and Italy.

Kuwaiti Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah held a phone call Sunday with Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammad bin Rashid Al-Maktoum.

According to a statement by the Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense, the call reviewed the latest developments, during which Sheikh Abdullah Ali Al-Sabah expressed Kuwait's full solidarity with the UAE and reaffirmed its firm rejection of any aggression threatening its security, stability, territorial integrity, or the safety of its citizens and residents.

He also stressed the importance of enhancing coordination and joint cooperation between the two sisterly countries to strengthen security and stability, safeguard shared interests, and maintain regional peace.



Sheikh Abdullah

'No missile hit on road, destruction of vehicles'

By Munif Nayef

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: The Ministry of Interior has denied claims circulating on social media regarding a missile strike on a main road and the alleged explosion of three vehicles.

The ministry clarified that the fires that engulfed the three vehicles were the result of a traffic accident, which was handled immediately on-site.

It emphasized that spreading such rumors undermines security and misleads the public.

Meanwhile, the Director of the Security Media Department at the Ministry of Interior, Colonel Othman Al-Gharib, affirmed that the ministry will not hesitate to take legal action against anyone spreading false information.

He highlighted ongoing cooperation between the Security Media Department and the Criminal Security Sector to monitor all published rumors and the circulation of misleading images and reports.

Colonel Al-Gharib explained that the incident involving a vehicle catching fire due to a traffic accident is a common occurrence on the roads, but the news was falsely presented as shrapnel or a missile explosion.

□ □ □

Municipality ready: Kuwait Municipality announced the readiness of its field teams, equipment, and machinery to support government agencies if requested, in light of the current situation in the region, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Probe on as woman rents luxury car, refuses return

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: An expatriate, acting as agent, manager, and authorized signatory for a car rental company, filed a report stating that the company was a victim of breach of trust by a Kuwaiti woman who rented a black 2025 luxury car valued at approximately KD 24,000, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The complainant explained that the woman rented the vehicle from the company's Hawally headquarters on February 2, for a two-week period, agreeing to return it by February 16, 2026. However, she continued to keep the car beyond the agreed period. He visited the police station several times and officers contacted her by phone. She had promised to return the vehicle and requested a lease extension, offering to pay part of the outstanding balance. Despite this, she continued to stall and failed to pay, with the accumulated amount reaching KD 840 as of February 16, 2026.

According to security sources, the case was referred to the Criminal Investigation Department for further investigation. Following the referral, the accused voluntarily appeared at the investigation headquarters, bringing the vehicle with her. When confronted with the evidence, she denied the breach-of-trust charge, claiming she had extended the lease but was unable to pay the full amount due to financial hardship. She said she had been making installment payments over time, with the last payment reportedly on February 9, 2026, and that some payments were made in cash.

During the initial investigations, both parties maintained their versions of events, with no evidence to contradict either account at that stage. Further investigation and legal procedures are ongoing.

Subsequent investigations revealed that the accused had not paid any of the vehicle rental fees, reinforcing suspicion of breach of trust. Procedures are ongoing, and the case file will be referred to the appropriate authority.

Man kills his spouse

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: A crime occurred in one of the areas of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate, where a Kuwaiti woman was killed by her husband, who later surrendered to the police, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

According to security sources, the relevant authorities launched an investigation with the perpetrator to determine the motives behind the crime.

Influencers can appear in advts

Commerce law on track

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: Decree-law No. 10/2026 on regulating the digital commerce sector was published in the official gazette, 'Kuwait Al-Youm', on Sunday.

This is a comprehensive legislative framework aimed at keeping pace with rapid developments in the digital economy, boosting trust in electronic transactions, protecting consumers, and supporting the investment and innovation environment in the country.

The general provisions stipulate that no activity should be conducted in the digital commerce sector without registering in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Chapter Two mandates the ministry to regulate the digital commerce sector, oversee the implementation of the law and its executive regulations, issue regulatory decisions, establish electronic registers for product and service providers, and develop registration forms, systems and fees.

Chapter Three obligates product or service providers to disclose their basic data and contractual terms, issue electronic invoices, provide a mechanism for receiving complaints, guarantee consumer data protection, and implement cybersecurity measures issued by the competent authorities.

The law includes a chapter on consumer protection in electronic contracts, recognizing the consumer as the weaker party in the relationship.

It stipulates the consumers' right to correct errors before finalizing the contract, return the product within 14 days of receiving it or signing the contract, and receive a refund using the same payment method without incurring additional costs in certain cases.

It regulates advertising and promotion through digital media, as well as prohibits

the inclusion of false or misleading information, anything that violates public order or morals, use of logos or trademarks without legal basis or statements that mislead the consumer. A 24-hour grace period is granted to rectify any violation before further action is taken.

It permits the use of influencers in commercials, provided that the nature of the contractual relationship is disclosed, transparency is maintained, and no fraudulent or deceptive practices are promoted.

It also addresses the provisions for documents, records and electronic signatures, granting them legal validity if they follow the regulations and specifying the circumstances under which an electronic signature may be revoked.

Chapter Seven stipulates that service providers must implement cybersecurity standards issued by the Central Bank of Kuwait and other relevant authorities, regularly update their systems to address threats, and restrict electronic payment services to electronic platforms.

The law requires entities licensed by the Central Bank to adhere to the regulations, while prohibiting the imposition of additional fees for using electronic payment methods, unless it is in accordance with the guidelines.

It stipulates the formation of two specialized committees: the first to investigate, document and prove violations, and the second to resolve disputes related to digital commerce between providers and consumers. Serious violations are referred to the Public Prosecution.

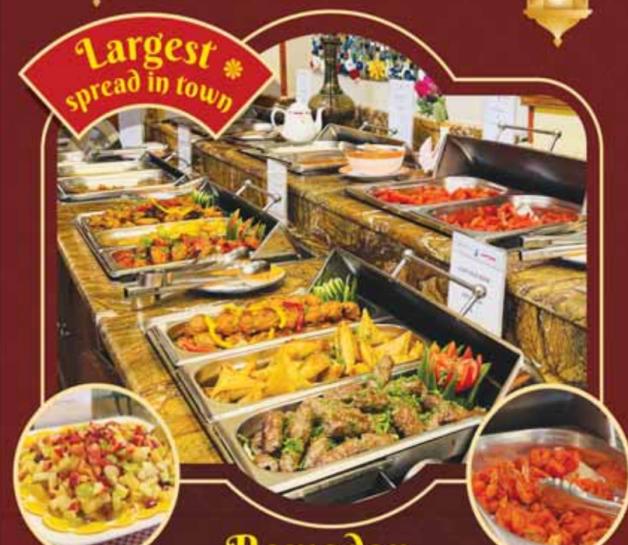
The section on penalties includes fines, which are doubled for repeat offenses, closure of the offending store, confiscation of equipment used in committing the violation, and accountability for the de facto manager of the legal entity if his knowledge of the violation is proven.

It mandates the concerned minister issue the implementing regulations within one year of its publication in the official gazette. The law shall take effect one month after the regulations are published.



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Ministry prepares return plan for students abroad

Cultural attachés on 24-hour alert

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

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: Undersecretary of the Ministry of Higher Education Dr. Bader Al-Busairi confirmed that the ministry is preparing the list of external scholarship students in Kuwait to coordinate with their universities and airlines to ensure their return to their places of study once the situation stabilizes and flights resume, thus, ensuring their academic progress.



Dr. Al-Busairi

In a press statement, Al-Busairi explained that since receiving initial reports about the current situation, the ministry contacted the cultural attachés in various countries, particularly the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, to check the students' situation, specifically their health and academic conditions. He indicated that all

students are safe and continuing their studies normally.

Al-Basiri reassured the parents that the situation of those studying abroad, whether on scholarship or at their own expense, is stable and secure. He said the ministry has taken precautionary measures, such as communication with students through email, to ensure their well-being and maintain contact. He affirmed that things are proceeding smoothly.

He pointed out that the emergency numbers and contact information of cultural attachés and accredited consulates remain unchanged. He stated that the cultural attachés are on 24-hour alert to address emerging developments, indicating that telephone communication is preferred in urgent cases.

He urged students to follow the in-

structions of the official authorities in their host countries, avoid gatherings, and comply with academic instructions through in-person attendance or distance learning.

He stressed the importance of not being swayed by rumors and to rely on official communications issued by the cultural attachés.

He affirmed that the ministry is keen on guaranteeing the safety and psychological and academic stability of students. He called on the parents to follow official sources, wishing everyone safety and stability in light of these circumstances.

The Secretariat General of the Council of Private Universities has established direct communication channels for students to use in emergency situations, affirming its commitment to guarantee quick response and effective communication under the current circumstances.

In an official statement, the Secretariat indicated that the emergency channels include the email address emergency@puc.edu.kw and WhatsApp number 22924401. These channels are for receiving reports and inquiries to ensure prompt action.

Precautionary measures

Kuwait Zakat House halts Iftar banquets until further notice

KUWAIT CITY, March 2, (KUNA): Kuwait Zakat House announced on Sunday the suspension of the distribution of Iftar banquet meals in order to avoid gatherings and to ensure the safety of those fasting, in light of the current circumstances facing the country.

Acting Director General of Kuwait Zakat House, Dr. Majed Al-Azmi, told KUNA that this step comes as a precautionary measure to safeguard the health of citizens and residents and in adherence to necessary safety procedures, given the regional conditions and developments that require caution and preventive measures. Dr. Al-Azmi affirmed that the distribution of iftar meals and banquets has been halted



Dr. Al-Azmi

until further notice, stressing that this measure is temporary and subject to ongoing evaluation in accordance with regional developments and state decisions in this regard.

He explained that Kuwait Zakat House will continue to carry out its humanitarian mission through alternative channels that ensure assistance reaches its beneficiaries safely and without exposing citizens and residents to risk.

FM receives wave of support calls

Global solidarity grows with Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, March 2, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received a series of phone calls Sunday from regional and international counterparts condemning the Iranian aggression against Kuwait and other countries in the region.

During a call from Ahmad Aboul-Gheit, Secretary-General of the Arab League, both sides strongly denounced the attacks. Aboul-Gheit stressed the right of targeted countries to take all necessary measures to safeguard their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

They also expressed their commitment to strengthening joint Arab action in response to current



Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs

developments.

In separate calls, Jean-Noel Barrot, France's Minister for Eu-

rope and Foreign Affairs; Ruben Lizcano, Foreign Minister of Paraguay; Elmedin Konakovic, Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Kestutis Budrys, Foreign Minister of Lithuania; Nadezhda Neynski, Foreign Minister of Bulgaria; and Oana Silvia Tutuianu, Foreign Minister of Romania, reaffirmed their countries' condemnation of the Iranian aggression.

According to statements issued by the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the ministers emphasized solidarity with Kuwait and underscored the right of affected nations to take all necessary measures to protect their sovereignty and territory.



Left: Kuwaiti Ambassador to the UK, Bader Al-Munayekh, lays a wreath in honor of the 47 British soldiers who sacrificed their lives during the liberation of Kuwait in 'Operation Granby'. Right: wEmbassy of Kuwait in London photos Kuwaiti Ambassador to the United Kingdom Bader Al-Munayekh delivering his speech.



British sacrifices in liberation war etched in history: Kuwaiti envoy

The sacrifices made by British troops in the war to liberate the State of Kuwait from the Iraqi invasion will not be forgotten and will be forever etched in the annals of history, Kuwaiti Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Bader Al-Munayekh, said Sunday.

Delivering a speech at a ceremony in Staffordshire, central England, commemorating the 47 British soldiers who lost their lives in "Operation Granby", Ambassador Al-Munayekh affirmed that the UK's action came in line with the belief that aggression must be stopped and international law must be upheld.

He went on to say that the British participation in the liberation war, with over 53,000 personnel, was a clear

message that the UK was against all acts of injustice.

Ambassador Al-Munayekh indicated that the operation, the largest for British troops abroad since World War II, came in defense of international legitimacy and to liberate a sovereign state from invasion.

He asserted that Kuwait will never forget the 47 brave soldiers and their families' sacrifices, which will remain forever etched in the annals of history.

In addition to the families of British soldiers, former British army officials, members of the Kuwaiti embassy in London, and members of the Kuwaiti military attaché's office in the UK were present at the ceremony. (KUNA)

Continued from Page 1

It is now

Since the launching of the GCC in 1981, the member states have been working as one.

This was clearly shown during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait when they opened their doors and hearts to welcome Kuwaitis. This was also exemplified in the liberation operation, during which Gulf armies shed blood to free Kuwait.

Throughout the past two decades and in spite of Houthi attempts to destabilize the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the military campaign, 'Operation Decisive Storm', with the participation of the Gulf armies, confronted Houthi aggression.

During the acts of sabotage in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Peninsula Shield forces thwarted the terrorist plot to control Bahrain.

Undoubtedly, all these events confirm the determination of the Gulf states to adopt a unified stance in times of crisis. The people of the Gulf consider the GCC as the protector of their stability. Gulf security is indivisible. Gulf cohesion is solid and unbreakable.

Perhaps, today is an opportune moment to activate economic, media and social integration among the GCC countries, considering the current circumstances. This step is crucial in preventing the vulnerability that the enemy could exploit to weaken their firm position.

At this point, it must be emphasized that there are different viewpoints among the leaders and governments of the GCC countries, but this is perfectly normal. The leaders of the GCC countries have proven their ability to unite on a single position, especially in difficult times.

Consequently, this opportunity must be seized to unify objectives. Events prove every day that Gulf unity is not a political choice, but an existential necessity.

Kuwait FM

They called for immediate cessation of the Iranian attacks to restore security, peace and stability in the region, and that it was important to maintain air and sea security, and safety of supply chain and stability of energy markets.

They said stability of the Arabian Gulf region was not only regional but key to global economy and maritime navigation.

They urged the international community to condemn the Iranian attacks, calling on the UN Security Council to live up to its responsibility and take a firm stance against recurrence of these attacks.

They affirmed that the GCC has always been calling for dialogue and resolution of conflicts with Iran through dialogue.

In Washington, the United States, Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Jordan have deplored Iran's indiscriminate and reckless missile and drone attacks against sovereign territories across the region.

"These unjustified strikes targeted sovereign territory, endangered civilian populations, and damaged civilian infrastructure," the seven countries stressed in a joint statement issued late on Sunday.

The statement referred to Iranian attacks on Bahrain, Iraq - including the Iraqi Kurdistan Region - Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

"The Islamic Republic's actions represent a dangerous escalation that violates the sovereignty of multiple states and threatens regional stability," the seven states warned.

"The targeting of civilians and of countries not engaged in hostilities is reckless and destabilizing behavior."

They vowed that they would "stand united in defense of our citizens, sovereignty,

and territory, and reaffirm our right to self-defense in the face of these attacks".

"We remain committed to regional security and commend the effective air and missile defense cooperation that has prevented far greater loss of life and destruction," they concluded.

Oil surges

Iran has been threatening vessels approaching the Strait of Hormuz and is believed to have launched multiple attacks.

Saudi authorities reported they intercepted Iranian drones that attacked the Ras Tanura oil refinery near Dammam and the refinery was shut down as a precaution, Saudi state television reported. Market attention has focused on whether the conflict would widen to other oil-producing countries in the region.

Monday's price increase was within the \$5-\$10 per barrel range expected by analysts based simply on the fear factor associated with the outbreak of war. And some war concerns were already reflected in the price before the conflict started.

However, long-term disruption to ship traffic in the strait could send prices even higher, and so could damage to oil infrastructure in other Gulf countries. Meanwhile, a shorter conflict in which disruptions are easily reversible could mean the current price spike won't last.

Mideast tensions

On the global front, gold opened trading on Monday at \$5,377 per ounce amid continued volatility and uncertainty in international markets, driven by rising geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and developments related to the U.S. stance on Iran. These factors have strengthened gold's appeal as a safe-haven asset at the start of the week.

The report explained that investors are turning to safe-haven assets amid uncertainty over U.S. trade policies, future interest rates, and ongoing discussions of U.S. options toward Iran, ranging from diplomatic measures to limited action, which keeps hedging demand elevated.

Relatively high U.S. inflation data have reduced the likelihood of a rapid interest rate cut, yet markets continue to weigh the strength of the U.S. economy against persistent geopolitical risks, providing structural support for gold prices.

Ongoing Central Bank purchases of gold, as part of reserve diversification policies and efforts to reduce reliance on the dollar, constitute a long-term supportive factor, particularly amid rising global sovereign debt and volatility in stock and bond markets.

The recent decline in the U.S. dollar index and the limited movement in bond yields have increased gold's appeal as a hedge against inflation and currency fluctuations, helping to maintain prices at relatively high levels.

The report noted that ongoing geopolitical risks and financial market volatility are prompting investors to shift assets toward precious metals as part of long-term risk management, especially amid challenges related to global growth, supply chains, and energy.

Continued military and political tensions in several regions, along with strong investment demand from institutions and central banks, are expected to keep gold prices elevated in the coming period.

It is worth highlighting that an ounce, used as a unit of mass for precious metals, equals 31.103 grams, while in general measurement systems it equals 28.349 grams.



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Photos by Samer Shaqair

Crown Prince and Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled lead a festive gathering highlighting society's solidarity in Qurtuba.

Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled hosts grand Ramadan gathering

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled hosted a large Ramadan gathering at the Dar Moza Diwaniya in Qurtuba, where he warmly welcomed various groups offering greetings on the holy month, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Present at the event were His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah who led a group of ruling family members, ministers, officials, diplomats,

public figures, and a big number of citizens and expatriates.

This gathering showcased the camaraderie and brotherhood prevalent in Kuwaiti society during Ramadan.

Attendees exchanged warm greetings and blessings, offering prayers to Almighty Allah for the return of the blessed month with goodness, prosperity and blessings for Kuwait, its wise leadership and its virtuous people.



Continued from Page 1

Security forces

He emphasized adherence to instructions from official security authorities, obtaining information only from verified sources, and refraining from spreading rumors, false news, or unverified information on social media or other channels, noting that such acts threaten public stability.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef also warned that any attempt to alarm citizens or residents, or to circulate unverified news, will face legal accountability, with violations of laws or official decisions dealt with firmly and immediately.

He prayed for the protection of Kuwait under the care of its wise leadership and good people.

Meanwhile, the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has announced emergency guidelines for employers and employees at various work sites to protect lives and property.

The Authority called on all concerned parties to immediately stop the work upon hearing the siren or receiving an official warning about the work site. It added that if the risk level at the site is high – particularly in energy facilities and oil sites – should they be targeted, coordination with the Civil Defense is necessary.

It urged everyone to follow instructions issued by official authorities, especially regarding the meaning of siren sounds.

It emphasized the necessity of implementing evacuation plans to ensure an organized and safe exit, and then proceed to the assembly points or shelters as per the emergency plan.

It stressed the need to avoid using elevators during evacuation and strictly adhere to instructions regarding emergency exits.

It affirmed the importance of continuous communication with the relevant authorities, following instructions issued by official bodies, and full cooperation with safety officials to guarantee public safety.

It asked the employers to periodically review emergency plans, ensure the efficiency of alarm systems, and raise employee awareness on evacuation procedures through regular field training.

The Ministry of Interior has issued a decision to temporarily ban fishing and recreational boating until further notice, as part of a precautionary measure to protect lives and prevent potential risks given the current situation in Kuwait and the region.

The ministry urged camping enthusiasts to postpone their activities during this period for their own safety and that of their families.

It also called on the public to avoid holding or organizing outdoor events, including traditional Gireean celebrations.

The ministry emphasized that these measures are temporary and precautionary, and that relevant authorities are closely monitoring developments.

It urged everyone to follow official instructions and seek information only from authorized sources.

In related news, Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Khaled Boodai issued two ministerial decrees - No. 20/2026 and No. 21/2026 - for setting the prices of all types of food commodities in the local market and prohibiting their export outside the country for one month from the date of issuance. The measures aim to protect consumers and

ensure market stability.

Ministerial Decree No. 21/2026 stipulates that the prices prevailing before February 28, 2026, are considered the maximum prices allowed for transactions, and may not be exceeded except with special permission from the Minister of Commerce and Industry. Anyone violating its provisions will face penalties under Decree Law No. 10/1979 on the supervision of trade in goods, services, and crafts and the regulation of prices, as well as under Consumer Protection Law No. 39/2014 and its executive regulations.

Minister Decree No. 20/2026 prohibits the export of all types of food commodities outside the country without prior written approval from the minister. The measure aims to ensure the availability of strategic reserves and strengthen food security amid current developments. Violators of the export ban will face penalties under Law No. 10/1979.

Both ministerial decisions will remain in effect for one month from the date of issuance and will be published in the official gazette, with relevant authorities responsible for their enforcement.

Drones near Rumaihiya, Salwa

On Sunday, the Director General of Civil Defense, Brigadier General Mohammad Al-Mansouri, confirmed on Monday that Kuwaiti Air Defense forces successfully intercepted the majority of hostile drones approaching the country via maritime routes near the Rumaihiya and Salwa areas in the Hawalli Governorate.

In a press statement, Brigadier General Al-Mansouri affirmed that no injuries were reported due to the interception operations.

He clarified that the Kuwait Air Defense personnel neutralized several aerial targets at dawn today with high efficiency and precision.

He assured the public that "the situation in the country remains stable" and emphasized that there is no cause for concern, as relevant authorities continue to monitor regional developments around the clock through a comprehensive operational framework.

Addressing reports of audible explosions in certain residential areas, Al-Mansouri explained that these sounds were the direct result of successful interception maneuvers.

He reaffirmed that Air Defense units maintain a constant state of vigilance, tracking potential threats before they enter national airspace.

Furthermore, the Director General highlighted that the Ministry of Interior's Cybercrime Department is actively monitoring digital platforms and accounts that disseminate rumors or misleading news intended to incite panic.

He warned that the state will take strict legal action against any individual involved in publishing or recirculating false information.

Al-Mansouri also noted the high-level coordination within the Emergency and Crisis Room of the Supreme Committee for Civil Defense. Chaired by the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, the committee includes representatives from 22 government entities to ensure a rapid, integrated response to any security developments.

In addition, Assistant Director of the Civil Defense Department Brigadier General Khaled Al-Marshoud confirmed that the department received only a limited

number of reports on the third day of the aggression.

Al-Marshoud disclosed that the concerned teams handled these reports swiftly and efficiently, attributing the smooth completion of tasks to the strong coordination and direct communication between the relevant authorities through the Operations Unit.

He expressed his gratitude to the citizens for their prompt response and cooperation with the authorities by strictly complying with official instructions, while praising their commitment to work with the relevant agencies. He pointed out that this kind of cooperation plays a crucial role in improving the preparedness level and ensuring public safety.

He also clarified the purpose of the sirens, emphasizing that they serve as an awareness-raising tool, not to frighten the public. He urged everyone to stay in safe locations – on the road, at work or at home – whenever the siren sounds. "Sounding the sirens day or night is a precautionary measure aimed at protecting everyone," he stressed.

He called on the public to rely on official sources in monitoring developments, disclosing that Kuwait TV is broadcasting real-time updates. He said everyone must obtain information only from official channels and ignore rumors.

Fire at Doha West station

Also on Sunday, the official spokesperson for the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, Engineer Fatma Abbas Jawhar Hayat, stated that during the interception of a drone, a fragment struck a fuel tank at the Doha West power and water station, causing a limited fire.

The station's safety and security team responded immediately according to approved procedures and emergency plans, successfully containing the fire while technical inspections are ongoing to ensure the safety of all units and equipment. Hayat confirmed that no human injuries occurred and the incident resulted only in minor material damage, with specialized teams continuing to monitor the situation and implement precautionary measures as necessary.

The ministry reassured citizens and residents that electricity and water services are operating normally, full readiness is maintained for any emergency, urging everyone to obtain information only from official sources.

Shrapnel injures workers

Two workers were slightly injured when shrapnel fell on Ahmadi Refinery at dawn Monday, KNPC and KIPIC reported.

Teams rushed to immediately deal with the situation and the injured were whisked to Adan Hospital and their health conditions were stable, Ghanem Al-Otaibi, spokesman of Kuwait National Petroleum Company and Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company, said in a statement.

He assured that operations and production at the refinery were not affected, and fast response plan was activated.

Al-Otaibi said Ahmadi Refinery was operating in full capacity.

US military aircraft crashes, crew safe

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense (MoD) announced on Monday that several United States military aircraft crashed earlier in the day, confirming that all crew members survived the incident.

In a statement, the official spokesperson

for the Ministry of Defense, Colonel Saud Al-Atwan said that the relevant authorities immediately initiated search and rescue operations. The crews were evacuated from the crash sites and transferred to hospital to assess their condition and provide necessary medical care, noting that their health condition is stable.

Al-Atwan added that direct coordination took place with the US forces regarding the circumstances surrounding the incident and the implementation of joint technical procedures.

He affirmed that the relevant authorities are continuing their investigations to determine the causes of the accident, urging the public and media outlets to obtain information from official sources.

Healthcare system fully activated

Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi revealed that he conducted an inspection tour of several hospitals throughout Kuwait based on directives from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah to monitor the health situation around the clock.

In an interview with Kuwait TV, the minister affirmed that he is in constant contact with His Highness the Prime Minister to track the condition of those injured in the Iranian aggression against the country.

Dr. Al-Awadhi explained that ministry officials visited several hospitals, including Jaber Hospital. Medical teams and ministry officials at Adan, Mubarak, Sabah, and Farwaniya hospitals have been working continuously since the full activation of the health disaster plan. All medical staff, including doctors, nurses, technicians, and administrators, are on duty, and coordinating with state entities such as the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Electricity and Water, and the National Guard to monitor developments around the clock.

Dr. Al-Awadhi highlighted his visit to the Accident and Emergency Department of Jaber Hospital, which is equipped to handle emergency cases with 100 beds, 50 intensive care beds, 8 operating rooms, CT and MRI machines, and a helipad for air ambulances.

He revealed that Al-Adan Hospital received 29 cases today, with 7 patients taken to operating rooms and 15 transferred to Jaber Hospital, adding that all cases were stable and none of the injured were Kuwaiti citizens.

The minister emphasized that all necessary medical and technical resources are available, and that highly qualified doctors in various specialties are managing the cases. He reassured the public that Kuwait's healthcare system is fully integrated, efficient, and ready to handle any emergency. Dr. Al-Awadhi highlighted that he is in direct contact with medical teams at Adan Hospital.

He explained that three cases were admitted at Al-Jahra Hospital, while the majority of cases were received yesterday at Farwaniya Hospital. Operations are proceeding according to comprehensive proactive plans, with the Emergency Departments Council managing the system efficiently.

The minister also confirmed that strategic stocks of medicines and medical supplies are available, urging citizens and residents to remain calm.

He assured that several primary healthcare centers have been equipped to re-

ceive patients 24/7, with clinics continuing to operate and dispense medications. Dr. Al-Awadhi stressed that all efforts are being carried out in full coordination and under the direct guidance of the political leadership.

In addition, the minister expressed gratitude to all the ministers for their round-the-clock efforts.

Residential towers attack 'fake news'

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior on Monday categorically denied circulating reports alleging that residential towers in the southern region of the country had been targeted by attacks, describing the claims as "entirely groundless."

In a televised interview with the official Kuwait News TV Channel, First Lieutenant Dhari Al-Awadhi of the Ministry of Interior's Cybercrime Department affirmed that these allegations are unfounded. He underscored the imperative of verifying information through official channels and warned against the dissemination of unauthenticated content.

Al-Awadhi emphasized that the department is rigorously monitoring fabricated footage and "inaccurate videos" proliferating across social media platforms. He noted that such material is designed to undermine national security and cause public panic.

The official further clarified that the Cybercrime Department is taking proactive measures to track and penalize any parties involved in publishing news that could destabilize the country's internal security.

He reaffirmed that legal proceedings will be initiated against violators in full accordance with the law.

Concluding his statement, Al-Awadhi called upon social media users to exercise restraint and uphold their social responsibility by relying on approved state sources.

He confirmed that the department has already commenced the surveillance of accounts involved in spreading misinformation and remains available to address public inquiries via its official WhatsApp service.

PM visits MEWRE control center

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Sunday paid an inspection tour of the national control center of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy.

Accompanied by Minister of Public Works and Acting Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, His Highness the Prime Minister was kept posted on relevant measures taken by the center's departments.

He underlined the significance of raising the efficiency of the performance and ensuring continued vital services amid the current circumstances that require the highest levels of readiness and preparedness. His Highness the Prime Minister also listened to a briefing from the center's operation officials on response to emergency in order to guarantee the highest levels of safety, lauding the capability of Kuwaiti staff in running the center's facilities.

1st Deputy PM checks on injured

Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah went to Adan Hospital to check on those injured in recent Iranian attacks on Kuwait.

The move came as part of continued follow of the current developments the country is going through and the keenness of security leadership on the reassurance about all, Ministry of Interior said in a statement.

During the visit, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef was briefed on provided medical care and listened to a detailed explanation about medical cadres' readiness and approved plans to deal with cases, it added. He commended great efforts exerted by medical and nursing teams to professionally achieve their humanitarian and national duties, it noted.

The minister affirmed that the state puts all its potential at the services of those wounded, directing providing all required care to ensure a rapid recovery, according to the statement.

He also underlined the necessity of continuing full coordination and integration among all concerned bodies, in a manner that boosts readiness and response. "Kuwait has been keen on maintaining security and safety in different conditions," Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef reiterated.

In latest development, Iran and allied armed groups fired missiles at Israel, Arab states and U.S. military targets around the region on Monday, while Israel and the United States pounded Iran as the war expanded to several fronts. Kuwait mistakenly shot down three American warplanes over its skies.

The intensity of the attacks on both sides, the killing of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and the lack of any apparent exit plan indicated the conflict would not end any time soon. It was already have far-reaching consequences across the region and beyond: Previously safe havens in the Mideast like Dubai have seen incoming fire; hundreds of thousands of airline passengers are stranded around the globe; oil prices shot up; and U.S. allies pledged to help stop Iranian missiles and drones.

If attacked, Iran has long threatened to drag the region into total war, including targeting Israel the Gulf Arab states and the flow of crude oil crucial for global energy markets. All these things came under attack on Monday.

QatarEnergy, in fact, said it would stop its production of liquefied natural gas because of the conflict, taking one of the world's top suppliers off the market. It offered no timeline for restoring its production.

Saudi Arabia's Ras Tanura oil refinery came under a drone attack on Monday, with defenses downing the incoming aircraft, a military spokesman told the state-run Saudi Press Agency.

Online videos from the site appeared to show thick black smoke rising after the attack. Even successfully intercepted drones cause debris that can spark fires and injure those on the ground.

Ras Tanura, near the city of Dammam in eastern Saudi Arabia, is one of the world's largest with a capacity over half a million barrels of crude oil a day. It was temporarily shut down as a precaution after the attack, Saudi state television reported.

Oman said a bomb-carrying drone boat exploded against Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker in the Gulf of Oman on Monday, off the coast of the sultanate's capital of Muscat, killing one mariner. The state-run Oman News Agency said the dead crew member was from India.

Columbia declines to release footage

ICE agents pose as police, a tactic some fear could erode trust in real cops

NEW YORK, March 2, (AP) — The 911 call came in at 6:32 am on Thursday: Two “suspicious” men wearing dark clothing were lingering inside a Columbia University residential building.

But when New York Police Department officers were dispatched to the scene, they came across US Immigrations and Customs Enforcement agents in the midst of an unusually elaborate operation.

According to a statement later released by Columbia, the agents had gained access to the building by posing as police in search of a 5-year-old — going so far as to present a flyer of the “missing child” to a campus safety officer. The ruse allowed them to make their way to the apartment of Ellie Aghayeva, an international student from Azerbaijan who immigration officials claim overstayed her visa. The NYPD officers arrived after the men had entered her apartment, a department spokesperson said. They confirmed the men were federal agents, then quickly left the building.

The arrest has prompted widespread censure and calls for investigation by

Democrats, as well as a surprising intervention by President Donald Trump. The Republican informed New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani that Aghayeva was being released shortly after meeting with the Democratic mayor.

As new details emerge, the operation has also threatened to open a rift between the city’s police department and ICE, whose agents have increasingly donned the disguises of utility workers, delivery drivers and other uniformed professionals to carry out Trump’s sweeping deportation campaign.

While such tactics are not illegal, former police officers said the apparent misrepresentation at Columbia represented a startling escalation, one that could gravely undermine public trust during the next emergency.

“If the police are actually looking for a child in danger, people are not going to be more hesitant to help,” said Michael Alcazar, a retired hostage negotiator with the NYPD. “Almost immediately, this sort of ICE subterfuge is going to make the job of police of-



A New York City police officer keeps watch on the campus of Columbia University in New York, May 6, 2024. (AP)

ficers more difficult.”

A spokesperson for the Department of Homeland Security, Tricia McLaughlin, has disputed portions of the university’s narrative, claiming

the federal agents “verbally identified themselves and visibly wore badges around their necks” and were allowed into the building by a property manager.

McLaughlin did not respond to repeated questions about whether the agents had used the guise of a missing child to enter the apartment.

Claire Shipman, the university’s acting president, said on Thursday that security cameras had “captured the agents in the hallway showing pictures of the alleged missing child,” adding that the situation was “utterly unacceptable.”

Columbia has so far declined to release that footage.

The NYPD also declined to share body camera footage of their response. A department spokesperson said the officers had followed the law by not interfering in an active federal investigation. Aghayeva’s arrest has prompted protests at Columbia, along with fear and confusion.

Her friends said that she was in her final semester on an international student visa, studying neuroscience and politics. In an emergency petition filed Thursday, her attorneys wrote she was not given a reason for the arrest.

A spokesperson for DHS said Aghayeva’s visa had been terminated

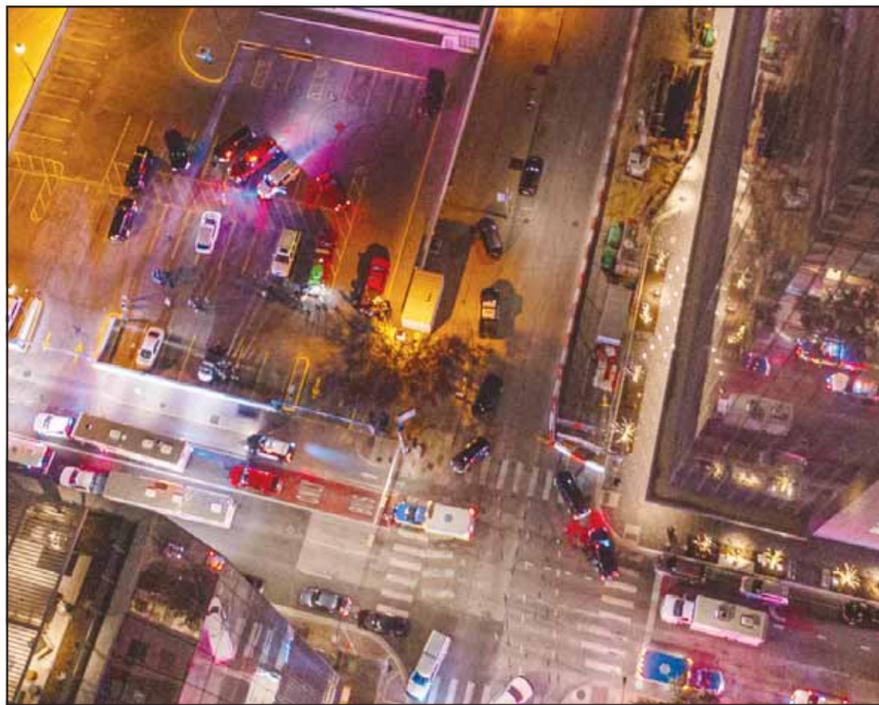
in 2016 for failing to attend classes. She remains in removal proceedings despite her release, the spokesperson said.

Jeffrey Fagan, a law professor at Columbia who studies policing, said research has shown that deceptive tactics by police are especially likely to hurt law enforcement legitimacy when they resulted in an arrest “perceived to be unjustified.”

“Anybody looking at this is going to immediately think it’s unjustified,” he said. “So that will erode trust in a relevant community the next time officers need cooperation.”

Peter Moskos, a professor of criminal justice at John Jay University and former Baltimore City police officer, agreed. He noted that sanctuary policies were originally meant to enhance public safety by building trust between immigrant communities and police.

“The idea is that you would trust the cops and call the cops when you need them and know you wouldn’t be deported,” he said. “But ICE seems to be doing everything they can to break down trust.”



Police respond to reports of a mass shooting in Austin on March 1. (AP)

FBI investigates incident

Texas shooting kills 2 and injures 14

AUSTIN, Texas, March 2, (AP) — A gunman wearing clothes with an Iranian flag design killed two people and wounded 14 early Sunday at a Texas bar, a law enforcement official told The Associated Press. The FBI is investigating the shooting, which erupted a day after the US and Israel launched an attack on Iran, as a potential act of terrorism.

Police in Austin shot and killed the gunman, who used both a pistol and a rifle to carry out the attack, police said.

The shooting happened outside Buford’s Backyard Garden just before 2 am along Sixth Street, a nightlife destination filled with bars and music clubs and only a few miles (kilometers) from the University of Texas at Austin. Nathan Comeaux, a 22-year-old senior, had spent the evening there with friends and said the bar was “full of college students, probably mostly UT kids, shoulder to shoulder, hundreds just enjoying their nights.”

The suspect drove past the bar several times before stopping and shooting from the window of his SUV at people on a patio and in front of the bar, according to Austin Police Chief Lisa Davis.

He then parked, got out with a rifle

and began shooting at people walking along the street before officers rushed to the intersection and shot him, Davis said. Three of the injured were in critical condition Sunday morning, she said.

The gunman was identified as 53-year-old Ndiaga Diagne, the Department of Homeland Security said in a statement. Comeaux had left the bar to grab pizza at a food truck across the street about 10 minutes before the first gunshots were fired. No one around the pizza truck understood what was happening, he said, with some thinking the noise was fireworks or a loud motorcycle.

Comeaux said he hid behind a bench for about a minute before getting out, and he saw police officers running toward the scene. He pulled out his phone to begin recording. That’s when more shots rang out. Comeaux said he saw the suspect turn his gun on police before officers shot him.

He said he knows someone who was shot and guessed that many other UT students do as well.

“The UT community has definitely been majorly affected by this,” he said.

Authorities haven’t provided a clear motive for the attacks but found “indi-

cators” on the gunman and in his vehicle leading them to look into the possibility of terrorism, said Alex Doran, the acting agent in charge of the FBI’s San Antonio office.

“It’s still too early to make a determination on that,” Doran said Sunday morning.

Diagne first entered the US in 2000 on a B-2 tourist visa and became a lawful permanent resident six years later after marrying a US citizen, according to DHS. He became a naturalized US citizen in 2013, the department said. Diagne was originally from Senegal, according to multiple people briefed on the investigation who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss the investigation.

The White House said President Donald Trump had been briefed on the shooting.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott warned that the state would respond aggressively to anyone trying to “use the current conflict in the Middle East to threaten Texas.”

University of Texas at Austin President Jim Davis said on social media that some of those affected included “members of our Longhorn family.”

Stranded travelers scramble to make new connections as war shuts much of ME to air travel

NEW YORK, March 2, (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of stranded travelers scrambled to make new connections and get through to airlines on jammed phone lines Sunday after the attack on Iran by the United States and Israel shut down much of the Middle East to air travel.

Tourists and business travelers crowded hotels and airports, with no word on when many airports would reopen or when flights to and through the Middle East would resume. Some governments advised their stranded citizens to shelter in place.

Shutdown airports in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Doha — including Dubai International Airport, one of the busiest in the world — are important hubs for travel between Europe, Africa and the West to Asia. All three were directly hit by strikes.

Mohammad Abdul Mannan, in the crowd at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka, Bangladesh, said he wasn’t concerned about the war, but that he needs to get his flight to the Middle East to make a living.

“We have set out to go for work, and we must go,” he said. “My only concern is how to go abroad and how to earn an income.”

Confusion reigned for many travelers as they tried to get answers on online portals or through busy phone lines.

In Dubai, stranded travelers could hear fighter jets overhead and an explosion when the Fairmont Palm Hotel was hit by a missile strike.

Many were unable to get updated flight information from tour opera-

tors or Dubai-based Emirates, which suspended all flights to and from Dubai until at least Monday afternoon.

Louise Herrle and her husband had their flight to Washington canceled on their way back to their Pittsburgh home after a tour of Dubai and Abu Dhabi, with no word when they could reschedule.

“We’re in the hotel room, we are not leaving it, so you’re not going to give it up until we know we have a flight out of here,” Herrle said. “I’m sure everyone else is in the same situation.”

Cirium, an aviation analytics firm, said it is hard to calculate the number of travelers stranded worldwide.

However, it estimated that at least 90,000 people alone change flights daily in the airports in Dubai, Doha or Abu Dhabi on just three airlines, Emirates, Qatar Airways and Etihad Airways.

Airspace or airports in Israel, Qatar, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman and the United Arab Emirates were closed, according to flight tracking sites and government agencies there.

More than 2,800 flights were canceled Sunday to and from airports across the Middle East, including those that remained open in Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt, according to flight tracking site FlightAware. International airports in London, Mumbai, Delhi, Bangkok, Istanbul, Sri Lanka and Paris each reported dozens of flights canceled, as well.

Cancellations will extend beyond

Sunday, at least.

Emirates suspended all flights to and from Dubai until at least Monday afternoon. Air India suspended all flights to and from the United Arab Emirates. Saudi Arabia, Israel and Qatar until Tuesday. Israeli airline EL AL said it was preparing to fly home Israelis stranded abroad once the airspace reopened and closed ticket sales for flights through March 21 to ensure stranded customers get priority.

Two airports in the United Arab Emirates reported strikes as the government there condemned what it called a “blatant attack involving Iranian ballistic missiles” on Saturday.

Officials at Dubai International Airport said four people were injured, while Zayed International Airport in Abu Dhabi said one person was killed and seven others were injured in a drone strike. Strikes were also reported at Kuwait International Airport.

Iran did not publicly claim responsibility.

Airlines urged passengers to check their flight status online before heading to the airport. Some airlines issued waivers to affected travelers that will allow them to rebook their flight plans without paying extra fees or higher fares. Others offered full refunds.

“For travelers, there’s no way to sugarcoat this,” said Henry Harteveldt, an airline industry analyst and president of Atmosphere Research Group. “You should prepare for delays or cancellations for

the next few days as these attacks evolve and hopefully end.”

Mike McCormick, who used to oversee air traffic control for the Federal Aviation Administration, said countries might reopen their airspace once American and Israeli officials tell airlines where military flights are operating and how capable Iran remains at firing missiles.

The reverberations echoed far outside the Middle East — for example, airport authorities in the resort island of Bali in Indonesia said more than 1,600 tourists were stranded at I Gusti Ngurah Rai International Airport on Sunday after five flights to the Middle East were canceled or postponed.

Airlines that are crossing the Middle East will have to reroute flights around the conflict with many flights headed south over Saudi Arabia. That will cause delays and higher costs.

Kristy Ellmer, an American who had been on business meetings in Dubai, said she was staying in a hotel and keeping multiple flights booked in case airports reopen.

She said she was gaining confidence in the government’s ability to protect the city from missiles, but also keeping away from windows when she hears explosions.

“You hear a lot of explosions at times, there’s hundreds of them,” Ellmer said. “And so when we hear them we sort of just don’t stay near the windows just in case the glass was to break or there was some impact.”



Passengers stranded by the closure of Dubai International Airport await in the airport parking lot in Dubai, United Arab Emirates on March 1. (AP)



Stranded travelers talk to airline staff as flights to the Middle East are cancelled following the attack on Iran by the U.S. and Israel, at Ngurah Rai International Airport in Kuta, Bali, Indonesia on March 1. (AP)

America

Jackson returns home to S. Carolina to lie in state: After a long career of fighting for civil rights, the Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr. is visiting his home for one last time to lie in state at the South Carolina capitol on Monday.

The final full honors from the state where he was born is a far cry from his childhood in segregated Greenville, where in 1960 he couldn’t go inside the local library’s much better funded whites-only branch to check out a book he needed.

Jackson led seven Black high school students into that segregated branch, where they sat down and read books and magazines until they were arrested. The branches closed, then quietly reopened for all.

With that action, Jackson launched his career — and crusade — fighting for equality for all. He would catch the attention of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and join the voting rights march King led from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. Jackson died Feb. 17 at age 84 after battling a rare



Jackson

neurological disorder that affected his mobility and ability to speak in his later years.

The South Carolina services are part of two weeks of events. It began with Jackson’s body lying in repose and the public invited last week to his Rainbow PUSH Coalition’s Chicago headquarters.

After South Carolina, Jackson will be returned to Chicago for a large celebration of life gathering at a megachurch and the final homegoing services at the headquarters of Rainbow PUSH. Plans for a service in Washington, D.C., to honor him have been postponed until a later date. (AP)

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9 wounded in Cincinnati shooting: A shooting early Sunday at a crowded Cincinnati nightclub and concert venue wounded nine people, police said. There were no immediate arrests.

The shooting victims were taken to hospitals with non-life-threatening injuries, Adam Hennie, the city’s interim police chief, said at a news conference.

About 500 to 600 people were in the Riverfront Live nightclub when shots rang out at 1 a.m., Hennie said. He declined to provide additional details, citing the integrity of the investigation.

The federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives said it was helping in the investigation. (AP)

Europe

Zelensky voiced readiness to meet Putin: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky voiced willingness to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin at a trilateral summit with the United States, warning that the conflict could become protracted without such talks.

There will be a chance to meet within half a year if Putin is ready for a trilateral meeting between the leaders of Ukraine, the United States and Russia, he said in an interview with Sky News.

But he rejected the possibility of holding the talks in Moscow or Belarus.

In the interview, he noted a window of opportunity to reach peace with Russia between now and the US midterm elections scheduled for November.

“If it is possible to achieve peace, we will have this window; we have it now,” he said.

Earlier this week, Zelensky announced that the next round of trilateral talks among the three sides is expected to



Zelensky

take place in early March.

The latest round of trilateral talks concluded in Geneva on Feb 18 with no breakthrough on key issues. (Xinhua)

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Greeks protest on third 'versary' of train crash:

Thousands of people took part in dozens of demonstrations across Greece on Saturday to mark the third anniversary of the train collision in Tempi, central Greece, which claimed 57 lives. The main rally was held in front of the Greek Parliament and was organized by an association of victims’ families. It was supported by opposition parties and labor unions, which had also called a 24-hour strike that disrupted public transportation services.

Student associations joined the mobilization as well, since most of the victims were university students returning to their studies after the holiday break.

Protesters carried banners and chanted slogans demanding justice ahead of the trial of dozens of railway employees and officials, scheduled to begin on March 23.

The victims’ families, opposition parties, and demonstrators accused the government of mishandling the investigation and alleged a “cover-up.” They are pressing for the prosecution of politicians, whom they also blame for safety system deficiencies that led to the head-on collision between a passenger train and a freight train. (Xinhua)

INTERNATIONAL

Asia

Flash flooding warning issued for southeast Australia: Emergency warnings for life-threatening flash flooding have been issued for vast areas of the southeast Australian states of Victoria and New South Wales (NSW).

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) on Monday issued severe weather warnings for heavy and locally intense rainfall across regions in central and northern Victoria and south and southwestern NSW.

It said that six-hourly rainfall totaling up to 100 mm was possible on Monday across the warning area spanning over 650 km from the central Victorian town of Seymour to the outback mining town of Broken Hill in far western NSW.

"Locally intense rainfall, which may lead to dangerous and life-threatening flash flooding, is possible throughout the warning area with thunderstorms this morning," it said. (Xinhua)

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Australia police probes shooting in Central Coast: Police in the Australian state of New South Wales (NSW) are investigating a public place shooting incident in Central Coast on Sunday.

NSW Police said in a statement that emergency services were called to a home in Killamey Vale, a suburb of the Central Coast region, just after 9:15 am local time following reports of shots fired.

Officers were told that several shots were fired at a house before a man left the scene in a white SUV. Three occupants, a man and woman aged in their 20s and a child, were not injured.

Police established a crime scene at the home and commenced an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident. (Xinhua)

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Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, center, talks with the ruling party's lawmakers during a special session of the lower house in Tokyo, Japan on Feb 18. (AP)

6 new laws take effect in Vietnam from March: Six new laws officially took effect in Vietnam from March 1, covering legislation on artificial intelligence, investment, planning and state secrets protection, the Vietnam News

Agency reported Sunday.

The new regulations include the Law on Artificial Intelligence 2025, the Law on Oversight Activities of the National Assembly and People's Councils 2025, the Law on Rehabilitation and Bankruptcy 2025, the revised Law on Investment 2025, the Law on Planning 2025, and the Law on Protection of State Secrets 2025.

Among them, Vietnam's first Law on Artificial Intelligence (AI), adopted in December 2025, introduces a risk-based regulatory framework, requires AI-generated audio, images and videos to carry identifiable labels, and provides incentives and testing mechanisms to support the development of the country's AI industry. (Xinhua)

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Quake hits Volcano Islands, Japan region: An earthquake with a magnitude of 6.0 jolted Volcano Islands, Japan region at 0355 GMT on Monday, the German Research Centre for Geosciences said.

The epicenter, with a depth of 10.0 km, was initially determined to be at 23.12 degrees north latitude and 144.30 degrees east longitude. (Xinhua)

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Japanese rally against PM attempt to revise constitution: Large numbers of Japanese citizens gathered on Friday evening in Tokyo to protest Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's attempt to revise the country's pacifist Constitution.

Nearly 1,000 people attended the demonstration in front of the prime minister's official residence, holding placards reading "Oppose war, defend the Constitution," and "No war, no Takaichi."

Protesters chanted slogans such as "No constitutional revision" and "Protect peace," voicing strong dissatisfaction with the government's direction.

Chiharu Tomiyama, one of the demonstrators, told reporters that Takaichi had repeatedly advocated constitutional revision even before becoming prime minister, and that her renewed push must be stopped. (Xinhua)

Airstrikes on trading site kills more than two dozen

Myanmar's military govt pardons 10,000 prisoners before parliament opens

BANGKOK, March 2, (AP) — The head of Myanmar's military government granted amnesty to more than 10,000 prisoners and reduced the sentences of others to mark a holiday, state-run media reported Monday.

There was no sign former leader Aung San Suu Kyi, who was ousted in the military takeover in 2021 and has been held virtually incommunicado since then, would be freed.

The amnesty comes two weeks before parliament is set to convene for its first session in more than five years following the recent election that critics said was neither free nor fair.

State-run MRTV television reported that Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, the head of the military government, pardoned 10,162 prisoners, including 7,337 convicted under a counterterrorism law, on Peasants' Day, a national holiday honoring farmers.

A separate statement said 12,487 people who were either being prosecuted under that law or were in hiding, will receive amnesty and have their incitement cases closed.

The law carries a potential death penalty and was widely used to arrest and imprison political opponents, journalists, and others involved in dissent since the 2021 army takeover.

Ten foreigners will also be released and deported from Myanmar, it said in a separate statement.

Mass amnesties to mark holidays are not unusual in Myanmar. The prisoner releases began Monday but may take a few days. The identities of those released were not immediately available.

According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, an independent organization that keeps detailed tallies of arrests and casualties linked to the nation's political conflicts, more than 22,800 political detainees were in detention as of last Friday.

They include the 80-year-old Suu Kyi, who is serving a 27-year sentence after being convicted in what supporters have called politically tinged prosecutions.

Meanwhile, airstrikes by Myanmar



Released prisoners, in a bus, are welcomed by family members and colleagues after they left Insein Prison on March 2, in Yangon, Myanmar. (AP)

and ethnic armed groups in the country. The strikes often cause civilian casualties.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the army seized power from the elected government of Suu Kyi on Feb. 1, 2021, triggering widespread popular opposition. After peaceful demonstrations were put down with lethal force, many opponents of military rule took up arms, and large parts of the country are now embroiled in conflict.

The strikes near Pyaung village, west of Mindon township, occurred twice on Sunday morning, according to Ko Myat, the spokesperson of the Thayet District Battalion No. 4, which operates in Magway.

He said that two jet fighters bombed a trading point on a road, where locals and truck drivers load and exchange goods, and at least 25 people, including two women, were killed in the attacks. About 14 vehicles were burned or damaged by the explosions.

"We are carrying out search, rescue and cremation operations," Ko Myat said.

Myanmar's media outlets, including Mizzima, reported the death toll at between 20 and 25. They also posted photos and videos showing what they said was the aftermath of the strike, with images of bodies and damaged vehicles.

The military hasn't mentioned any attack in Mindon, about 320 kilometers (120 miles) northwest of Yangon, the country's largest city.

Arakha Times online media reported that the bombs struck the area where traders exchanged goods between Magway and neighboring Rakhine State. It said most of the victims were traders from Rakhine, where the Arakan Army is based.

The Arakan Army is the well-trained and well-armed military wing of the Rakhine ethnic minority movement, which seeks autonomy from Myanmar's central government. It began its offensive in Rakhine in November 2023 and has seized a strategically important regional army headquarters and 14 of Rakhine's 17 townships.



Supporters of former President Jair Bolsonaro take part in a protest against President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in Sao Paulo on March 1. (AP)

Supporters of Bolsonaro rally across Brazil against Lula

Thousands of supporters of Brazil's former president Jair Bolsonaro demonstrated in cities across the South American nation on Sunday, as organizers hoped to build momentum for a right-wing victory in the upcoming presidential elections.

Protesters draped in yellow and green - the colors of the national flag - took to the streets in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and the capital Brasilia to voice their opposition to current President Luiz Inacio Lula

da Silva who faces a tough reelection bid in October.

"This year will be decisive for all Brazilians," Flavio Bolsonaro, the ex-president's son who was chosen by his father to stand against Lula, said on Instagram ahead of the demonstration. "We're one step away from succeeding at rescuing our Brazil."

Flavio has sought to rally the right around his candidacy against Lula, who has said he will run for a fourth, nonconsecutive term.

Bolsonaro is in prison, where he is serving a 27-year sentence for attempting a coup despite his 2022 electoral defeat to Lula. Many of Bolsonaro's supporters believe the embattled far-right leader is the victim of political persecution.

"We believe that 2026 will be the year of the turning point. We have a project led by President Bolsonaro, which was entrusted to Flavio Bolsonaro," said Douglas Ruas dos Santos, a state lawmaker at the protest in Rio. (AP)

Argentina's Milei opens Congress praising Trump, attacking opp'n

BUENOS AIRES, March 2, (AP) — Argentina's libertarian President Javier Milei opened Congress on Sunday with a fiery speech highlighting his government's achievements, lambasting the opposition, and praising his relationship with American President Donald Trump.

His 90-minute speech, was marked by shouting at opposition lawmakers, who he described as "thieves," "murderers" and "ignorant," while highlighting what he described as his government's key achievements over the past year.

Milei delivered the speech after a series of legislative victories, including labor reform, lowering the age of criminal responsibility, the Mercosur-European Union trade agreement and initial approval of a glacier protection law.

"This has been one of the most productive extraordinary sessions in our history, fulfilling all the campaign promises made in 2025," Milei said.

Some of Milei's main points included Argentina's potential for exporting raw materials and energy, as well as its strategic location. He also emphasized the need to maintain alignment with the United States, highlighting the success of the financial aid provided by Washington last year and alluding to the "special relationship" he has with Trump, whom he defined as a "key ally."

Milei added that "we have to create the century of the Americas. Make America Great Again."

He also argued that Argentina possesses the critical minerals demanded by the West and underscored the country's strategic location, with access to



Argentina's President Javier Milei delivers the annual State of the Nation address at Congress in Buenos Aires, Argentina on March 1. (AP)

two oceans and proximity to Antarctica. "We are a natural link in the West's strategic value chain," he asserted.

However, throughout the speech, Milei repeatedly clashed with opposition lawmakers, calling them corrupt and thieves, and also took aim at former leftist President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, who is imprisoned on corruption charges.

On Friday, Milei scored a crucial victory in Congress after the approval of a labor reform bill that will radically alter the job market and which was opposed by left-wing parties and the country's main labor union.

Milei appears much stronger on the legislative front, Juan Negri, director of the Political Science program at Torcuato Di Tella University, told The Associated Press.

"We find him with significant support and, through his allies, with a parliamentary majority that seemed unprecedented in 2023," he said.

Milei assumed the presidency in 2023 with an opposition that promised to resist the liberal reforms promoted by his party La Libertad Avanza, which at the time was only the third-largest bloc in both houses of Congress. During the first months of his term, the president had strong clashes with the Legislative Branch, which he called a "rat's nest" for obstructing his initiatives.

In the 2025 legislative elections, La Libertad Avanza, in alliance with the right-wing Republican Proposal, or PRO, party, consolidated its position as the largest bloc in both chambers and secured the one-third needed to uphold presidential vetoes in Congress.

Opp'n leader Machado to return to Venezuela in coming weeks

CARACAS, Venezuela, March 2, (AP) — Venezuelan opposition leader and winner of the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize Maria Corina Machado said on Sunday that she will return to Venezuela in the coming weeks and that elections will be held in the South American country.

Machado did not set a date for her return but said that one of the objectives will be to prepare "for a new and gigantic electoral victory."

In a message shared on social media, the politician called on her supporters to "strengthen the unity of Venezuelans that began with the primaries," a reference to the 2023 process in which she won the vote aimed at establishing a single candidate to compete at the polls against former President Nicolas Maduro.

Acting President Delcy Rodriguez - in power since Maduro and his wife were captured in a U.S. military operation in January - has warned that Machado "will have to answer" if she returns to the country.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said that change in Venezuela must go through phases of stabilization, economic recovery and transition. He has not indicated that elections could be held in the short term.



Nobel Peace Prize laureate Maria Corina Machado reacts to the crowd gathered below at the Grand Hotel, in Oslo, Norway on Dec 11, 2025. (AP)

The 58-year-old politician, a key figure in the Venezuelan opposition, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize last year for her fight for democratic transition in Venezuela.

She controversially later presented her medal to US President Donald Trump after the military intervention that deposited Maduro, who now faces drug-trafficking-related charges

in U.S. courts. He has pleaded not guilty.

After Maduro was declared the victor of the July 2024 elections, protests erupted which sparked widespread repression. The opposition claimed it had credible evidence that the real winner was Edmundo González, who replaced Machado after she was barred from participating.

Gunmen kill at least 15 in northern Nigeria, says Amnesty International

ABUJA, Nigeria, March 2, (AP) — At least 15 people have been killed after gunmen attacked three communities in north-central Nigeria, Amnesty International said Sunday.

The simultaneous attacks occurred on Saturday in Tashan Maje, Saduro, and Runtuwa villages located in the Borgu area of Niger state, the rights group said in a statement posted on X.

"The gunmen invaded the villages ... on dozens of motorcycles shooting in all directions. They also ransacked shops," Amnesty said.

The "horrific attack" is yet another indication that "people are constantly living on the edge and feeling helpless," the statement said. It didn't provide further details about the attackers.

Northern Nigeria is in the grip of a complex security crisis featuring both Islamic militants operating in the northeast and armed criminal gangs kidnapping people for ransom who have wrecked havoc in the northwest and north-central regions.

Africa's most populous country has been a focus of Washington after U.S. President Donald Trump said that the country wasn't protecting Christians from an alleged genocide. The Nige-



Homes that were burned stand in ruins, days after an attack in the village of Woro, Nigeria on Feb 5. (AP)

rian government rejected the accusation, and analysts say that it simplifies a very complicated situation in which people are often targeted regardless of their faith.

In December, U.S. forces launched airstrikes on Islamic State group-affiliated militants in northwestern Nigeria.

Last month, Nigerian authorities said that the U.S. is sending troops to help train the West African nation's military in fighting extremism.

Last week, the police in Nigeria said that 38 people were killed and others were abducted in an attack in the northwestern state of Zamfara.

Business

Boursa Kuwait resumes trading

General index falls 1.9% to 8,408 points

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: Boursa Kuwait announced the resumption of trading sessions starting Monday, March 2, 2026, following the issuance of the relevant decision by the Capital Markets Authority and after confirming full operational readiness and stability to ensure the orderly functioning of the market in accordance with the approved regulatory frameworks.



Bader AlKharafi

"Resuming trading sessions from tomorrow, Monday, March 2, 2026, follows the full verification of stability and the fulfillment of all technical and regulatory requirements, ensuring a fair and transparent trading environment that safeguards orderly market operations and equal opportunities for all participants," said Boursa Kuwait Chairman Mr. Bader Nasser AlKharafi.

"The recent period has demonstrated the strength and efficiency of Boursa Kuwait's technical and operational infrastructure as its business continuity and crisis management plans were activated in line with best practices, ensuring the protection of investors and their financial positions, and reaffirming the exchange's institutional readiness to address exceptional circumstances with professionalism and a high sense of responsibility," he added.

"We reaffirm our full operational readiness to welcome market participants and resume activity in accordance with the approved regulatory frameworks. We also value the continuous coordination with the Capital Markets Authority and the relevant authorities, which played a vital role in managing this phase efficiently and with a strong sense of national responsibility," he emphasized.

"We pray that the State of Kuwait continues to enjoy security and stability under its wise leadership, and that we are all guided toward what serves the best interests of our nation and the sustainable prosperity of its economy," he concluded.

Boursa Kuwait confirmed that all technical systems and trading platforms are operating efficiently and that business continuity and crisis management plans were implemented in accordance with international best practices, reflecting the



Boursa Kuwait

institutional maturity of the market and its ability to respond effectively to developments.

The bourse also reiterated its continued commitment to transparency and disclosure, urging all market participants to follow announcements through its official website and approved channels for accurate and up-to-date information.

Boursa Kuwait concluded its statement by reaffirming its confidence in the strength of the national economy and the resilience of its institutions, as well as its ongoing role as a key driver of growth and in enhancing the market's attractiveness to local and international investors.

Meanwhile, Boursa Kuwait closed Monday's trading session on a negative note, with the general index dropping 164.02 points, or 1.91 percent, to settle at 8,408.29 points. Total trading volume reached 280.2 million shares exchanged through 29,319 cash transactions, amounting to KD 111.2 million (approximately USD 339.16 million).

The main market index fell 155.11 points, or 1.96 percent, to 7,764.39 points. It recorded 66.11 million shares traded across 6,493 transactions valued at KD 7.8 million (around USD 23.7 million).

The premier market index also declined, losing 174.41 points, or 1.90 percent, to close at 8,981.36 points. Trading activity included 214.11 million shares across 22,826 transactions worth KD 103.4 million (approximately USD 315.3 million).

The Main 50 Index recorded the steepest drop, falling 364.90 points, or 4.37 percent, to end the day at 7,986.02 points. Total trading for the index reached 61.5 million shares through 5,608 cash transactions valued at KD 6.7 million (about USD 20.4 million).

Residential sector leads

Kuwait's real estate market rises 69.6% in value in Feb

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

KUWAIT CITY, March 2: The local real estate market witnessed remarkable quantitative and qualitative growth in February, with 20.4 percent increase in the number of deals, equivalent to 98 transactions, and 69.64 percent increase in value, amounting to KD252.82 million year-on-year compared to February 2025.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the monthly report from the Real Estate Registration and Documentation Departments at the Ministry of Justice, revealing the registration of 577 real estate transactions worth KD615.83 million in February this year, compared to 479 transactions worth KD363.01 million within the same period last year.

This growth is attributed to the increased transactions in the commercial, investment, residential and nursery sectors, while transactions in the crafts and retail sectors declined.

The residential sector ranked first in terms of the number of transactions, accounting for 61.8 percent of total monthly trading with 357 deals valued at KD169.32 million, compared to 334 deals valued at KD138.04 million within the same period last year. This is 6.9 percent increase in volume (23 additional deals) and 22.6 percent increase in value (KD31.28 million), reflecting the growing value of private transactions year-on-year amidst regulatory developments in the sector.

The investment sector also recorded significant annual growth, with 158 transactions valued at KD164.31

million. This is 27.4 percent increase in the number of transactions (34 additional deals) and 12.8 percent increase in value (KD18.76 million), compared to 124 transactions valued at KD145.55 million in February last year, indicating the sector's continuous attractiveness to investors.

The commercial sector achieved outstanding annual performance, registering 255 percent quantitative growth (23 additional transactions) and 224 percent qualitative increase (KD127.25 million).

The total number of commercial transactions reached 32, valued at KD183.94 million, compared to nine transactions worth KD56.7 million in February 2025. This shows the rising demand for commercial real estate since the beginning of the year.

On the other hand, the industrial real estate sector experienced a remarkable decline, with 77.7 percent decrease in the number of transactions (seven fewer transactions) and 92.4 percent decrease in value (KD19.85 million). Only two transactions were recorded, valued at KD1.63 million, compared to nine transactions worth KD21.48 million in February last year.

The retail sector witnessed a decline of 66.6 percent and a qualitative decline of 20.9 percent, recording only one transaction worth KD1.5 million, compared to three transactions worth KD1.24 million during the same period last year.

The nurseries sector recorded 21 transactions worth KD79.28 million, and the warehouses sector recorded six transactions worth KD 15.85 million, compared to no transactions recorded in both sectors in February last year.

GCC markets miss EM rally due to geopolitical issues

By KAMCO Invest

Global equity markets witnessed broad gains during February-2026 despite the Al-scare trade affecting US stocks. The rest of the major global indices witnessed healthy gains during the month with emerging markets leading the gains backed by gain in tech stocks in Korea and Taiwan resulting in monthly gains of 19.5% and 10.5% in these markets, respectively. The broader European benchmark also witnessed a gain of almost 4% while the S&P 500 dropped by 0.9%. The net impact was a gain of 1.2% in the MSCI World Index.

On the other hand, GCC equity markets failed to see gains and dropped by 2.5% led by fall in Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The rest of the markets saw minimal gains barring Oman that was up by 16.8%, one of the biggest gains during the month globally. The 5.9% decline in Saudi Arabia came after healthy gains during the previous month and was mainly led by escalating geopolitical issues in the region. The markets started sliding after the US and Iran tensions escalated with the US increasing its military presence in the region while Iran ramped up naval drills by temporary closing the Strait of Hormuz and issuing a NOTEM. In terms of YTD-2026 performance, Oman topped with a gain of 26% as the country geared-up reforms aimed at inclusion in the MSCI Emerging Market index. UAE markets were next with Dubai and Abu Dhabi benchmarks up by 7.5% and 4.6%, respectively. On the other hand, Kuwait and Bahrain lagged with YTD-2026 declines of 3.8% and 0.3%, respectively. In terms of sector performance, almost all the sectoral indices declined during the month barring the Real Estate index that was up by 3.6%. The Healthcare index witnessed the steepest monthly fall of 10.1% followed by Food & Beverage and Consumer Durable & Apparels with monthly declines of 8.4% and 7.0%, respectively. Large-cap sectors like Banks and Energy witnessed relatively smaller declines of 1.6% and 2.5%, respectively.

Boursa Kuwait

The Boursa Kuwait All Share Index closed February-2026 with a marginal monthly gain of 0.1%, closing at 8,572.3 points, mainly led by a marginal gain of 0.3% for the Premier Market Index. Conversely, the Main 50 Index and the Main Market Index posted monthly declines of 2.0% and 1.3%, respectively. During the month, several companies were upgraded from the Main Market to the Premier Market following Boursa Kuwait's annual review, expanding the list of Premier Market stocks to 38 companies. In terms of YTD-2026 performance, all market segments remained in the red mainly led by the steep fall registered during the previous month.

The sector performance chart for the month showed mixed performance. The gainer's side was topped by the Consumer Staples index with a double-digit gain of 11.6% followed by Consumer Discretionary and Energy with gains of 6.4% and 3.7%, respectively. On the other hand, the Basic Materials index registered the biggest fall of 10.0%, followed by the Healthcare and Technology indices with declines of 5.7% and 3.6%, respectively. In the Banking sector, shares of four out of nine constituents declined during the month, with CBK and Gulf Bank falling by 2.2% and 1.7%, respectively. In the telecom sector, two out of four constituents declined during the month, with Ooredoo and STC leading the declines, recording losses of 2.4% and 0.6%, respectively. Separately, Digitus Group

In terms of monthly stock performance, Jazeera Airways topped the month-

GCC Equity Markets	Index Closing	MTD Chg%	YTD Chg%	M-Cap (USD Bn)	Val Traded - (USD Bn)	P/E (x) TTM	P/B (x) TTM	Div. Yield
Kuwait - Premier Market Index	9,155.8	0.3%	(3.6%)	168.2	3.6	13.5	1.2	2.4%
Kuwait - Main 50 Index	8,350.9	(2.0%)	(3.9%)					
Kuwait - Main Market Index	7,919.5	(1.3%)	(4.6%)					
Kuwait - All Share Index	8,572.3	0.1%	(3.8%)					
Saudi Arabia	10,709.0	(5.9%)	2.1%	2,437.3	23.2	18.1	2.2	3.6%
Abu Dhabi	10,453.9	1.7%	4.6%	849.4	7.9	18.5	2.6	2.2%
Dubai	6,503.5	1.1%	7.5%	284.0	5.3	10.7	1.9	4.4%
Qatar	11,055.2	(2.3%)	2.7%	180.8	2.2	12.4	1.4	4.4%
Bahrain	2,060.7	0.8%	(0.3%)	71.8	0.05	15.7	1.2	3.7%
Oman	7,393.4	16.8%	26.0%	51.3	3.3	14.1	1.1	4.2%
Total GCC				4,042.8	45.7	16.8	2.1	3.4%



Source: GCC Stock Exchanges, Kamco Invest Research

ly chart with a gain of 23.1% followed by ACICO Industries and Digitus Group with gains of 17.8% and 16.6%, respectively. Jazeera Airways posted its strongest-ever net profit in FY-2025 that reached KWD 21.8 million registering an increase of 113.7%. Operating revenues rose 4.6% to KWD 218.1 million, and passenger traffic exceeded 5 million, up 2.2%. On the decliner's side, Al Kout for Industrial Projects Co. topped with a decline of 34.5% followed by Equipment Holding Co. and Metal & Recycling Co. with declines of 21.6% and 17.3%, respectively. Trading activity declined during the month mainly due to the month of Ramadan. Total volume of shares traded during February-2026 fell 28.6% to 3.6 Bn shares while value traded declined by 24.5% to reach KWD 1.1 Bn vs. KWD 1.5 Bn during the previous month. First Investment Co. topped the monthly volume chart with 283.4 Mn shares followed by KIB and GFH Financial with 194.3 Mn shares and 174.1 Mn shares traded, respectively. On the monthly value traded chart also, KFH topped with KWD 126.4 Mn worth of shares traded followed by NBK and KIB at KWD 106.6 Mn and KWD 54.4 Mn, respectively.

Saudi Arabia (Tadawul)

Shares listed on the Saudi Exchange declined during February-2026 reflecting recent earnings announcements, a decline in crude oil prices amid steep volatility as well as due to looming geopolitical instability in the region. The benchmark peaked at a closing high of 11,341.3 points at the beginning of the month but mostly trended downwards during the rest of the month to close with a decline of 5.9% to 10,709.0 points. However, despite the decline, the index remained in the green in terms of YTD-2026 performance at 2.1%.

The sector performance chart also highlighted the broad-based decline in the market during the month. The Media index witnessed the steepest decline of

25.2% after all the constituents of the index reported declines. The Software & Services sector and Health Care Equipment & Svc indices were next with declines of 16.7% and 11.6%, respectively. In the Energy sector, shares of Aramco declined by 3.3% during the month. Large-cap sectors like Banks declined by 4.6%. In the Banking sector, most of the listed banks reported declines during the month. Large-cap banks like Al Rajhi Bank declined by 5.8%, while shares of Saudi National Bank and Riyadh Bank dropped by 7.1% and 1.1%, respectively. The Telecom Sector was dragged down by losses in most of the constituent stocks including Etihad Etisalat Co. (-8.6%), Saudi Telecom Co. (-5.8%) and Etihad Atheeb Telecommunication Co. (-7.3%). In the Utilities sector, all the constituent stocks declined with shares of Miahona Co. and National Gas and Industrialization Co. leading with declines of 14.1% and 11.6%, respectively, during February-2026.

The monthly gainer's chart was topped by Americana Restaurants International PLC with a gain of 24.2% followed by Banque Saudi Fransi and The Mediterranean and Gulf Insurance and Reinsurance Co. with gains of 10.1% and 9.5%, respectively. On the decliner's side, Saudi Research and Marketing Group topped with a decline of 31.7% followed by Chubb Arabia Cooperative Insurance and United Cooperative Assurance Co. with declines of 24.7% and 24.1%, respectively. Trading activity on the exchange declined during February-2026. Monthly volume of shares traded declined by 8.5% to reach 4.5 Bn shares compared to 4.9 Bn in January-2026. Monthly value of shares traded also declined by 12.8% to reach SAR 87.1 Bn compared to 99.9 Bn in the previous month.

For the Banking sector, FY-2025 profits for the ten banks reached SAR 92.5 Bn as compared to SAR 79.6 Bn in FY-2024, up by 16.2%. In terms of Q4-2025 earnings performance, net profits increased by 13.0% to reach SAR 23.7 Bn as compared to SAR 20.9 Bn during Q4-2024. However, in terms of q-o-q performance, net profits declined marginally due to higher provisions during the quarter. Nevertheless, the sector continued to witness growth in lending with q-o-q growth of 0.8% in gross loans while y-o-y growth stood over 10%. In economic news, Saudi Arabia's fiscal deficit hit a five-year high in Q4-2025 due to falling oil revenues, reaching SAR 94.9 Bn (USD 25.3 Bn) and pushing the annual shortfall to SAR 276.6 Bn up from SAR 115.6 Bn, or 5.5% of GDP. Non-oil revenue rose to SAR 122.6 Bn, but oil revenue fell to SAR 154.2 Bn.

Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange

The FTSE ADX Index was up for the third consecutive month during February-2026 with a gain of 1.7%. Due to this moderate uptick, the index increased its positive year-to-date performance, reaching 4.6%. Sectoral performance during February-2026 was moderately positive, with six out of the ten sector indices on the exchange recording gains, while the remaining four posted declines. The Consumer Discretionary Index experienced the largest gain, increasing by 13.0% to close the month at 4,655.8 points. This increase was driven by share price gains in seven out of the nine constituent companies within the sector, with Abu Dhabi National Hotels Co. leading the upturn at 19.0%. Similarly, the Real Estate Index recorded the second-largest monthly gain, jumping by 12.2% to close at 15,708.7 points. All five constituent companies in the Real Estate sector saw share price increases, with Aram Group witnessing the most significant increase at 17.0%. In contrast, the Healthcare Index recorded the largest drop among all other sectors, posting a 4.1% decline during February-2026.

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BUSINESS

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In terms of individual stock performance, Insurance House topped the monthly gainers chart, with its share price more than tripling. It was followed by Sharjah Cement & Industrial Development Co. and Orascom Construction PLC, which recorded gains of 30.0% and 22.8%, respectively. The sharp rise in Insurance House's share price followed its preliminary results disclosure, which showed a rebound from a net loss of AED 19.7 Bn in 2024 to a net profit of AED 4.8 Bn in 2025. On the decliner's side, Al Buhaira National Insurance Co. registered the largest drop, with its share price falling by 18.4%. It was followed by Umm Al Qaiwain General Investments Co. and Two Point Zero Group, which posted declines of 12.7% and 11.9%, respectively.

Trading activity on the exchange increased during February-2026, rebounding from a decline in the previous month. The total volume of shares traded rose by 16.6% to 6.4 Bn shares, compared to 5.5 Bn shares in January-2026. Similarly, the total value of shares traded increased by 14.3% to AED 29.1 Bn, up from AED 25.5 Bn in the prior month. ADNOC Gas was the most active stock by volume, with 0.82 Bn shares traded, followed by Two Point Zero Group and Americana Restaurants International PLC, which recorded 789.1 Bn and 528.2 Bn shares, respectively. In terms of value traded, Al Dar Properties Co. led the market with AED 3.0 Bn worth of shares exchanged during the month, followed closely by ADNOC Gas PJSC with AED 2.96 Bn.

On the economic front, the UAE economy is projected to grow by approximately 5% in 2026, according to national authorities, driven by sustained strong and accelerated growth. The non-oil sector is expected to expand by more than 5.5%, accounting for an estimated 78% of GDP. This positive outlook is supported by the resilience and diversification of the national economy, as well as the variety of its growth drivers. Key indicators highlighted by UAE economic authorities include the enactment of over 40 updated laws and regulations aimed at enhancing the business ecosystem, improving competitiveness, and facilitating ease of doing business. Additionally, the number of companies registered in the national economic register has risen to over 1.45 Bn, compared to approximately 650,000 five years ago, reflecting the country's continued economic advancement.

Dubai Financial Market

The DFM General Index posted a 1.1% gain in February-2026, registering its third consecutive monthly gain and closing the month at 6,503.50 points. Sectoral performance was slightly skewed toward the decliners, with three out of eight sector indices recording gains, while the remaining five experienced declines. The overall gains were driven by strong performances in Real Estate (+8.3%) and Communication (+6.3%), two of the largest weighted sectors on the exchange. Within the Real Estate Sector, five out of eight companies saw share price increases, led by shares of Al Mazaya Development Holding and Emaar Development, which surged by 15.4% and 12.5%, respectively. On the other hand, the Financial Sector witnessed a 2.2% decline during February-2026, closing the month at 4,507.19 points, weighing on the DFM General Index's possible overall gain that was otherwise supported by the strong performance of the Real Estate Sector. The decline of prominent and heavily weighted companies or banks within the Financial Index, such as the 14.1% share price drop of Dubai Islamic Bank, contributed to the overall moderate uptick of the DFM General Index during the month.

In line with monthly stock performance data from Bloomberg, Oman Insurance topped the gainers' table in February-2026, with its share price rising by 22.0%. It was followed by Dubai Insurance and Al Mazaya Holding, which recorded gains of 18.5% and 15.4%, respectively. Dubai Insurance reported a 44.1% year-on-year increase in net profit for FY-2025, reaching AED 190.7 Mn. On the decliner's side, Talabat Holding led with a share price decline of 25.6%, followed by Islamic Arab Insurance and Dubai Islamic Bank, which posted decreases of 18.5% and 14.1%, respectively, during February-2026.

Trading activity on the exchange rose significantly during February-2026. Total volume traded increased by 16.4% to 5.2 Bn shares, compared to 4.5 Bn shares in January-2026. Similarly, the total value of shares traded rose at a relatively higher pace of 35%, reaching AED 19.6 Bn in February-2026. Talabat topped the monthly volume chart with 1.1 Bn shares traded, followed by Drake & Scull International and Emaar Properties, which recorded 657.1 Bn and 416.2 Bn shares changing hands, respectively. In terms of value traded, Emaar Properties led the market with AED 6.8 Bn worth of shares exchanged during the month, followed by Emirates NBD and Air Arabia PJSC, with AED 2.4 Bn and AED 1.8 Bn, respectively.

In economic developments, Dubai reinforced its position as a leading global travel destination in 2025, welcoming a record 19.6 Bn international overnight visitors. This represents a 5% increase compared to the 18.7 Bn arrivals recorded in 2024, according to data released by the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (DET). This marks the third consecutive year of record-breaking tourism figures for the emirate. Dubai's government attributed these achievements to initiatives under the D33 Economic Agenda, which aims to double the emirate's economy by 2033. During the first half of 2025, the hotel and tourism sector was among the top recipients of foreign direct investment (FDI).

Qatar Exchange

After witnessing gains in January-2026, the Qatar Stock Exchange reported declines during February-2026. The headline DSM index rose early in the month to 11,515.81 points on 12-Feb-2026 driven by foreign institutional buying but declined during the remainder of the month to close at 11,055.18 points, registering a monthly decline of 2.3%. The Qatar All Share Index also reported a monthly decline of 1.1% and closed at 4,213.72 points. The decline in February-2026 lowered the QE 20 Index's YTD-2026 gain to 2.7%, while the Qatar All Share Index posted a gain

Monthly Indicators	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26
Premier Market Index	8,674.7	8,553.5	8,799.1	9,187.5	9,294.2	9,087.7	9,371.9	9,565.9	9,428.2	9,498.3	9,123.9	9,155.8
Monthly % Change	(0.2%)	(1.4%)	2.9%	4.4%	1.2%	(2.2%)	3.1%	2.1%	(1.4%)	0.7%	(3.9%)	0.3%
Main 50 Index	7,078.9	7,093.5	7,207.3	7,221.2	7,604.7	7,973.9	8,507.1	8,853.6	8,440.6	8,688.8	8,523.3	8,360.9
Monthly % Change	(4.2%)	0.2%	1.6%	0.2%	5.3%	4.9%	6.7%	4.1%	(4.7%)	2.9%	(1.9%)	(2.0%)
Main Market Index	7,267.6	7,155.0	6,967.0	7,194.6	7,613.7	7,823.5	8,228.1	8,680.1	8,316.9	8,302.4	8,023.1	7,919.5
Monthly % Change	(0.9%)	(1.5%)	(2.6%)	3.3%	5.8%	2.8%	5.2%	5.5%	(4.2%)	(0.2%)	(3.4%)	(1.3%)
All Share Market Index	8,074.0	7,959.5	8,112.5	8,455.2	8,617.8	8,499.2	8,795.7	9,031.9	8,856.3	8,907.6	8,565.6	8,572.3
Monthly % Change	(0.3%)	(1.4%)	1.9%	4.2%	1.9%	(1.4%)	3.5%	2.7%	(1.9%)	0.6%	(3.8%)	0.1%

Source: Boursa Kuwait, Kamco Invest Research

Boursa Kuwait Monthly Sector Performance



Source: Kuwait Stock Exchange, Kamco Invest Research

Monthly Value Traded (KWD Mn)



Monthly Indicators	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26
Tadawul All Share Index	12,025.1	11,671.6	10,990.4	11,163.96	10,920.27	10,696.9	11,503.0	11,655.9	10,590.9	10,490.7	11,382.1	10,709.0
Monthly % Change	(0.7%)	(2.9%)	(5.8%)	1.6%	(2.2%)	(2.0%)	7.5%	1.3%	(9.1%)	(0.9%)	8.5%	(5.9%)

Market Cap (SAR Bn)	9,908.5	9,503.5	9,196.5	9,118.5	9,035.8	8,866.5	9,314.6	9,671.8	9,001.7	8,820.5	9,566.8	9,140.4
P/E (X) - TTM	18.47	18.17	16.91	17.12	16.67	16.36	19.80	20.03	17.99	17.56	19.25	18.11
P/BV (X) - TTM	2.31	2.23	2.04	2.07	2.01	1.95	2.36	2.39	2.15	2.10	2.30	2.16
Dividend Yield (%)	3.67%	3.86%	4.25%	4.20%	4.29%	4.34%	3.50%	3.45%	3.68%	3.70%	3.37%	3.62%
Volume (Mn Shares)	4,815.4	6,713.3	5,313.9	4,426.0	8,609.4	5,785.1	5,833.8	6,138.3	4,137.6	3,450.1	4,945.0	4,528.8
Value (SAR Mn)	105,675	124,205	119,778	89,732	107,504	90,485	125,665	121,940	86,372	73,380	99,931	87,100
Trades ('000)	9,353	11,907	10,275	8,857	10,881	9,798	11,177	10,337	8,588	7,784	9,160	7,774

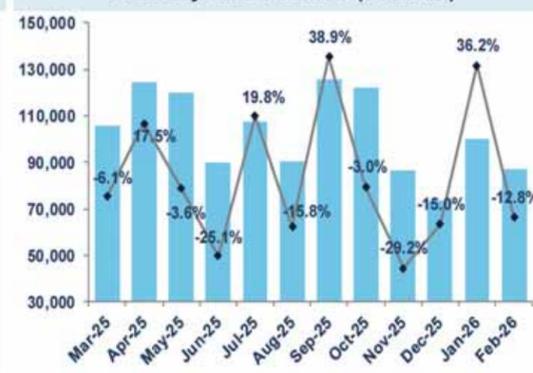
Source: Tadawul, Kamco Invest Research. Note: Trading data includes stocks in the Main Market.

Tadawul Monthly Sector Performance



Source: Tadawul, Kamco Invest Research

Monthly Value Traded (SAR Mn)



Monthly Indicators	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26
ADX General Index	9,368.81	9,534.33	9,685.10	9,957.52	10,370.66	10,094.67	10,014.60	10,099.90	9,747.17	9,992.72	10,281.76	10,453.88
Monthly % Change	(2.0%)	1.8%	1.6%	2.8%	4.1%	(2.7%)	(0.8%)	0.9%	(3.5%)	2.5%	2.9%	1.7%

Market Cap (AED Bn)	2,870.1	2,867.3	2,928.2	3,016.3	3,014.3	3,032.8	3,038.0	3,039.9	2,945.1	3,054.8	3,078.6	3,120.0
P/E (X) - TTM	20.82	20.99	18.32	20.14	20.91	21.10	20.75	20.97	20.20	19.55	20.22	18.49
P/BV (X) - TTM	2.47	2.49	2.54	2.61	2.71	2.62	2.60	2.63	2.53	2.49	2.57	2.62
Dividend Yield (%)	2.34%	2.38%	2.37%	2.28%	2.18%	2.31%	2.33%	2.33%	2.42%	2.36%	2.27%	2.20%
Volume (Mn Shares)	5,668.9	7,558.9	6,945.7	6,642.9	8,678.0	5,161.0	5,085.1	6,249.3	6,387.4	6,836.2	5,468.0	6,376.1
Value (AED Mn)	21,309.7	25,884.8	30,608.0	26,334.3	28,196.6	20,971.1	23,967.2	26,517.2	25,917.5	32,868.1	25,480.0	29,124.5
Trades	355,453	424,117	424,946	407,640	525,659	362,574	381,671	416,539	368,061	308,523	394,232	430,045

Source: Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange, Kamco Invest Research

of 3.8%.

The sector's performance chart also highlighted the broad-based decline in the market during the month with merely two sectors witnessing gains. The Industrials sector posted the biggest decline among the sectors at 4.2% to close the month at 4,184.58. The Real Estate and Telecoms indices were next with declines of 4.6% and 2.7%, respectively. Among the gainers, Insurance and Transportation indices topped the table in February-2026, posting notable gains of 8.6% and 3.5%, respectively. Gains for the Insurance index was mainly led by shares of Qatar Insurance Co. that gained 14.2% during the month, while shares of QLM Life & Medical Insurance Co. declined by 1.5%. In the Transport sector, Qatar Gas Transport Co Ltd gained 2.7%, while Gulf Warehousing Co. declined 8.3%.

In the Qatari Banking sector, shares of most of the banks reported gains during the month. Prominent gainers included Doha Bank with a 6.9% rise, followed by marginal gains in Commercial Bank of Qatar (0.3%) and Dukhan Bank (0.7%). The Telecom sector's decline was driven by a 4.6% drop in the shares of Ooredoo, while the shares Vodafone Qatar shares witnessed a gain of 4.7%. Most of the constituents of the Industrials sector declined during the month with Qatar Aluminium Manufacturing Co. and Gulf International Services leading the declines with 7.5% and 6.6%, respectively. The decline in the Real Estate Sector was led by the fall of Ezzan Holding Group QSC by (-10.9%), followed by Barwa Real Estate Co. (-6.5), whereas Mazaya Real Estate Development posted a gain of 1.9%.

The monthly gainer's chart was topped by Qatar Cinema & Film Distribution with a gain of 15.6% followed by Widam Food Co. and Qatar Insurance Co. with gains of 14.9% and 14.2%, respectively. In terms of decliners, Medicare Group led with a monthly stock price decline by 17.5% followed by Qatar Oman Investment Co. and Ezzan Holding Group QSC with declines of 15.9% and 10.9%, respectively.

Trading activity on the exchange declined marginally during the month. Total volume of shares traded during the month declined by 0.8% to 2.6 Bn shares compared to 2.7 Bn in January-2026. Value traded also decreased by 4.0% to reach QAR 8.0 Bn during February-2026 compared to QAR 8.3 Bn. Baladna topped the monthly volume traded chart with 293.5 Mn traded shares followed by Barwa Real Estate Co. and Qatar Aluminium Manufacturing Co. at 279.8 Mn shares and 205.3 Mn shares, respectively. On the value traded chart, Qatar National Bank topped with QAR 1.1 Bn worth of trades during the month followed by Barwa Real Estate Co. and Ooredoo QPSC at QAR 732.1 Mn and QAR 622.2 Mn, respectively.

Bahrain Bourse

The Bahrain Bourse All Share Index recorded a marginal gain of 0.8% during February-2026 to close the month at 2060.72 points. In terms of sectoral performance during the month, the market trend was predominantly positive, as five out of the seven sectors recorded gains during February-2026, while the remaining two sectors registered declines. The Consumer Staples Sector recorded the largest gain among the sectors during the month at +3.5%, closing at 2534.5 points, followed by the Real

Estate Sector (+2.2%). On the other hand, the Communication Services Sector (-1.2%) registered the steepest loss during the same period. During February-2026, Silah Gulf, a local portfolio company of Bahrain Mumtalakat Holding Company, was listed on the Bahrain Bourse. Approximately 16.3 Bn shares were offered in the Silah IPO at a price of BHD 0.176 per share, representing 30% of the company's total issued post-IPO share capital, with a total value of BHD 2.9 Mn. The IPO was met with strong retail and professional demand, resulting in a total subscription of 4.0 times, representing 64.9 Bn shares, with total demand exceeding BHD 11.4 Mn.

In terms of share price performance, according to Bloomberg data, Arab Insurance Group topped the gainers' list with a 5.6% increase during the month, followed by BMMI and Bahrain Cinema Co., which recorded gains of 5.4% and 4.4%, respectively. Shares of BMMI Group benefited from an increase in FY-2025 profits that reached BHD 7.5 Mn in 2025, compared to BHD 6.5 Mn in 2024. On the decliner's side, Bahrain National Holding led the list with a 4.8% share price decline during the month, followed by Bahrain Islamic Bank BSC and Bahrain Telecommunications Co., which posted decreases of 2.4% and 1.4%, respectively.

Trading activity on the exchange was mixed during February-2026. Total volume traded during the month improved by 4.3% to 57 Bn shares, compared to 55 Bn shares in January-2026. In contrast, total value traded on the exchange witnessed a substantial decline, reaching BHD 18.5 Bn in February-2026, down from BHD 24.1 Bn during the previous month. Bahrain Islamic Bank BSC topped the monthly volumes chart with 19.2 Bn shares traded, followed by Al Salam Bank-Bahrain BSC and Aluminium Bahrain B.S.C., with 12.2 Bn and 6.4 Bn shares, respectively. On the monthly value traded chart, Aluminium Bahrain led with BHD 7.1 Bn worth of shares exchanged, followed by Al Salam Bank-Bahrain BSC and BBK BSC, which recorded BHD 2.9 Bn and BHD 1.7 Bn in value traded, respectively.

In economic news, ratings agency Fitch downgraded Bahrain's long-term foreign-currency issuer default rating to "B" from "B+" on Monday, citing high public debt, large fiscal deficits, and low foreign exchange reserves. The Kingdom's fiscal debt was elevated by its heavy reliance on energy income, as well as lower oil revenue, increased interest expenditure, and substantial growth in public sector wages. The ratings agency stated that the downgrade reflects Fitch's expectation of continued growth in the elevated debt-to-GDP ratio. In context, Bahrain undertook initiatives to bolster its public finances in 2025, introducing fiscal reforms that included higher fuel prices and increased tariffs on electricity and water.

Muscat Stock Exchange

The MSX 30 Index recorded the largest gain among GCC indices at 16.8% during February-2026, closing the month at 7,393.4 points. The MSX 30 Index maintained its upward trajectory in 2026, recording its eighth consecutive monthly gain. Sectoral performance was entirely positive, with all three sector indices on the exchange recording gains, including two indices with double-digit growth during the month. The Financial Index jumped by 13.6%, closing the month at 12,404.9 points. This gain was largely driven by share price increases in major companies within the sector, including Sohar Bank (+36.6%) and Bank Muscat (+18.0%). The Services Index also rose sharply during the month by 13.8%, closing at 2,882.6 points. In contrast, the Industrial Index posted a single-digit monthly gain of 7.1%, closing February-2026 at 9,645.6 points.

In terms of company performance, National Aluminium Products Co. topped the gainers list with a share price gain of 123%, followed by Ray-sut Cement Co. and Sohar Bank, which recorded monthly share gains of 65.9% and 36.6%, respectively. On the decliner's side, Al Batina Development & Investment Holding Co. led the chart with a 15.6% share price decline, followed by Al Madina Investment Holding Co. and Takaful Oman Insurance, which witnessed share price drops of 11.1% and 7.4%, respectively.

Trading activity on the exchange recorded strong gains during February-2026. The total volume of shares traded increased by 38.6% to 4.7 Bn shares in February-2026, compared to 3.4 Bn shares in January-2026. Similarly, the total value traded on the exchange rose by 58.4% to OMR 1.3 Bn, up from OMR 814.2 Bn in the previous month. Sohar Bank topped the monthly value traded chart with transactions totaling OMR 1.2 Bn, followed by OQ Base Industries (SFZ) and Bank Muscat, with total values traded of OMR 887.9 Bn and OMR 463.5 Bn, respectively. In terms of monthly volume traded, Sohar Bank again led the list with 241.2 Bn shares, followed by OQ Exploration & Production SA and OQ Base Industries (SFZ), with volumes of 191.0 Bn shares and 187.4 Bn shares, respectively.

In its latest economic assessment, Fitch Ratings projects that Oman's current account deficit will widen to 3.3% of GDP in 2026, up from an estimated 2.6% in 2025. According to the agency, this deterioration will be driven by a narrowing surplus in goods trade and a widening deficit in the services sector. Fitch notes that lower energy prices will limit the growth of export receipts, even as accelerated expansion in the non-hydrocarbon economy fuels higher imports of both goods and services.

The report indicates that Omani authorities are expected to finance the deficit through debt issuance, while foreign exchange reserves are forecast to remain significantly above their pre-pandemic lows. Moreover, the IMF has also recently indicated that the Sultanate's finances still remain vulnerable to oil price volatility, despite Oman planning to use higher tax revenues to fund infrastructure projects.

In its latest assessment, the IMF suggested that it is a sound policy for Oman to push further on export-oriented industries, urging the Sultanate to diversify its economy away from oil. The Omani government collected nearly OMR 1.4 Bn (USD 3.6 Bn) in taxes last year, including VAT, excise duties, and corporate tax, as reported by Oman Television.

'Unified effort essential for energy stability'

Kuwait PM inspects Mina Al-Ahmadi Refinery operations



HH the PM inspects KNPC operations, praises oil workers.



PM Diwan photos

KUWAIT CITY, March 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, visited on Monday the Mina Al-Ahmadi Refinery, affiliated with the Kuwait National Petroleum Company.

His Highness was received by Chief Executive Officer of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation Sheikh Nawaf Saud Al-Sabah, Chief Executive Officer of Kuwait National Petroleum Company Wadha Ahmad Al-Khateeb, along with several executive leaders and officials.

During the tour, His Highness was briefed on the workflow and the

regularity of operational and production processes at the refinery.

He underscored the importance of maintaining the highest levels of operational efficiency and ensuring business continuity, particularly under the current circumstances that require maximum readiness and the reinforcement of security and safety systems.

His Highness also listened to a detailed explanation on emergency plans, approved preventive measures and mechanisms for handling exceptional situations. He expressed satisfaction with the swift response and preparedness of technical teams, as well as the measures implemented to

ensure the safety of personnel and the protection of facilities.

For their part, company officials affirmed that operations at the company's refineries are proceeding at normal rates, with full adherence to the highest standards of industrial safety and security.

His Highness the Prime Minister commended the efforts of workers in the oil sector, praising their sense of responsibility, discipline and high readiness. He emphasized the importance of continuing to work in a unified team spirit to safeguard vital facilities and support the stability of Kuwait's energy system.

Oil prices soar and stock prices fall as US-Israel war with Iran rattles markets

Gold jumps 3.4% to \$5,426

BANGKOK, March 3, (AP): The U.S. and Israeli attacks on Iran rattled world markets on Monday, with U.S. futures falling more than 1% and oil prices soaring, though gains for defense contractors and oil companies helped limit losses in Asian trading.

The futures for the S&P 500 and Dow Jones Industrial Average sank 1.7%.

The price of a barrel of U.S. benchmark jumped 9% to \$73 per barrel. Brent crude jumped nearly 10% to nearly \$80 per barrel.

European markets opened sharply lower. Germany's DAX dropped 2.2% to 24,737.47, while in Paris the CAC 40 lost 1.9% to 8,413.91. Britain's FTSE 100 slipped 1% to 10,800.63.

Shares fell in most Asian markets but they rose in Shanghai, where higher oil prices lifted some oil company stocks such as CNOOC, China Petroleum & Chemical and PetroChina to the 10% limit.

The Shanghai Composite index climbed 0.5% to 4,182.59, while in Hong Kong, the Hang Seng lost 2.1% to 26,059.85.

Japan's Nikkei 225 index initially fell more than 2%. It closed 1.4% lower at 58,057.24. Offsetting other losses, shares in defense-related stocks including Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and IHI Corp. advanced.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 ended flat, at 9,200.90.

In India, which could face disruptions to its access to oil due to the hostilities, the Sensex fell 2.1%.

Taiwan's benchmark lost 0.9% and Singapore's dropped 2.3%. In Bangkok, a major tourism destination for the Middle East, the SET fell 3.1%.

Markets were closed in South Korea for a holiday. The price of gold, which usually is viewed as a safe haven for investment in times of uncertainty, rose 3.4% to about \$5,426 per ounce.

The U.S. dollar also gained, rising to 157.20 Japanese yen from 156.27 yen late Friday. The euro slipped to \$1.1708 from \$1.1762.

Traders are betting the war will disrupt oil supplies from Iran and elsewhere in the Middle East. Attacks throughout the region, including on two vessels traveling through the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf, have constrained oil exports to the rest of the world.

"Roughly one-fifth of global oil and LNG (liquefied natural gas) flows squeeze through the Strait of Hormuz. This is not an obscure canal. It is the aorta



People walk in front of an electronic stock board showing Japan's Nikkei index at a securities firm Monday, March 1, 2026, in Tokyo. (AP)

of the global energy system," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary.

A prolonged war would likely result in higher prices for other fuels and gasoline and could cascade throughout the global economy, adding to production costs overall.

Prolonged interruptions to oil flows through the Middle East would have "huge implications for oil and LNG and every market everywhere if it occurs. Energy is an input to ALL production," RaboResearch Global Economics & Markets said in a report. Iran exports roughly 1.6 million barrels of oil a day, mostly to China. It may need to look elsewhere for supply if Iran's exports are disrupted, another factor that could increase energy prices.

The size of China's strategic oil reserves is a state secret. But a recent report by John Kemp of Base Research estimated them at 1.1 billion to 1.2 billion barrels -- equivalent to around 100 days or just over three months of imports.

The war's impact on markets was muted somewhat because the attacks were anticipated, with a massive

buildup of U.S. forces in the Middle East. So traders had adjusted their positions to take that risk into account.

The conflict has shifted attention, for now, away from issues surrounding artificial intelligence that have dominated markets in recent months.

On Friday, the S&P 500 fell 0.4% to finish just its second losing month in the last 10. The Dow industrials dropped 1.1%, and the Nasdaq composite fell 0.9%.

Treasury yields fell in the bond market as investors sought safer places for their money.

"When markets are fragile, they do not need a knockout blow. They just need another weight on the bar," Innes said. Also hurting the broad market was a report Friday showing that inflation at the U.S. wholesale level was at 2.9% last month, much higher than the 1.6% that economists expected.

That could pressure the Federal Reserve to hold off longer on its cuts to interest rates. Lower rates would give the economy and prices for investments a boost, but they risk worsening inflation.

Chinese youth 'lie flat' in abandoned Venice replica

The "Life in Venice" housing development, a multibillion-dollar replica of the Italian city on the Chinese coast, stands silent. Many of the tens of thousands of homes are hollow husks of concrete and alabaster.

But in recent years the remote, partially abandoned complex has drawn unlikely new residents like Sasa Chen, a burned-out young Chinese woman who until recently worked a high-earning finance job in Shanghai, China's bustling commerce hub.

The appeal?

Chen pays just 1200 RMB, or \$168, a month for her apartment in faux Venice in the eastern Chinese province of Jiangsu. It's so cheap that it's allowed Chen to retire at the tender age of 28.

Experts say Chen is part of a broader trend that has seen a growing number of young people across China migrating to small towns and cities, taking advantage of cheap real estate prices that have been plummeting since the COVID pandemic.

It's a stark reversal from previous generations that prized upward mobility. In decades past, China's ascendent middle class flocked to booming megacities to chase jobs and dreams, once abundant as the country went from rags to riches.

But as the once red-hot economy cooled, expectations have soared, opportunities have dwindled and competition has grown fierce.

Most large Chinese companies, especially high-paying tech firms, requires a work schedule of 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. from Monday to Saturday, a grueling lifestyle popularly known as the 996 culture. Under the intense pressure, some young professionals have called it quits altogether and joined a resistance movement called "lying flat" - shunning careers and capitalism for a "low-desire life."

Some are redefining their dreams to focus on rest and relaxation, much like what some young adults in the West are doing under what they call FIRE: "Financial Independence, Retire Early."

That's much more achievable in China because the cost of living in some places can be so low compared to prices in the West.

Home prices at the massive "Life in Venice" development have more than halved since the downturn in China's property market a few years ago, and a lunch of noodles or a rice dish costs under three dollars in the neighborhood's restaurants.

The bargain prices have benefited young people like Chen willing to live in remote but affordable housing now available across the country. Chen describes it as the perfect life: a sea view, clean air, and cheap rent.

"I have all the time in the world, the freedom of doing whatever I want," said Chen. "I am living the life that I want."

"Life in Venice" was envisioned in the early 2010s as a weekend resort for wealthy residents from nearby Shanghai, providing a luxurious yet peaceful life by the sea.

But demand for the vast complex's 46,000 units cratered after China's debt-fueled property market popped. The developer, real estate giant Evergrande, went bankrupt in 2024.

Today the site is a ghost town, with many villas just empty shells. Less than one in five apartments are occupied. Abandoned boats founder off its rundown pier and "For Sale" signs and empty storefronts line its streets. But a smattering of residents have moved in, some of them fishing in the development's tranquil waters.

Chen used to work in a glossy high-rise in Shanghai, making up to 700,000 yuan (\$98,480) a year at a large finance firm. But she had never liked the idea of working. After three years, she began plotting her escape from the drudgery of China's white-collar workforce.

Her plan was to save up and find somewhere to live with rent so low she could live off returns on her investments.

Last year, her dream came true: Chen saved 2 million yuan (\$290,000) and found a spacious apartment at "Life in Venice". With such low rent, she calculates she can live there for the rest of her life without ever having to work again.

Though "Life in Venice" doesn't have a branch of her favorite sour soup hotpot restaurant, door to door delivery, or proximity to major hospitals, her new residence has plenty of conveniences like a grocery store and eateries.

Chen used to dread the grind of her nine-to-six job, which she said "felt like marching to my own death." Now, she wakes at 10 a.m. every day, filling her days with cooking, chilling, and long walks on the beach.

"I never believed that work is the meaning of life," Chen said. "My ideal state of life is not to work and stay at places that I like."

Like Chen, scores of young Chinese people have left big cities.

While there's no available data about how many have left the Chinese workforce in recent years, figures show that from 2019 to 2024, Beijing lost 1.6 million people in their twenties and early thirties - around the total population of Philadelphia - according to China's capital statistic office.

"People are quitting this competition, this very clear, linear, upward career track," said Xiang Biao, director of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Germany. "It's a broader trend."

China's economy has cooled in recent years, growing just 5% in 2025 - still higher than the U.S. and other rich countries, but a far cry from the double-digit growth the country saw in past decades.

As the economy slows, young Chinese are struggling to find jobs. As of December, 16.5% of 16-24 year-olds who aren't in school were unemployed.

Some, like 29-year-old Ban Zhao, are rejecting the corporate rat race altogether.

Last summer, Ban moved from a bustling commercial city on China's east coast to a small town in China's southwestern Yunnan province.

Tucked away in a lush valley, the town is famed for fresh, clean air and healing hot springs. There, for just 800 yuan a month (\$110) Ban rents an apartment with three bedrooms, one of which she converted to a yoga studio.

She and her boyfriend work less than 20 hours a week, offering yoga classes online to make ends meet. The rest of the time, she walks around her scenic neighborhood surrounded by trees and blossoms, often enjoying the region's famed sunshine.

"I can do whatever I want and not do whatever I don't want," Ban said. "I live in heaven."

Some are flocking to places like Hegang, a cold and remote coal mining city in northeastern China famous for shockingly cheap housing prices. As resources dried up and mines closed, young people left, turning Hegang into a city with far more homes than people.

Apartments there are now cheaper than cars, making sales easy for realtor Yang Xuewei.

Yang has sold more than 100 bargain-priced apartments to clients across the country - and even to some foreigners who contacted Yang after watching his online virtual tours. A one-bedroom apartment can be bought for \$3,000, and \$13,000 can buy a roomy four-bedroom place.

"I don't know about big cities, I never lived in one," Yang said. "I can only say that living in Hegang is easy." (AP)

Greenspan's 1990s playbook misread, analysts warn

Trump's Fed pick Warsh sees AI productivity as case for rate cuts

WASHINGTON, March 2, (AP): President Donald Trump, his Treasury secretary and his choice to lead the Federal Reserve believe they can coax the U.S. economy into parting like it's 1999.

They are putting their faith in artificial intelligence to duplicate what happened when another technology arrived in the 1990s: the internet. Back then, the American economy surged as businesses became more productive, unemployment tumbled and inflation remained in check.

Trump is confident that his nominee to become Fed chair, Kevin Warsh, can unleash an even greater economic bonanza by jettisoning what the president sees as the central bank's hidebound reluctance to slash interest rates.

Many economists are skeptical. The world looks a lot different today than it did when the Spice Girls ruled radio and "Titanic" dominated the box office. And the story the Trump team is telling - that a visionary Fed chair, Alan Greenspan, fueled the '90s boom by keeping interest rates low - is incomplete at best. "The administration is offering a rather distorted version of what actually happened in the 1990s," economist Dario Perkins of TS Lombard said in a commentary.

Nonetheless, the Trump administration believes history can repeat itself. All that's been missing, in the president's view, is a Fed chair with Greenspan's foresightedness.

Trump has repeatedly attacked current Fed chief Jerome Powell, whose term as chair ends in May, for

his reluctance to lower rates aggressively while inflation hovers above the central bank's 2% target. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said on social media in January that the president sought to replace Powell with someone with "an open, Greenspan-like mind."

"Our nation can see productivity boom like we did in the '90s when we are not encumbered by a Federal Reserve which throws the brakes on," Bessent said.

On Jan. 30, Trump said he was picking Warsh. In speeches and writings, Warsh has argued that AI-driven improvements in productivity could justify lower interest rates.

These views align with Trump's desires for Fed rate cuts but mark a break with Warsh's own past as an inflation hawk. In the aftermath of the 2007-2009 Great Recession, Warsh - then a Fed governor - objected to some of the central bank's efforts to help the struggling economy by pushing down rates even though unemployment exceeded 9%. Warsh warned then, wrongly, that inflation would soon accelerate.

At issue now are gains in productivity and the possibility that AI will make them bigger - much bigger.

To economists, productivity improvements are almost magical. When companies roll out new machines or technology, their workers can become more efficient and produce more stuff per hour. That allows firms to earn more and to raise employees' pay without raising prices. In short: Surging productivity can drive economic growth without spurring inflation.

In the mid-1990s, Greenspan was contending with a strange set of economic circumstances: Wages were

rising, but inflation wasn't heating up. Big productivity gains might have explained things, but government data showed no sign of them. Other Fed policymakers worried that surging wages and tame inflation couldn't co-exist and that higher prices were coming. They wanted to raise interest rates.

But Greenspan suspected the official productivity numbers were missing something. For one thing, they didn't jibe with the amazing tales of efficiency improvements the Fed was hearing from companies investing in computers and turning to the internet.

So he ordered his lieutenants to dig through decades of productivity numbers. The official statistics they assembled told an implausible story: Services firms - from retailers to legal practices - had supposedly seen productivity fall over the years, despite intense competitive pressure and massive investments in technology.

Greenspan didn't believe it. He persuaded his Fed colleagues that the government's numbers were wrong and were understating productivity. They agreed in September 1996 to hold off on raising rates. The economy took flight.

Tardily, productivity advances began to show up in the official data. Overall, American economic growth surpassed 4% every year from 1997 through 2000, something it would do again only once in the next quarter century. The unemployment rate plunged to 3.8% in April 2000, lowest in three decades. Inflation stayed in its cage, coming in below 2% - later the Fed's official target - for 17 straight months in 1997-1999.

'GOAT' slips to No. 2 with \$12M in third weekend

Paramount's 'Scream 7' opens with a franchise-best \$64.1 million

NEW YORK, March 2, (AP) — "Scream" is still making a killing.

Thirty years after the original slasher movie opened in theaters, "Scream 7" debuted with a franchise-best \$64.1 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. The bigger-than-expected opening is a win for Paramount, which on Friday announced its acquisition of Warner Bros. Discovery.

In a so-far sluggish 2026 at the box office, "Scream 7" managed the best debut of the year, easily displacing last weekend's champ, the Stephen Curry-produced animated film "GOAT," from Sony Pictures.

"Scream 7," which cost \$45 million to make, got a boost from the return of Neve Campbell, as Sidney Prescott. The actor sat out 2023's "Scream VI," but was drawn back for the seventh film by a reported \$7 million payday. Original cast members Courtney Cox, David Arquette and Matthew Lillard also co-star.

"Scream VI" had set a new high (not accounting for inflation) for the fran-

chise with a \$444 million launch. That film starred Melissa Barrera and Jenna Ortega, along with series regulars. But in 2023, Barrera was dropped from the seventh film by the film's production company, Spyglass Media Group, after making comments on the Israel-Hamas war that some deemed antisemitic. Ortega subsequently dropped out of the film.

Kevin Williamson, who wrote the 1996 original and many of the following chapters, stepped into direct, retooling the film around Campbell and company. In the film, Sidney and her 17-year-old daughter are haunted by Ghostface in the suburban community of Pine Grove.

Reviews were poor (34% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes) and audience scores (a "B-" CinemaScore) also weren't great.

But the overperformance of "Scream 7," which added \$33.1 million overseas, gave Paramount more to celebrate on a potentially historic weekend for the studio. On Friday, its parent company, Paramount Skydance,

announced its intention to merge with Warner Bros. Discovery after Netflix dropped out of negotiations. The deal, which forms a Hollywood colossus and remakes the media landscape, awaits regulatory approval.

For Josh Goldstone, president of global marketing and distribution at Paramount, the launch of "Scream 7" signaled a new beginning for Paramount, which last year completed an \$8 billion merger with David Ellison's Skydance. Following that merger, Dana Goldberg and Josh Greenstein, co-chairs, took the reins of Paramount Pictures.

"This is the first time that the new Paramount team has gotten their arms around a movie, not necessarily from the production side but from the marketing and distribution side," said Goldstone. "It's really an exciting time for the new Paramount."

Goldstone declined to address the merger with Warner Bros. But he attributed the success of "Scream 7" — the rare franchise to keep growing so



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows the character Ghostface in a scene from "Scream 7." (AP)

many films in — to the studio's commitment to exhibition. In opposing Netflix's bid for Warner Bros. Discovery, Ellison trumpeted the studio's dedication to theatrical, pledging a minimum

45-day theatrical window for films. "It's really about the passion for the theatrical marketplace that exists at Paramount right now and the desire that we wanted to show the culture and

the world why we love, and what we can do, with theatrical movies," Goldstone said of the "Scream 7" opening.

"Scream 7" benefited significantly from IMAX screens and premium format screens, something no previous "Scream" movie had on opening. Shaun Barber, head of domestic distribution for Paramount, noted that 40% of the film's business over the weekend was on premium format screens.

"The film's success speaks to the strength of the brand and Ghostface's staying power as an iconic villain," said Barber. "When you put that on the biggest screens in the country, audiences are even more excited to watch it together." After claiming the top spot in its second weekend, "GOAT" dropped to second place with \$12 million in its third weekend. It's so far accumulated \$74 million domestically. "Wuthering Heights," Emerald Fennell's Emily Brontë adaptation, fell to third place with \$7 million in its third weekend. Its three-week haul stands at \$72.3 million.

Awards



Delroy Lindo, (from left), Miles Canton, Wunmi Mosaku, Omar Benson Miller, Jayme Lawson, Li Jun Li, Lola Kirke, Francine Maisler, Michael B. Jordan, and Jack O'Connell accept the award for outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture for "Sinners" during the 32nd Annual Actor Awards on Sunday, March 1, at the Shrine Auditorium and Expo Hall in Los Angeles. (AP)



Fiona Dourif, (third from left), Kristin Villanueva, Noah Wyle, Tracy Ifeachor, Gerran Howell, Isa Briones, Supriya Ganesh, Amielynn Abellera, Tracy Vilar, Patrick Ball, Alexandra Metz, Brandon Mendez Homer, Krystal V. McNeil, and Joanna Going accept the award for outstanding performance by an ensemble in a drama series for "The Pitt" during the 32nd Annual Actor Awards. Claire Danes, (from left), and Damian Lewis look on from left. (AP)



Seth Rogen, (from center), Ike Barinholtz, Chase Sui Wonders, and Kathryn Hahn accept the award for outstanding performance by an ensemble in a comedy series for "The Studio." (AP)



Seth Rogen accepts the award for outstanding performance by a female actor in a comedy series for "The Studio" on behalf of Catherine O'Hara. (AP)



Host Kristen Bell performs during the 32nd Annual Actor Awards. (AP)



Miles Caton, (center), performs "This Little Light of Mine" during the 32nd Annual Actor Awards. (AP)

O'Hara wins posthumous best comedy actress award

'Sinners' takes top prize at the Actor Awards

LOS ANGELES, March 2, (AP) — After a near awards-season sweep by "One Battle After Another," "Sinners" won best ensemble at the Screen Actors Guild's 32nd Actor Awards on Sunday, shaking up the Oscar race and setting up a potential nail-biter finale in two weeks at the Academy Awards.

The guild's awards, formerly known as the SAG Awards, are one of the most closely watched Oscar precursors. Actors make up the largest slice of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and their choices at the Actor Awards often align.

The victory for Ryan Coogler's blues-soaked vampire saga showed that it has a strong chance to win at the Oscars, too, despite an almost unblemished run of awards for Paul Thomas Anderson's "One Battle After Another." It's won at the Golden Globes, the Producers Guild Awards, the BAFTAs and the Directors Guild Awards.

But the win Sunday, in a Netflix-streamed ceremony at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles, flipped that awards-season script. Writer-director Ryan Coogler, whose "Black Panther" triumphed at the guild's awards in 2019, became the first filmmaker to steer two ensembles to the guild's top prize.

Favorite

"From the bottom of our hearts, to the bottom of your hearts, thank you so much for everything," said Delroy Lindo, who spoke on behalf of the film's cast.

Moments earlier, Michael B. Jordan also won best male actor, upsetting the category favorite, Timothée Chalamet, and handing the 39-year-old Jordan the most significant prize of his acclaimed career. Even Jordan looked shocked as the audience rose to its feet and Viola Davis, the award's presenter, celebrated.

"I wasn't expecting this at all," said Jordan, who reflected on starting out as actor before he paused to appreciate the moment. "Yeah, man, this is pretty cool."

As expected, Jessie Buckley won best female actor for her performance in "Hamnet." But the other actor races have been harder to call. On Sunday, Sean Penn (who didn't attend) won best supporting male actor for "One Battle After Another" and Amy Madigan won best supporting female actor for "Weapons."

The 75-year-old Madigan, who had never before been nominated by the guild, was visibly surprised. Partway through her winding and charming acceptance speech, she looked down at the statuette.

"It's like when you were little and you had the Barbie and then you got



Michael B. Jordan poses with the awards for outstanding performance by a male actor in a leading role and outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture for "Sinners." (AP)



Jessie Buckley poses with the award for outstanding performance by a female actor in a leading role for "Hamnet." (AP)



Michelle Williams poses with the award for outstanding performance by a female actor in a television movie or limited series for "Dying for ..." (AP)



Harrison Ford poses with the lifetime achievement award during the 32nd Annual Actor Awards. (AP)

Ken and whipped down his drawers and went, "Hey, that's nothing," joked Madigan before apologizing for getting distracted.

Catherine O'Hara posthumously won best female actor in a comedy series for her performance as a movie executive in the showbiz satire "The Studio." O'Hara died at the age of 71 on Jan. 30 from a blood clot in the lungs. At the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles, the crowd stood in a standing ovation for O'Hara after she was announced as the winner.

Seth Rogen, co-creator of "The Studio," accepted the award on her behalf. He recalled a passionate collaborator who would, the night before a scene, invariably send a polite email with suggested rewrites. Rogen said O'Hara "showed that you could be a genius and you could be kind."

O'Hara and we were lucky that we got to live in a world where she so generously shared her talents with us."

The ceremony, presented by the actors guild SAG-AFTRA, were hosted by returning emcee Kristen Bell, who kicked off the show on a light, song-and-dance note despite the war in Iran and entertainment industry upheaval. Sean Astin, SAG-AFTRA president, offered a "a prayer for peace" in his remarks.

The Actor Awards were the biggest Hollywood bash since Paramount reached an agreement to acquire Warner Bros. Discovery for \$111 billion. The merger, which awaits regulatory approval, sent shock waves through Hollywood. Netflix chief executive Ted Sarandos, whose company lost out to Paramount competing bid, walked the red carpet in jeans.

The win for "Sinners" insures that Warner Bros. will head into the Academy Awards with the two clear best picture favorites in it and "One Battle After Another" — an awards-season coup for a studio set to be sold. Before the ceremony began, the award for best stunt ensemble went to a Paramount release: "Mission:

Impossible — The Final Reckoning." Among the TV awards, "The Studio" won for comedy series and "The Pitt" won for drama series. Individual winners included Keri Russell ("The Diplomat"), Rogen ("The Studio"), Michelle Williams ("Dying for Sex"), Owen Cooper ("Adolescence") and Noah Wyle ("The Pitt").

Harrison Ford was honored with the SAG-AFTRA Life Achievement Award, a prize presented with warm sarcasm by Woody Harrelson. The 83-year-old actor said he was humbled.

"I'm in a room with actors, many of whom are here because they've been nominated to receive a prize for their amazing work, while I'm here to receive a prize for being alive," said Ford, who called it "the half point" of his career.

Ford teared up for much of his speech, reflecting on a career that he noted was "not an overnight success." He called the award a "very encouraging." "I'm indeed a lucky guy," said Ford. "Lucky to have found my people. Lucky to have work that challenges me. Lucky to still be doing it."

NEWS/FEATURES



Keri Russell poses with the award for outstanding performance by a female actor in a drama series for 'The Diplomat'. (AP)



Noah Wyle accepts top actor award for drama series 'The Pitt'. (AP)



Amy Madigan with the supporting actress award for 'Weapons'. (AP)



Delroy Lindo accepts outstanding performance by a cast award for 'Sinners'. (AP)



Seth Rogen poses with top comedy actor and ensemble awards for 'The Studio'. (AP)



From left: Amelie Zilber, Claire Danes, Leslie Bibb, Emma Stone, Aimee Lou Wood and Lisa Ann Walter arrive at the 32nd Annual Actor Awards on Sunday, March 1, at the Shrine Auditorium and Expo Hall in Los Angeles. (AP)

List of winners at the 2026 Actor Awards

LOS ANGELES, March 2, (AP): "Sinners" was the top winner at the 2026 Actor Awards handed out Sunday during a ceremony that honored the best performances in film and television.

Presented by the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, the show was streamed live on Netflix.

Michael B. Jordan and Jessie Buckley took home the top film acting awards. Television Winners included Keri Russell for "The Diplomat," Noah Wyle for "The Pitt" and Seth Rogen and a posthumous win for Catherine O'Hara for "The Studio."

Here is the complete list of winners at the 2026 Actor Awards.

Movies

- Cast: "Sinners"
- Male actor in a leading role: Michael B. Jordan, "Sinners"
- Female actor in a leading role: Jessie Buckley, "Hamnet"
- Female actor in a supporting role: Amy Madigan, "Weapons"
- Male actor in a supporting role: Sean Penn, "One Battle After Another"
- Stunt ensemble: "Mission: Impossible - The Final Reckoning"

Television

- Drama ensemble: "The Pitt"

Comedy ensemble: "The Studio"

- Female actor in a drama series: Keri Russell, "The Diplomat"
- Male actor in a drama series: Noah Wyle, "The Pitt"
- Female actor in a comedy series: Catherine O'Hara, "The Studio"
- Male actor in a comedy series: Seth Rogen, "The Studio"
- Female actor in a limited series or TV movie: Michelle Williams, "Dying For ..."
- Male actor in a limited series or TV movie: Owen Cooper, "Adolescence"
- Stunt Ensemble: "The Last Of Us"

Music



Members of Twice, (from left), Jeongyeon, Jihyo, Dahyun, Sana, Mina, Tzuyu, Chaeyoung, Momo, and Nayeon pose for a portrait on Wednesday, Jan. 21, 2026, in Inglewood, Calif. (AP)

K-pop girl group reinvents stardom

Twice mark 10 years, take on 'Demon Hunters'

LOS ANGELES, March 2, (AP): The only thing rarer than success in the global pop music industry is longevity. But K-pop girl group Twice make resilience look easy.

Last year - Nayeon, Jeongyeon, Momo, Sana, Jihyo, Mina, Dahyun, Chaeyoung and Tzuyu - celebrated their 10th anniversary with the release of "TEN: The Story Goes On." It's mostly composed of solo songs from its nine members, extending into genres far beyond the bubblegum pop they popularized: "Fix a Drink" is country, "Chess" samples Beethoven's "Für Elise," and so on.

But that's not the only thing they're celebrating: Not so long ago Sony Pictures Animation reached out to the group to participate in a new project they were working on: "KPop Demon Hunters."

The movie, which Netflix has said is its most watched film of all time, has amassed hundreds of millions of hours viewed worldwide. It was also the highest charting soundtrack of 2025 with eight of its songs landing on the Billboard Hot 100. It also made a splash in theaters in August and got a subsequent release over Halloween weekend.

Next week, it's up for two Oscars at the Academy Awards. Not a bad call to get.

Below, Twice discusses "KPop Demon Hunters," being a decade into their career and evolving definitions of success.

This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: To celebrate 10 years of the group, you released "TEN: The Story Goes On." And for the first time, all of you have solo tracks on a Twice record.

Mina: For Twice's solo songs, it seems like each member chose a concept that suited them well. And for the group songs, because we've been together for 10 years, we know each other's vocal colors and strengths, so we're able to assign parts that highlight those individual characteristics, allowing us to showcase our personalities even more.

AP: How has your definition of success changed over time, 10 years later?

Jihyo: We've worked incredibly hard for the

past 10 years, but honestly, I'm not sure what the criteria for success really is. We've just consistently and diligently done what we've been doing, and if the fact that many people have listened to our music, loved it, and felt encouraged by it constitutes success, then perhaps we have achieved success. However, I still think there's so much more we can do.

AP: I'm curious how the conversations begin for you when it comes to putting out a new comeback release. What are those early chats like?

Dahyun: First of all, we have a lot of group chats. We have a company group chat, a member group chat, and several other group chats. When we can't meet in person, we discuss things there, and sometimes we even use a voting feature to make decisions by majority vote, choosing from various options. We also hold meetings in person at the company. Both the members and the company staff work together, discussing things and trying their best to make a great album.

AP: How do you keep moving forward?

Jihyo: It feels like there's also a broader generational trend at play, and when looking at what's popular these days, we tend to choose things that align well with Twice. We try to do what we can at that time, and we also try not to repeat what we've done before. We consider many different opinions, and although the process gets more difficult with each album, we're still enjoying it.

AP: What's your relationship to your individual voices now, as opposed to 10 years ago?

Jeongyeon: I think I understand it well now. Ten years ago, my voice was one that was trying very hard to sound good, but now I'm recording with the mindset of singing in my natural voice, just being myself.

AP: And what's your relationship to perfectionism?

Chaeyoung: When recording, I think we try our best to perform our parts well, listening to it repeatedly and rerecording. Since performing well is our job, we naturally feel that we have to do it perfectly.

AP: We have to talk about "KPop Demon Hunters." I mean, Jeongyeon, Jihyo, and Chae-

young, your version of "Takedown" is in the credits. And the group song, "Strategy," was also featured on the soundtrack. How did being a part of this project challenge you creatively?

Jeongyeon: Twice's music is very bright, cute, and generally requires a refreshing vocal style, but the song "Takedown" in "KPop Demon Hunters" is a very powerful song. In fact, during my trainee days, I only sang powerful songs. So, it brought back memories of my trainee days, and I remember having a lot of fun recording it.

AP: You're one of a small handful of people that can relate to the girl group narrative in "KPop Demon Hunters." Were there specific moments in the film that hit home for you?

Chaeyoung: There were several scenes where Mira (a member of "Kpop Demon Hunters" girl group HUNTR/X), was constantly eating something. Although the eating scene was portrayed dramatically in the animation, we also eat a lot after concerts because we had spent so much energy, and we need that energy replenishment. I think those aspects were portrayed quite well. Those parts really resonated with me. The costumes were also great.

AP: What are you hungry for at this point of the journey? What is it that you want right now as a group?

Momo: We've done a lot already, but our goal is to meet our fans for a long, long time, perform together, try new things, and continue to connect with our fans for many years to come.

AP: How do you kind of balance, your personal goals, your goals in your various subunits and the goals of the group?

Jihyo: Well, so far, I honestly think that over the past 10 years, we've put a lot of emphasis on the group. But recently, we've shown some unit activities, like the MiSaMo subunit (made up of Momo, Sana, and Mina) and some members performing at the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show and I think those are also part of Twice's activities.

Dahyun is pursuing an acting career for example, but ultimately, I think these activities don't negatively impact Twice's activities; in fact, they bring many positive benefits, so I don't feel like there's much of a difference.

Fashion

Fluid, essential collection

Silvana pays tribute to Armani legacy in Milan

MILAN, March 2, (AP): Giorgio Armani's niece **Silvana Armani** took up her uncle's mantle with quiet confidence, presenting the first signature collection without the input of the iconic founding designer to close Milan Fashion Week on Sunday.

Actor Andie MacDowell, 67, was among the front-row guests for a show that represented a new chapter for the Giorgio Armani fashion group, following the designer's death Sept. 4 at age 91.

"One of the things that is really important to me is representing women of a certain age, and showing that we still are fashionable and powerful and strong, and we enjoy life and looking beautiful," MacDowell said as she arrived for the show wearing a dark Armani suit with a three-dimensional rose detail.

"I love this because I was born Rosalie Anderson MacDowell, and I thought this suit was made for me. It makes me feel really elegant," she said.

The Giorgio Armani women's winter wardrobe for next fall and winter was fluid, essential and wholly contemporary, expressing the fashion house's essence. To point, there was no jewelry, save pins with the zodiac sign for Cancer, for the late designer's birth sign.

Opening looks were in an urban slate gray, softened by silken blouses with foulard detailing around the neck. A burgundy belt gave color and structure, while knitwear with the slightest scoop neck maintained discipline. Long overcoats grazed the runway.

As for her uncle, Silvan Armani made soft yet tailored jackets the backbone of the collection, including quilted Japanese-style jackets and colorful shearling coats.

They were complemented with fluid trousers, some with side pleats for volume. Winter white trousers with silken high-neck blouses and anoraks suggested an active lifestyle, as did the cozy knitwear, cross-body bags and tinted eyewear.

The color palette shifted to burgundy and midnight blue, the new black. Velvet looks accented with beaded embroidery gave cozy elegance, while eveningwear featured iridescent corsets that sat slightly away from the body.



Armani



Models wear creations from the Giorgio Armani Fall/Winter 2026-2027 Women's collection presented in Milan, Italy, Sunday, March 1, (AP)

Hazardous chemicals in soil and water raise cancer risk

Nanoparticles and AI help detect toxic pollutants faster

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



By Andres B. Sanchez Alvarado
Rice University

Across the US, hundreds of sites on land or in lakes and rivers are heavily contaminated with hazardous waste produced by human activity. Many of these places, designated as Superfund sites by the Environmental Protection Agency, can be found in Houston, Texas, the city where my colleagues and I live and work.

Hazardous contaminants present at these sites that can increase the risk of cancer - such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAHs - are pervasive in soil and water. Detecting these contaminants is only the first step to cleaning them up and keeping the environment safe.

The EPA's standard methods for analyzing water samples from a well, for example, involve expensive techniques that must be carried out in a separate location, taking weeks.

Our chemistry research group develops new methods that are more accessible and portable to detect toxic pollutants in soil, water and even blood.

My colleagues and I use machine learning methods to detect individual compounds in mixtures without separating them and to automatically identify those compounds by comparing them to a digital database. With machine learning we can streamline analysis of a contaminated site, detecting hazardous pollutants faster and on-site, for more efficient environmental monitoring.

Imagine trying to look at the end of a strand of your hair head on. You would barely see the width of the tiny filament.

Now try to imagine a material that is 1,000 times smaller than the width of that hair strand. You wouldn't see anything at all. My research uses microscopic objects known as nanoparticles that are about that size.

These nanoparticles interact with light in unique ways - kind of like how a magnifying glass focuses sunlight. Any substances near the nanoparticles are exposed to this focused light. We take advantage of this property by shining a beam of infrared light on the nanoparticles, so the substances around them absorb the intense light and generate a signal. We can detect the signal with a spectrophotometer: an instrument that measures the amount of light of a specific frequency.

Any toxic pollutant near the nanoparticles will absorb more of that infrared light than it normally would, enhancing the signal that we can measure. This process occurs only when the pollutant is close to the nanoparticles' surface. But even the smallest concentrations of these pollutants can be detected using the nanoparticles' enhancement, if they're nearby.

In our laboratory, I make the nanoparticles using solutions of metal salts. I then dissolve them in a liquid to make an ink, which I then paint onto glass microscope plates. After the ink dries, I am left with nanoparticles packed together on the surface of the glass, like beads on a diamond painting kit.

Once the nanoparticle painting is ready, I add a drop of contaminated water on top of the tinted glass and let it dry again. During this process, the contaminant molecules stick to the nanoparticles. Once dry, I slide the glass inside a spectrophotometer and measure the light absorbed and emitted by the pollutants on the nanoparticles.

The specific frequencies of light that a compound absorbs and emits are like a signature. Each contaminant will have

a different signature that we can use to identify them in the water.

Sometimes, the contaminated water contains a mix of many different compounds, which complicates the analysis. Each compound will absorb light, and they might absorb similar wavelengths. To prevent this interference, scientists usually need to use sophisticated techniques to physically separate out each compound. These techniques can be time-consuming, so our team wanted to figure out how to circumvent this step.

We partnered with computer scientists who have been designing tailored algorithms that use machine learning. These programs take the data from our measurements and find patterns so subtle that even the most skilled analyst would miss them.

These methods can simplify the data and extract the most significant characteristics from each compound. These distinctive characteristics help the computer distinguish the individual compounds present in a mixture, bypassing any physical separation stage in the analysis. Computer scientists can make these algorithms so sophisticated that we don't even need to train the machine before analyzing a sample.

We can use our nanoparticles to measure water or soil polluted with a toxic contaminant, feed the data into the algorithms, and the machine will find the most important features and match them to a reference database. This analysis takes only a few hours, making it at least twice as fast as standard methods.

However, our method is far from perfect. One of the biggest challenges we face is optimizing the nanoparticles' composition for different classes of contaminants. It can take different nanoparticles to enhance the detection of different pollutants. We also have to tweak the algorithm to look more closely for different signatures in the data.

This method could screen a site for broad classes of contaminants that are similar in chemical structure. Subsequently, in the future a specific type of nanoparticle and a more refined model could be used to identify each specific pollutant molecule.

Analyzing contaminants in the environment helps detect the presence of hazardous pollutants, and doing so efficiently can prevent exposure to people. The techniques our group uses to detect contaminants and analyze the data have been used in the field with portable instrumentation by other researchers. These portable instruments are still cheaper than those required for standard techniques.

Currently, our team is exploring the use of these machine learning-enhanced methods in different environmental contexts. We've analyzed other types of samples, such as water and air from contaminated sites. We are working on expanding the scope of analysis to a wider range of hazardous pollutants. We also collaborate with toxicologists and environmental engineers in the Texas Medical Center, with the goal of transferring this technology as an alternative method for environmental and public health agencies.

To that end, we've filed a patent for our method that combines spectroscopy and machine learning to analyze complex samples. While our team is not currently pursuing commercialization of this technology, it is a possibility down the road.

Still, detection is not the end for environmental safety. After a hazardous pollutant has been identified, a site must be investigated to decide how to clean it up. Our motivation is to streamline the process of detecting and identifying contaminants. The faster we can detect a hazardous substance, the faster we can prevent future emissions and begin cleanups. (AP)



Traffic is seen at a square in western Tehran, Iran, Thursday, Feb. 26, 2026. (AP)

Experts call for quieter urban planning to protect health

Night-time traffic noise tied to higher cholesterol, blood fat markers: study

HELSINKI, March 2. (Xinhua): Exposure to road traffic noise at night may be linked to subtle but measurable changes in adults' blood cholesterol and fat-related markers, according to a large European study in which the University of Oulu took part.

In a press release issued recently, the Finnish university said the study, published in the journal Environmental Research, analyzed data from more than 270,000 adults drawn from three major European population cohorts: the UK Biobank, the Rotterdam Study and the Northern Finland Birth Cohort 1966.

Researchers modeled night-time road traffic noise at participants' residential addresses using national noise maps. The analysis focused on night-time exposure because people are more likely to be at home then and because noise can interfere with sleep, the release said.

Using advanced analytical meth-

ods, the team measured 155 biomarkers from blood samples, allowing them to link long-term night-time noise exposure to specific metabolic changes detectable in blood.

The study found that changes in blood lipid measures appeared from about 50 decibels (dB) and became more pronounced as noise levels rose. In particular, night-time road traffic noise above 55 dB was associated with higher levels of total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, often called "bad" cholesterol, as well as other lipid-related measures, including fatty acids and cell membrane-related lipids.

These indicators are widely recognized as factors related to cardiovascular and metabolic health. For most biomarkers, the researchers reported an exposure-response pattern, meaning the higher the noise level, the more evident the changes.

Doctoral researcher Yiyan He of the University of Oulu said the findings

suggest that night-time traffic noise may affect metabolic health "in a subtle but consistent way." While the changes for any single individual are small, she noted that very large numbers of people are exposed to traffic noise, meaning even modest shifts could have public-health implications.

Professor Sylvain Sebert, also of the University of Oulu, said the results help illuminate biological pathways that may help explain previously observed links between traffic noise and cardiovascular disease as well as related metabolic disorders, adding that environmental noise should be seen as a real health risk rather than merely a nuisance.

The researchers said reducing night-time road traffic noise could help mitigate related metabolic effects, and called for noise-reduction measures in urban planning and transport as well as building designs that prioritize quieter sleeping environments.

Cancer relapse test

New study shows promise against drug-resistant TB

SYDNEY, March 2. (Xinhua): Researchers in Australia have discovered how a promising class of experimental antibiotics disrupts the bacterium that causes tuberculosis (TB), raising hopes for improved treatments against drug-resistant strains.

TB remains one of the world's deadliest infectious diseases, killing about 1.2 million people every year, with drug-resistant strains posing a growing threat, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, said a statement from Australia's Centenary Institute on Friday.

The study, published in Nature Communications, investigated how three naturally occurring antibiotic compounds -- ecumicin, ilamycin and cyclomarin -- act on a vital protein degradation machine inside Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the bacterium that causes TB.

The molecular machine, known as the ClpC1 - ClpP1P2 complex, allows the bacterium to break down damaged or unneeded proteins, helping it to survive stress and maintain essential functions. Without it, the TB bacterium can't survive, making it an attractive drug target, the study showed.

"TB bacteria depend on this degradation system to stay alive, particularly under stressful conditions inside the human body," said study co-senior author Warwick Britton, laboratory head in the Centenary Institute's Center for Infection & Immunity.

"Our findings show these (antibiotic) compounds don't simply shut the

system down. Instead, each one interferes with it in a different way, triggering widespread imbalances across the whole bacterium. This disruption weakens its ability to function and survive," Britton said.



Cancer relapse: Scientists in Australia have developed a simple blood test that detects circulating tumor cells -- cancer cells that have broken away from a tumor and entered the bloodstream -- to increased recurrence odds, said a statement from Australia's Centenary Institute on Wednesday.

Around 5,500 Australians face diagnosis annually for head and neck cancer, which affects the lining of the mouth, throat and voice box. While many patients respond well to treatment, a significant number experience relapse, often with limited early warning, said the study published in the European Journal of Surgical Oncology.

Follow-up care relies heavily on scans and clinical exams, which do not always spot early relapse risks, said study co-senior author Jonathan Clark, director of Head and Neck Cancer Research at Australia's Chris O'Brien Lifehouse, in collaboration with Centenary Institute.

Program helps people with limitations stay active

Accessible walks bring the joys of birding to people with disabilities

TUCSON, Ariz., March 2. (AP): Wearing an oxygen pack on her back for her COPD, Marcia OBara is leading a group of nature enthusiasts on a mission to see birds. They carry walking sticks on the flat trails, moving at their own pace, without pressure or competition and enjoying a sense of community.

This is Birding for Every BODY, one of numerous such excursions offered each month by the nonprofit Tucson Bird Alliance with Arizona's Pima County.

It's part of a growing national movement to help people with physical and other limitations experience birding and nature in general.

"It's an opportunity for people to get out and see birds without pressure, no matter how long it takes or how many birds we see," said OBara, a retired nurse who has been leading the accessible outings for three years. She said disabled people often cannot keep up on traditional outings, especially when competitive birders are focused on checking off a list of the greatest possible number of species.

For her accessible walks, OBara ensures that all trails are easily traversable, and bathrooms are open and large enough to accommodate mobility scooters and wheelchairs. She checks on the availability of drinking water, shade and benches. Once a walk gets underway, OBara checks to ensure everyone is keeping up, then modulates the pace as needed.

"I used to work in rehab, so I usually know what people need," OBara said.

While the outings are open to those with wheelchairs and mobility scooters, people who use those devices rarely attend the walks, OBara said, perhaps because they don't think they'll be able to keep up.

"But we'd encourage them to come," OBara said.

On one of several walks she led in February at Tucson-area parks, OBara pointed out a phainopepla, a slender, crested bird perched on a mesquite tree that adorns the bright red berries of desert mistletoe clumped on the branches.

Quacking mallards and other ducks swam in ponds or pecked the ground.

"It's nice to just be outside and not think of anything else," said Rhea Guertin, a retired Rhode Island snowbird who spends four months in Tuc-



Group leader Marcia OBara checks the landscape for birds during an accessible birding walk at Feliz Paseos Park in Tucson, Ariz., on Feb. 4, 2026. (AP)

son each winter. She used a walking pole for stability.

"I'm just slow," she explained.

Evelyn Spitzer, a retired Tucson-area teacher, used a walking pole for her heart condition and the lingering effects of a recent surgery.

The organized effort to share birding with people with limitations goes back at least to 2018, when retired Texas teacher Virginia Rose founded the nonprofit Birdability. Rose has used a wheelchair since suffering a spinal injury at age 14.

"Our vision is that birding be truly for everybody and every BODY, regardless of disability," said Cat Fribley, Birdability's executive director. She said participants' limitations include mobility issues, blindness or low vision, chronic illness, intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental illness. Some are neurodivergent, deaf, hard of hearing or have other health concerns.

Fribley, who has a mobility scooter for multiple disabilities, said she can go five or six miles while birding on the accessible paths in her residential community in Iowa City, Iowa.

"In the winter, I bird on my back deck with my coffee," she said.

Other examples of accessible birding include watching from a car, from a canoe on a river, or simply through a kitchen window, advocates said.

Birdability has helped compile a

crowdsourced map of accessible birding locations nationwide in partnership with the National Audubon Society, and offers advice to able-bodied birders on how to be more welcoming and inclusive.

The group's website has many other resources and adaptive devices, such as car-window mounts for cameras, and apps that blind people and others can use to identify and record birdsong.

Occupational therapist Freya McGregor recommends binocular harnesses, which are strapped around the back and chest, saying they're easier on the shoulders and neck than binoculars that hang around the neck.

McGregor - who has a permanent knee injury - runs Access Birding, which trains nature organizations such as state parks and local Audubon chapters on making trails accessible.

Birding "really brings you joy," said Jerry Berrier, a 73-year-old Massachusetts birder who has been blind since birth. "There is happiness from being out in nature."

Berrier got hooked as a college student when he learned to identify a huge number of bird calls and songs to satisfy the lab requirement for a biology class. He later taught blind and blind-deaf people how to negotiate the use of laptops and cellphones at the Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts.

Children with thalassemia find new hope

China turns tide on rare genetic disorders

NANNING, March 2. (Xinhua): For seven-year-old Candy (pseudonym), the journey from her home in Vietnam to Nanning, the capital city of south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, which borders Vietnam, was a race against the clock.

Born with severe thalassemia, a debilitating hereditary blood disorder, the better part of Candy's life was once measured by three-week intervals of painful blood transfusions on a hospital bed and defined by the diameter of a needle and the slow drip of an IV bag.

Today, her world has opened up beyond recognition. She became one of six Vietnamese children recently discharged from the hematology department at the First Affiliated Hospital of Guangxi Medical University, following successful hematopoietic stem cell transplants, a procedure that effectively "reboots" the patient's blood-building system with healthy cells.

Her recovery is considered yet another milestone in a growing cross-border medical initiative between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), transforming Guangxi from a high-incidence "hotspot" for rare diseases into a regional center of life-saving solutions.

The success of these pediatric cases is built on decades of experiments and clinical practices borne out of local necessity. In Guangxi, thalassemia is a significant public health challenge, with the carrier frequency averaging over 20 percent in the population.

The high prevalence has compelled

local medical institutions to dedicate expertise and funding in the search for a solution at a scale few other places in the country could match, according to Zheng Baoshi, president of the First Affiliated Hospital of Guangxi Medical University.

At the heart of the efforts is the "Guangxi Scheme," a standardized transplant protocol developed by the hospital and forged in the decades-long battle against the debilitating disease.

According to hospital data, the scheme has achieved a 95 percent cure rate for severe thalassemia, a figure that stands on par with international standards.

The institution now performs the largest number of hematopoietic stem cell transplants in Guangxi, curing over 200 patients annually. These cases range from metabolic disorders like pyruvate kinase deficiency (PKD) to complex immune deficiencies.

This Saturday, landmarks across the world are lit in blue, pink, green, and purple, forming a "chain of light" to mark the 19th Rare Disease Day under the theme "More Than You Can Imagine," the day set up to shine a light on around 350 million people worldwide living with a rare condition.

While the World Health Organization (WHO) defines "rare" as affecting between 0.065 percent and 0.1 percent of the population, the sheer scale of the collective impact is staggering.

In China, where 207 rare conditions are listed, an estimated 20 million people live with rare diseases. For these patients, the "rarity" of their condition often translates into a woeful lack of recourse,

a years-long odyssey to secure the right specialists who can recognize their symptoms and administer medical procedures they can afford, noted Zheng.

Seeking to move beyond disease management and toward permanent cures, Guangxi is aggressively recruiting global scientific talent. In late 2025, the hospital successfully brought Thomas Mikael Oliveberg, a prominent biophysicist from the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, into the fold.

A leading authority on protein folding and protein disease, Professor Mikael Oliveberg studies the biological "glitches" behind the neurodegenerative conditions like amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), a rare condition that was brought to global attention by the "Ice Bucket Challenge," a viral social media campaign.

Under the terms of the newly signed agreement with the Guangxi hospital, Professor Mikael Oliveberg will conduct on-site research at the institution for three months every year.

"Significant breakthroughs have been achieved in thalassemia diagnosis and treatment research, while steady progress has been made in promoting prevention and control models," said Zheng.

He is convinced that the institution has established a mature thalassemia diagnostic and therapeutic system, providing a full spectrum of services from screening and diagnosis to transplantation. Furthermore, the hospital has pioneered the internationally original "Guangxi Scheme," offering a proven solution for countries lacking the resources to manage the disease.

Jarvis secures Masters, British Open berths after South African Open triumph

Echavarria takes advantage of Lowry's meltdown on PGA Tour

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla., March 2, (AP): Nico Echavarria didn't make a bogey all weekend. Shane Lowry was on his way to doing the same, until the very end. And that's what decided the Cognizant Classic.

Echavarria - who was three shots back with three holes left - shot a 5-under 66 on Sunday to win at PGA National, finishing at 17-under 267 and beating Lowry (69), Austin Smotherman (69) and Taylor Moore (68) by two shots.

Lowry - who remains snakebit by PGA National, where he has finished in the top 11 for five straight years without a victory - was undone by double bogeys at the par-4 16th and par-3 17th, both after tee shots went way right and into the water.

It was Echavarria's third PGA Tour win and first in the United States, and this one earned a second Masters invitation for the 31-year-old from Colombia.

Lowry - who has been in contention at PGA National in each of the last five years and had late leads in 2022 and 2024 - was rolling along, chipping in for birdie on the par-4 ninth to start a run where he went 5 under in a five-hole stretch. And he had a three-shot lead over Echavarria going to the par-4 16th. That's where his nightmare began.

Casey Jarvis seized control with three birdies in his opening five holes and closed with a 3-under 67 to win the South African Open, earning him a spot in the Masters and the British Open this year.

Jarvis won for the second straight week on the European tour, following his victory last week in the Kenya Open. The South African Open for the first time came with an invitation to the Masters. It also offered three spots to the leading players not already eligible for the British Open.

Francesco Laporta of Italy closed with a 69 and tied for second with Frederic



Nico Echavarria of Colombia holds the Cognizant Classic Trophy at the end of the final round of the Cognizant Classic golf tournament in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. (AP)

Lacroix of France (65) and Hennie Du Plessis of South Africa (69).

Du Plessis was the main challenger to Jarvis for most of the day. He was two shots behind playing the 18th but finished with a bogey, which cost him a spot in the British Open. Those places went to Laporta and Lacroix because of their better world ranking.

Alistair Docherty picked a good spot for his first Korn Ferry Tour victory, making a short birdie on the final hole to win the Argentine Open and earn a spot in the British Open this summer at Royal Birkdale.

Docherty hit wedge to 3 feet for birdie on the final hole for a 5-under 65, giving him a one-shot victory over S.Y. Noh and Chris Forte.

Forte closed with a 61 well ahead of the final group of Docherty and Noh. There was a three-way tie until Noh had to hit two off the tee at the par-5 15th and made bogey to fall one behind. Noh also made birdie on the 18th for a 66.

Docherty, Canadian-born who played at Chico State, finished at 22-under 258 and moved to No. 2 on the Korn Ferry Tour points list.

Daniel Hillier closed with a 4-under 67 for a two-shot victory over Lucas Herbert in the New Zealand Open, becoming the first New Zealander since 2017 to win his national open. Herbert closed with a 67 and earned a spot in the British Open as the leading finisher not already eligible. Hillier already had earned his way to Royal Birkdale by finishing on the top 25 in the Race to Dubai on the European tour last year.

Agathe Laisné closed with a 6-under 65 to win the Ford Women's NSW Open in Australia for her first Ladies European Tour title. She won by one shot over April Angurasanee of Thailand and South Korean amateur Soomin Oh.

Van Gisbergen settles for second

Reddick makes history at COTA with 3rd straight win to start the season

AUSTIN, Texas, March 2, (AP): Tyler Reddick's latest win drove him straight into the NASCAR record books.

Reddick held off hard-charging Shane van Gisbergen over the final 20 laps at the Circuit of the Americas on Sunday to become the first Cup Series driver to win the first three races of the season.

Driving a Toyota co-owned by Michael Jordan, Reddick won the season-opening Daytona 500 and a week later at Atlanta, then won from the pole in the first road course race of the year.

Jordan, the basketball Hall of Famer and six-time NBA champion, was with Reddick's 23XI pit crew exchanging high fives as Reddick crossed the finish line.

"It's one race, but it was so important," Reddick said. "It's so fitting to get three in a row and make history."

History made for a team and ownership group that has been making a lot of it. They took on NASCAR with a federal antitrust lawsuit. The settlement in December and was considered a major legal victory that secured a permanent franchise-style model and ensured the team would remain in business for the long-term.

They've been unbeatable on the race track ever since.

"I'm proud of the team we put together," Jordan said. He credited co-owner Denny Hamlin, who also is a driver for Joe Gibbs Racing, with being the "mastermind" behind it's racing success.

"I just put up the money," Jordan said. "Denny's done an incredible job building this team."

Jordan also said he'll be at the next race in Phoenix to see if Reddick can extend the winning streak that has built a commanding 70-point lead in the drivers' championship.

Van Gisbergen, who won five of six road course races in 2025, lost his bid for a record-tying sixth consecutive road win. The only road course race the Trackhouse driver didn't win last season was in Austin.

"Tyler was just amazing," van Gisbergen said. "You're always disappointed with second when the expectations are so high."

Reddick was just too good all weekend in pursuit of history. His 11th career victory was also his second at

COTA, a track built for Formula 1, and the first time he's had multiple victories at a track. He won at COTA in 2023.

It was far from easy, even if Reddick looked like he was in complete control. Van Gisbergen was on his bumper for several laps in the final stage, but never found the pace to pass before falling farther and farther behind over the final six laps.

"I was just trying to minimize mistakes, Shane is so good," Reddick said.

Jordan, so clutch in his playing days, noted Reddick was cool in the driver's seat while under immense pressure.

"You see SVG coming back, you get a little nervous, but I think he had him covered the whole day," Jordan said.

Trackhouse Cup Series rookie Connor Zilisch came into the weekend with the expectation that he might be the one to end van Gisbergen's dominance on road courses.

But Zilisch's weekend began with a surprisingly poor qualifying position of 25th and got worse Sunday when he got spun on the restart for stage two. Zilisch fought back into contention for the win in the final stage, but his race effectively ended when he was spun again in a restart out of a caution with 16 laps to go. He finished 14th.

Hendrick Motorsports driver Alex Bowman had to get out of his car with about 20 laps to go after complaining about being sick.

He was replaced by Myatt Snider who had been working as a pit spotter for the Fox broadcast. Snider had to scramble to put on his race suit and get in the car.

Brad Keselowski had a reserve driver Joey Hand on hand to take over in case his recently broken leg hurt too much. He didn't need him and was able to finish the race in 20th place.

The RFK Racing driver has been able to race in all three events this season despite breaking his right leg in December. The road course in Austin was a particular concern but of the physical strain through the left and right turns.

The NASCAR Cup Series returns to oval racing Phoenix Raceway on Sunday, March 8. Christopher Bell outduelled Denny Hamlin in Arizona last year to become the first driver to win three races in a row in the NextGen car.



23XI Racing's Tyler Reddick drives into Turn 20 during a NASCAR Cup Series auto race in Austin, Texas. (AP)

Wolfsburg left in relegation zone

BERLIN, March 2, (AP): Jamie Leweling scored twice and Stuttgart routed Wolfsburg 4-0 to boost its chances of Champions League qualification while leaving the visitors in the Bundesliga's relegation zone.

Deniz Undav started Stuttgart's party in the 21st and Leweling made it 2-0 nine minutes later after another well-worked team move, before grabbing his second with a deflected shot in the 42nd.

Stuttgart eased up in the second half. Substitute Nikolas Narthey completed the scoring in stoppage time with another deflected shot that squirmed in off the far post.

Stuttgart consolidated fourth place, the last for Champions League qualification, with 10 rounds remaining.

Wolfsburg is second-last after its fifth defeat from a run of seven games without a win. The Volkswagen-backed team's coach Daniel Bauer is its second this season after he took over - initially on an interim basis - from the fired Paul Simonis in November.

Former Wolfsburg coach Dieter Hecking is reportedly a candidate to return and try to save the team from the drop. The 61-year-old Hecking was in charge from December 2012 to October 2016 and won the German Cup with Wolfsburg in 2015, when it finished second behind Bayern in the Bundesliga and Hecking was voted coach of the season.

But Hecking couldn't prevent Bochum's relegation last year and he was fired in November after starting the second division with four defeats in five games. Traveling Wolfsburg fans brought a giant banner to Stuttgart saying "relegation fight," as if they needed to inform the players of their predicament.

Yan Diomande scored the winner as Leipzig kept pace with a 2-1 win at Hamburger SV to stay two points behind Stuttgart in fifth.

Bayer Leverkusen was six points behind Stuttgart before visiting Hamburg for their postponed 17th-round game on Wednesday.

Knicks snap Spurs' 11-game winning run, T-Wolves move into 4th in West



Oklahoma City Thunder centers Isaiah Hartenstein (55) and Chet Holmgren, right, defend the basket against Dallas Mavericks guard Max Christie (00) during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Dallas. (AP)

Lakers complete back-to-back weekend wins

NEW YORK, March 2, (AP): Mikal Bridges had 25 points, Jalen Brunson scored 24 and the New York Knicks snapped the San Antonio Spurs' 11-game winning streak with a 114-89 victory.

After going unbeaten in February, the Spurs were shut down to open March, never recovering from the Knicks' 26-2 run in the first half and losing for the first time since Jan. 31 in Charlotte.

Victor Wembanyama bounced back from two quiet offensive games with 25 points, 13 rebounds and four blocks, but a Spurs team that became the first in NBA history to go unbeaten and score at least 110 points in every game while playing at least 10 in a month fell flat after a fast start.

Mohamed Diawara had 14 points off the bench for the Knicks, who also beat the Spurs earlier this season to win the NBA Cup in Las Vegas.

Wembanyama had been limited to 12 points in each of the last two games. He was much sharper Sunday in his first game at Madison Square Garden since finishing with 42 points and 18 rebounds in a loss on Christmas 2024 in his first time playing on the holiday.

But the Spurs couldn't overcome 22 turnovers that led to 24 points and were also outrebounced 54-41.

Timberwolves 117, Nuggets 108

In Denver, Anthony Edwards scored 21 points, Bones Hyland had 15 of his 18 points in the first half against his former team, and the Minnesota Timberwolves moved a game ahead of Denver in the Western Conference with win over the Nuggets.

Minnesota swept its three-game trip to improve to 38-23 and jump into fourth in the West, beating Denver for the first time in four games this season.

"Everyone around the league knows what's at stake when you look at the standings, and every single night these games feel just so big," Timberwolves coach Chris Finch said before tipoff.

Nikola Jokic finished with 35 points, 13 rebounds and nine assists but couldn't carry the Nuggets over their Northwest Division rivals. Jamal Murray had 25 points on 9-of-22 shooting, including 4 of 6 from 3-point range.

Denver has lost four of six games since the All-Star break. The Nuggets have been without forward Aaron Gordon since Jan. 30 because of a hamstring injury, and Peyton Watson is also sidelined with a hamstring strain.

Lakers 128, Kings 104

In Los Angeles, Luka Doncic had 28 points and nine assists, LeBron James added 24 points and the Los Angeles Lakers finished a back-to-back set with a victory over the Sacramento Kings.

Austin Reaves scored 12 points for the Lakers, who also won at Golden State on Saturday to end a three-game skid. After a week of unimpressive play following the All-Star break, Los Angeles snapped back into form on the weekend, beating its two Northern California rivals by a combined 52 points.

Doncic made four 3-pointers as the NBA's leading scorer played only the first three quarters, while James, Marcus Smart and Luke Kennard hit three 3s apiece.

Pistons 106, Magic 92

In Orlando, Cade Cunningham had 29 points and 11 assists, Tobias Harris scored 23 points and the NBA-leading Detroit Pistons beat the Orlando Magic for their sixth straight road victory.

The Pistons improved to 45-14, winning for the eighth time in nine games. They have won 10 of 11 on the road and are 21-7 overall away from home.

Jalen Duren added 16 points and 10 rebounds for Detroit.

Celtics to 114, 76ers 98

In Boston, Neemias Queta scored a career-high 27 points and added 17 rebounds to help the Boston Celtics recover from a slow start and rally to beat the Philadelphia 76ers.

Jaylen Brown added 27 points, eight rebounds and eight assists, and Derrick White finished with 21 points and eight assists as the Celtics became the fourth team to reach 40 victories. They have won six of seven.

It was the 11th double-double of the season for Queta, who also had three blocks. He has three double-doubles - with at least two blocks in each - over his last five games.

Thunder 100, Mavericks 87

In Dallas, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 30 points, Chet Holmgren had 19 points and nine rebounds and the Oklahoma City Thunder beat the Dallas Mavericks.

Gilgeous-Alexander has scored at least 20 points in 59 consecutive road games, the longest streak in NBA history. The reigning NBA MVP played his second game after missing nine because of an abdominal strain.

The defending champion Thunder are 47-15, a half-game behind Detroit for the NBA lead. They have a three-game lead in West over second-place San Antonio.

The Mavericks, with star rookie Cooper Flagg among three regular starters sidelined, were held to a season low in points and saw the NBA's longest active streak of triple-digit games end at 41. They are 21-39.

Cavaliers 106, Nets 102

In New York, James Harden scored 22 points in his return to the lineup with a broken thumb and the Cleveland Cavaliers snapped a two-game skid with victory over the Brooklyn Nets.

Harden missed two games after fracturing his thumb earlier in the week. He bounced back and shot 5 for 9 from the field, 4 for 7 from 3-point distance and 8 for 12 from the line, with nine rebounds and eight assists. He was injured Tuesday night in a 109-94 home victory over New York. X-rays Wednesday showed a non-displaced

fracture of the distal phalanx. The 17-year veteran was traded by the Los Angeles Clippers to Cleveland on Feb. 4.

Jarrett Allen scored 20 points and Evan Mobley added 16 points and 13 rebounds as the Cavaliers improved to 12-1 in their last 13 games against the Nets. Sam Merrill finished with 15 points and Dennis Schroder had 10.

Clippers 137, Pelicans 117

In Inglewood, Kawhi Leonard scored 23 points and the Los Angeles Clippers beat the New Orleans Pelicans to end a three-game losing streak.

Tenth in the Western Conference, the Clippers improved to 28-31. The Pelicans are 13th in the West at 19-43.

New Orleans star Zion Williamson sat out after injuring his right ankle at Utah on Saturday night. He had played a career-high 35 straight games.

Los Angeles never trailed. It led 43-32 after a quarter and had a 76-70 advantage at the half. It was 107-94 after three, and the Clippers stretched the margin to 26 in the fourth.

Jordan Miller added 19 points for Los Angeles. Derrick Jones Jr. had 17, Brook Lopez 16 and John Collins 15.

Grizzlies 125, Pacers 106

In Indianapolis, Taylor Hendricks scored 19 points, Jaylen Wells had 18 and the Memphis Grizzlies beat the Indiana Pacers.

Olivier-Maxence Prosper added 17 points, and Scotty Pippen Jr. and Ryan Rupert each had 16 to help Memphis sweep the season series for the third time in five years.

Jarace Walker led Indiana with 21 points, and Micah Potter had 18.

Memphis took a 77-66 advantage four minutes into the third period.

The Grizzlies were without guard Ja Morant for the 17th consecutive game because of a left elbow injury. Rookie Cedric Coward sat out with a knee injury.

Bulls 120, Bucks 97

In Chicago, Josh Giddey had 20 points, 14 rebounds and 10 assists for his eighth triple-double this season, and the Chicago Bulls used a 27-0 run to beat the Milwaukee Bucks and stop an 11-game losing streak.

Giddey had his 15th triple-double as a member of the Bulls, tying Scottie Pippen for second on the franchise list.

Collin Sexton added 22 points, and Matas Buzelis had 20, helping Chicago come out on top after matching the third-worst skid in franchise history. The Bulls were 0-11 in February and had not won since Jan. 31 in Miami.

Bobby Portis scored 18 points for Milwaukee. The Bucks missed 17 straight shots down the stretch in their second straight blowout loss.



Boston Celtics guard Jaylen Brown (7) drives by Philadelphia 76ers forward Dominick Barlow (25) during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Boston. (AP)

Gray scores late winner as NYFCFC beats Union

Messi and Segovia rally Inter Miami past Orlando City

ORLANDO, Fla., March 2, (AP): Lionel Messi scored twice in a four-goal second half, defender Telasco Segovia added a goal and two assists and defending champion Inter Miami rallied to beat Orlando City 4-2 on Sunday night, winning for the first time at Inter&Co Stadium.

Messi took a pass from Segovia and scored in the 57th minute to tie it 2-2 and Segovia scored unassisted in the 85th for the lead. Messi put the finishing touch on the victory when he scored off a free kick in the 90th. The reigning MVP's first two goals of the season give him 52 in his first 55 regular-season MLS matches - 51 of them in his last 49 appearances.

Marco Pašalić took a pass from Iván Angulo and scored in the 18th minute to give Orlando City a 1-0 lead. Pašalić has scored in four straight matches against Inter Miami.

Defender Griffin Dorsey set up Martín Ojeda for a goal six minutes later for a 2-0 advantage that stood through halftime.

Inter Miami cut it to 2-1 four minutes into the second half on Mateo Silveti's first career goal. Defenders Segovia and Facundo Mura had assists as the 20-year-old forward found the net in his fifth career appearance. Segovia had eight goals and six assists as a rookie last season, while Mura collected his first assist in his first season.

Dayne St. Clair, the reigning goalkeeper of the year, turned away three shots - all in the second half of his second start with Inter Miami.

Maxime Crépeau had four saves in his second start for Orlando City.

Tayvon Gray scored in the ninth minute of stoppage time to help New York City FC beat the Philadelphia Union 2-1.

Hannes Wolf scored in the 36th minute to give NYFCFC (1-0-1) a 1-0 lead.

Olwethu Makhanya was shown his second yellow card in the second minute of stoppage time and the Union played a man down the rest of the way.

Agustin Ojeda, from the left corner of the 18-yard box, flicked an arcing cross to the back post where Gray skipped a header back inside the front post to cap the scoring.

Wolf, who had a career-high 11 goals in 2025, scored his first of the season to give NYFCFC a 1-0 lead in the 36th minute. On the counter-attack, Nicolás Fernández had his shot from the left corner of the 6-yard box parried by goalkeeper Andre Blake, but Wolf slammed home the first-touch putback.

The Union's Stas Korzeniowski drew a penalty, conceded by Thiago Martins, and Indiana Vassilev converted from the spot to make it 1-1 in the 89th.

Blake finished with eight saves for Philadelphia (0-2-0), which won the 2025 Supporter's Shield.

Matt Freese had three saves, which included a kick-stop of a shot by Agustín Anello in the 60th minute and a diving parry that denied Nathan Harriel in the 81st.

Ojeda cut back to evade Union defender Frankie Westfield, but his shot from the center of the area banged off the right post.

Christian Ramirez scored in the 82nd minute to help Austin FC beat D.C. United 1-0.

Ramirez headed home the rebound of a shot by Besard Sabovic that was redirected at the goal line by defender Silvan Hefti. The 34-year-old Ramirez, who has 56 career goals in MLS, was acquired off waivers Friday from the LA Galaxy.

Brad Stuver had two saves for Austin (1-0-1).



Inter Miami CF forward Lionel Messi's, center, goal attempt is stopped by Orlando City SC goalkeeper Maxime Crépeau, left, during the first half of an MLS soccer match in Orlando, Fla. (AP)

Juventus boosts Champions League hopes with stoppage-time equalizer at Roma



Roma's Evan Ndicka, left, and Bryan Cristante and Wesley, right, challenge Juventus's Lloyd Kelly during the Serie A soccer match between AS Roma and Juventus FC in Rome, Italy. (AP)

Veteran striker Aubameyang stars as Marseille stuns Lyon

ROME, March 2, (AP): Substitute Federico Gatti equalized in stoppage time and Juventus came back from two goals down to earn a 3-3 draw at Roma in Serie A.

Gatti, who had come on in the 88th minute, scored from close range following a free kick.

The result kept Juventus within four points of fourth-place Roma and the final Champions League spot.

Wesley put Roma ahead with a long curler late in the first half and then Evan Ndicka and Donyell Malen added second-half scores for the Giallorossi after Francisco Conceicao had equalized for Juventus.

Jeremie Boga scored for Juventus in the 78th to create a tense finish at the Stadio Olimpico, with former Roma coach Luciano Spalletti loudly urging his squad on for the equalizer.

AC Milan needed two late goals to secure a 2-0 win at Cremonese and bounce back from its second loss of the season.

Strahinja Pavlovic scored in the 90th and Rafael Leão added another five minutes into stoppage time for Milan, which had wasted a series of chances earlier on.

Second-place Milan moved back within 10 points of Italian league leader Inter Milan ahead of next weekend's derby.

Milan's only league losses this season came against Cremonese in its opener in August and at home against Parma last weekend.

Pavlovic's goal came following a corner, and a VAR review that confirmed the ball went in off his

shoulder instead of his arm.

Then Leão finished off a counterattack.

Also, Sassuolo beat Atalanta 2-1 with Armand Laurienté setting up both goals for the hosts; and Torino beat Lazio 2-0 with goals from Giovanni Simeone and Duvan Zapata.

American midfielder Yunus Musah scored in the 86th minute for Atalanta, his first competitive club goal since Jan. 22, 2022, for Valencia against Atletico Madrid.

In Paris, Veteran striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang rolled back the years with two late goals as Marseille twice came from behind to beat Lyon 3-2 in a pulsating Ligue 1 game.

With the clock running down, the 36-year-old Aubameyang equalized in the 81st minute with an opportunistic low finish from winger Igor Paixão's looping pass and then slid in Ethan Nwaneri's left-wing cross.

It was a second straight defeat for third-place Lyon, which saw its 13-game winning run come to an end last weekend and is only two points ahead of fourth-place Marseille with 10 games left.

Newly appointed Marseille coach Habib Beye, who played for the club as a right back from 2003-07, would not have been impressed as his side carelessly lost the ball on the left flank and fell behind in the third minute.

Lyon's teenage Brazil star Endrick expertly helped the ball on and midfielder Corentin Tolisso clipped a fine shot past goalkeeper Geronimo Rulli from 10 meters out.

Endrick almost made it 2-0 moments later with an overhead kick and needed treatment after hitting the right side of his head when he landed. He then

bamboozled the defense with remarkable close control only to shoot over.

Marseille then missed several chances to score as Mason Greenwood failed to make the most of some great positions.

Thudding challenges flew in during a first half which produced eight minutes of stoppage time because of the fouls.

Moments after Tolisso had a goal ruled out for offside, Brazilian winger Paixão equalized in the 52nd with a brilliant curler from the left edge of the penalty area into the top right corner.

There was more drama to come as 18-year-old Lyon winger Rémi Humbert netted his first career goal in the 76th.

But Aubameyang, who made his name with prolific spells at Borussia Dortmund and Arsenal, had the last word as Stade Velodrome erupted in joy and disbelief.

Veteran coach Antoine Kombouaré got off to a winning start with his latest club as Paris FC picked up a much-needed 1-0 home win against Nice.

The 62-year-old former defender is at his 10th club as coach. Four years ago, he saved Nantes from relegation and won the French Cup.

Zimbabwe midfielder Marshall Munetsi scored midway through the first half for Paris FC to move up to 14th place. Nice dropped to 15th.

"The victory is beautiful because it was built on suffering and pain. Nice caused us a lot of problems; we were sometimes on the limit, but we didn't crack," Kombouaré said. "This match was about recovery, about redemption, about fightback."

Paris FC has tough away trips next at Lyon and Strasbourg.

2026 World Cup tickets start at \$900

LOS ANGELES, March 2: Ticket prices for the 2026 FIFA World Cup range from \$900 for the opening match to \$8,000 for the final, making the world's biggest football event — kicking off in 100 days — a premium experience.

According to FIFA, nearly seven million tickets have been made available. Fans can purchase up to four tickets per match, with a maximum of 40 tickets across the tournament.

The first ticket phase, held in October via lottery, sold around two million tickets. The second phase, conducted in December and January and also based on a lottery system, saw a record 508 million applications, FIFA reported.

FIFA has not revealed the exact allocations from this phase, but the highest-demand matches included the final Group 11 game between Colombia and Portugal in Miami on June 27, Mexico vs. South Korea in Guadalajara on June 18, and the final at MetLife Stadium on July 19.



Former Brazilian soccer player Roque Junior holds a FIFA World Cup trophy during the FIFA World Cup Trophy Tour in Guadalajara, Mexico. (AP)

This expanded World Cup, the first in history to feature 48 teams and 104 matches, comes with a significant rise in ticket prices, especially for the most popular games.

Best of the Rest

Referee activates anti-racism protocol: Espanyol and Elche drew 2-2 in a Spanish league match briefly interrupted toward the end after the referee activated the anti-racism protocol.

The ref's decision came around the 80th minute after Espanyol defender Omar El Hilali accused Elche forward Rafa Mir of racially insulting him.

The game was stopped for about three minutes. The referee said in his post-match report that he was told by El Hilali that Mir used derogatory terms against him related to immigrants.

The use of the anti-racism protocol came less than two weeks after the first-leg match between Benfica and Real Madrid in the Champions League playoffs was halted for nearly 10 minutes when forward Vinícius Júnior accused Benfica player Gianluca Prestianni of calling him "monkey." Prestianni, who has denied racially insulting Vinícius and has been defended by Benfica, was provisionally suspended for one match by UEFA and did not play in the second leg.

Mir converted a 90th-minute penalty kick to secure a point for Elche in a result that extended both teams' winless streaks.

Elche, which is just outside the relegation zone in 17th place, hasn't won in 10 matches across all competitions, with seventh-place Espanyol winless in nine straight league games. (AP)



Canada beats Colombia 4-1: Vanessa Gilles, Janine Sonis, Sydney Collins and Nichelle Prince scored and Canada beat Colombia 4-1 on Sunday in the opening match of the SheBelieves Cup.

Canada ended a five-game losing streak in international play. It will face the United States on Wednesday in Columbus, Ohio.

Gilles opened the scoring in the 31st minute, heading in a corner from Sonis. Sonis was awarded a penalty kick in the 67th minute and scored on an arcing shot that beat goalkeeper Katerin Tapia to the left corner.

Collins connected in the 73rd, and Leicy Santos beat Kailee Sheridan on a penalty kick for Colombia in the 81st. Prince scored in the 90th minute.

It was chippy throughout, with seven yellow cards issued, two to Colombia's Gisela Robledo, which culminated in a red card. (AP)



Can will miss the rest of the season: Borussia Dortmund captain Emre Can will miss the rest of the season with a torn ACL in his left knee.

The Bundesliga club said Sunday that Can will be out for "several months" after the anterior cruciate ligament injury in the team's 3-2 loss at home to Bayern Munich in Der Klassiker on Saturday.

Can had tried playing on with the injury but had to go off before the break. He received an ovation from the appreciative home fans when he finally went off.

"Emre's injury is extremely bitter. Not just for him, but for all of us," Dortmund sporting director Sebastian Kehl said. "He is our captain, always puts himself at the service of the team, and is an important part of our club. Emre will get our every support over the coming months to ensure his full recovery."

Dortmund's loss left Bayern with an 11-point lead at the top of the Bundesliga. (AP)

Goalkeeper Yektaei impresses despite loss

South Korea starts campaign with win over Iran

GOLD COAST, Australia, March 2, (AP): Zahra Ghanbari and her Iran team stood while their national anthem played at the Women's Asian Cup soccer tournament on Monday, a long way from the war that started on the weekend with a major attack by Israel and the United States.

The mood was mostly sombre during the anthem, although there were some smiles to acknowledge supporters at the Gold Coast stadium. And then it was down to the business of football.

South Korea, runner-up at the 2022 Women's Asian Cup, won 3-0 despite the dogged defense of the Iranians anchored by goalkeeper Maryam Yektaei.

The South Koreans had 20 shots in the first half but only led 1-0 at the break on Choe Yu-ri's goal in the 37th minute. She swooped on the rebound when Jang Sel-gi's angled left-foot shot deflected off the post.

Kim Hye-ri converted from the penalty spot in the 59th minute and Ko Yoo-jin finished off the scoring with a well-timed glancing header in the 75th.

"We definitely could have scored a

few more - missed a couple of chances - that's something we'll definitely work on in the upcoming trainings," South Korea substitute Casey Phair said. "But I think it was a really good starting point to start the tournament

with three points."

Ghanbari, the captain, was substituted off late in regulation. Her team had only 21% of possession in the game and had just three shots at goal compared with 32 for the South

Koreans.

A small pocket of Iran fans chanted and waved red, white and green flags, including the pre-Islamic revolution flag.

One of the Iran team's biggest targets at the tournament is to secure a place in the Women's World Cup next year in Brazil, and that will require at least a quarterfinal run in Australia.

Iran will next play tournament host Australia on Thursday at the same venue on the Gold Coast, a beachside tourist destination in Queensland state.

A tournament record crowd of 44,379 attended the opening game in Perth on Sunday to see hometown star Sam Kerr score in Australia's 1-0 win over Philippines.

After that win, Kerr acknowledged the difficult circumstances for the Iranian team.

"They're young girls and young footballers ... we'll treat the game like any other game and show the team the utmost respect and prepare properly," Kerr told the tournament's Australian TV broadcaster.



South Korea's Choi Woo-jung, centre, takes a shot on goal as Iran's Fatemeh Makhdoomi, left, and Fatemeh Amineh attempt to block during the Women's Asia Cup soccer match between Iran and South Korea on the Gold Coast, Australia. (AP)



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Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James shoots as Sacramento Kings forward Precious Achiuwa defends during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles. (AP) — See Page 14

Sports

Samson powers India into T20 World Cup semifinals



South Africa's Ryan Rickelton hits a six during the T20 World Cup cricket match between South Africa and Zimbabwe in New Delhi, India. (AP)



India's fans cheer for their team during the T20 World Cup cricket match between India and West Indies in Kolkata, India. (AP)

South Africa stays perfect, Windies out

KOLKATA, India, March 2, (AP): Defending champion and co-host India secured the last semifinal spot at cricket's T20 World Cup after a five-wicket win over West Indies in the Super Eights with four balls remaining.

After West Indies lost the toss and posted a challenging 195-4, opener Sanju Samson led India to 199-5 in 19.2 overs with a belligerent unbeaten 97 off 50 balls in front of a home crowd of 68,000 at Kolkata's Eden Gardens.

"The way we played, it was a do-or-die game and the boys showed character," Indian captain Suryakumar Yadav said.

India's highest-ever successful

chase at the T20 World Cup set up a semifinal clash against unpredictable England in Mumbai on Thursday.

New Zealand will meet 2024 runner-up South Africa in the first semifinal at Eden Gardens on Wednesday. South Africa stayed perfect at the tournament after beating Zimbabwe by five wickets.

India finished second in Group 1 behind South Africa. West Indies failed to advance after finishing third in the group.

Jason Holder (37 not out) and Rovman Powell (34 not out) shared a 76-run unbroken partnership as every West Indies batter reached double figures. Opener Roston Chase top-scored with 40 runs off 25 balls, and Shimron Hetmyer smashed a 12-ball 27, with two of his team's 10 sixes.

India pacer Jasprit Bumrah took 2-36 in four overs, including the wickets of Chase and Hetmyer.

Samson stayed focused in a tall chase despite India losing two aggressive batters, Abhishek Sharma (10) and Ishan Kishan (10), inside the power play.

West Indies was sloppy in the field as Gudakesh Motie and Holder dropped sitters and the dewy ground saw preventable boundaries.

Samson reached his first half century in the tournament off 26 balls with six fours and three sixes when he square cut Motie to point boundary and kept the required rate under 10 an over.

Suryakumar added 58 runs with Samson before he was caught low at deep cover by Sherfane Rutherford before Tilak Varma's quick-fire 27 off 15 balls further dented West Indies hopes of staging a comeback.

Despite losing Varma and then Pandya late in the chase, Samson sealed the game with a six and a four off Romario Shepherd in the final over.

"We knew 200 is always a good score to chase here with the dew and

partnerships, that was the key."

All-rounder George Linde - brought in for the game to rest Keshav Maharaj - picked up 1-22 in three overs and then scored a crucial 30 not out off 21 balls batting at No. 7 as South Africa continued its unbeaten run to the semifinals.

Dewald Brevis hit 42 off 18 balls with four sixes, while Tristan Stubbs anchored the innings home with 21 not out off 24 balls, as South Africa finished with 154-5 in 17.5 overs.

Earlier, Zimbabwe opted to bat and put up 153-7 (20 overs) thanks to skipper Sikandar Raza scoring 73 off 43 balls.

Raza rescued his side after the top-order stumbled to leave Zimbabwe down to 28-2 in 4.3 overs. He put on 38 off 23 balls with Dion Myers, even as the Proteas struck back in the middle overs.

Linde got the breakthrough, with Myers caught for 11. Raza, though, scored 50 off 29 balls, hitting five fours and three sixes.

Lungi Ngidi and Corbin Bosch

(2-40) hit the middle order to reduce Zimbabwe to 87-5 but Raza found an able partner in Clive Madande. They put on 39 off 29 balls, before Kwena Maphaka finally accounted for Raza.

Madande's 26 not out helped Zimbabwe cross 150.

South Africa too started poorly as Raza struck twice with his off-spin bowling counterpart Aiden Markram out for four, while Quinton de Kock was out caught for a two-ball duck.

Ryan Burl held a terrific catch in the deep to dismiss Ryan Rickelton (31) who put on 29 off 18 balls with Brevis.

The crucial partnership was 50 off 25 balls for the fourth wicket - Brevis and David Miller (22) did the job again for the Proteas.

But Zimbabwe just wouldn't relent as Raza struck a third time to remove Brevis, while Blessing Muzarabani sent back Miller as South Africa was down to 101-5 in 10.4 overs.

Stubbs-Linde resisted with an unbeaten 53 off 43 balls to see their side home with 13 balls to spare.

Doha gears up for first Gulf Mini Football Cup

DOHA, March 2: The Qatari capital, Doha, is set to stage the inaugural Gulf Mini Football Cup from April 1-5, 2026, under the supervision of the International MiniFootball Federation (IMF). The tournament will unite national teams from across the GCC in a competitive showcase highlighting the rapid development and rising popularity of minifootball in the region.

Organizers confirmed that all Gulf nations will participate in the event, which aims to strengthen regional sporting ties and provide a fresh competitive platform to boost the profile and growth of the game throughout the Gulf.

The official draw will be held on the 7th of this month at Al Aziziyah Boutique Hotel within the Aspire Zone Foundation. Aspire Zone will also host the matches on its state-of-the-art pitches, renowned for their world-class infrastructure and advanced organizational capabilities, ensuring a high-standard event.

Mohammed Al-Mohannadi, Qatar international player and tournament general manager, emphasized that Qatar continues to reinforce its standing as a global hub for major sporting events. He praised Aspire Zone Founda-



The tournament logo

tion for its strong backing and efficient organizational preparations.

"Qatar has a long track record of successfully hosting sporting competitions," he said. "We appreciate the cooperation and support of Aspire Zone Foundation in staging this tournament, which gives us full confidence in delivering a championship that reflects the stature of Gulf sports."

Players could be sent off for covering mouths in 'confrontation': Infantino

CARDIFF, Wales, March 2, (AP): FIFA president Gianni Infantino has raised the prospect of red cards being shown to players who cover their mouths when confronting opponents.

The issue has been highlighted in recent weeks after Real Madrid player Vinicius Junior said he was racially insulted by Benfica's Gianluca Prestianni during a Champions League match.

Prestianni, who denies the allegations, had approached Vinicius while covering his mouth with his jersey during Madrid's 1-0 win in the first leg of the playoff match. He was provisionally suspended for the second leg while an investigation was being carried out.

The issue of players covering their mouths was discussed on Saturday at

a meeting of the International Football Association Board (IFAB).

Measures could come into force at this summer's World Cup.

"If a player covers his mouth and says something, and this has a racist consequence, then he has to be sent off, obviously," Infantino told Sky News. "There must be a presumption that he has said something he shouldn't have said, otherwise he wouldn't have had to cover his mouth."

"I simply do not understand - if you don't have something to hide, you don't hide your mouth when you say something."

"That's it, as simple as that. And these are actions that we can take and we have to take in order to be serious about our fight against racism."

MANCHESTER, England, March 2, (AP): Arsenal passed the latest test of its Premier League title credentials with a crucial 2-1 win against Chelsea, and Manchester United climbed up to third by beating Crystal Palace 2-1 to boost its pursuit of a return to the Champions League.

Jurrien Timber's second-half goal saw Arsenal re-establish a five-point lead over second-place Manchester City after Pep Guardiola's team kept the pressure on at the top by beating Leeds on Saturday.

Victory against Chelsea saw Arsenal overcome another of its major rivals and move a step closer to a first league title since 2004. It leaves the visit to City next month as potentially the last major hurdle for Mikel Arteta's team, which has no other games against the rest of the current top seven in the standings.

"We have the feeling that we have to win and win and win. You win so many games, but it is not enough to open the gap. That is the level of this league," Arteta said.

Benjamin Sesko's seventh goal in eight games sealed victory for United against Palace and moved it above Aston Villa in third on goal difference.

At the other end of the standings, Tottenham's winless run extended to 10 games after a 2-1 loss at Fulham - leaving it mired in a fight to avoid relegation. Nottingham Forest also failed to pull further away from the drop zone after a 2-1 loss at Brighton.

Arsenal had to respond after City closed the gap to two points a day earlier. And if Arsenal goes on to claim the title, it may well look back on this win as a decisive moment.

Even when down to 10 men, after Pedro Neto was sent off in the second half, Chelsea pushed deep into added time for an equalizer.

David Raya produced a stunning save to push Alejandro Garnacho's goalbound cross away as the seconds ran down at the Emirates. And the home fans breathed a sigh of relief when Liam Delap's goal was ruled out for offside in the dying moments.

In the end, Arsenal's threat from set pieces proved the difference again. William Saliba put the home team in front, converting from a corner after 21 minutes.

And after Piero Hincapié's own-goal got Chelsea back into the game in first-half added time, Timber headed in from another corner in the 66th.

With 16 goals from corners this sea-

son, Arsenal has tied the record for a Premier League season, according to stats provider Opta.

"It feels like a big result," United captain Bruno Fernandes said after his team beat Palace.

United's latest win boosted its push for a return to the Champions League and further strengthened Michael Carrick's credentials to be given the coach's job on a long-term basis.

He remains unbeaten since being given a contract to the end of the season in January, with a record of six wins in seven games. His cause may also have been helped after overcoming a Palace team coached by Oliver Glasner, who was one of the early favorites to get the job when United fired Ruben Amorim at the start of the year.

Over two spells as United coach, Carrick has picked up 23 points from nine games. Opta said it was the joint highest points total for a manager after his first nine games in the league's history - equalling Ange Postecoglou's start at Tottenham.

"This place means a lot to me so to have the sort of positivity and everyone

enjoying going to the games and watching it and for me to have an influence on that, I'm not going to lie, it feels good," Carrick said.

Glasner was widely seen as a leading contender for the United job. His reputation has grown after winning the FA Cup with Palace last season and he will be a free agent at the end of the current campaign. And when Maxence Lacroix headed Palace in front after just four minutes, Glasner had the chance to claim a statement win in front of United's hierarchy.

But Carrick has instilled a resilient streak in his team in just a short space of time and United leveled in the 57th after Lacroix dragged back Matheus Cunha in the box and was sent off for denying a clear scoring opportunity.

Fernandes stepped up and converted from the penalty spot for his seventh goal of the season.

Sesko, who has been a scoring substitute in recent weeks for United, was given a chance from the start and struck again with a powerful winning header in the 65th.

"We were behind so we had to show

some character," Fernandes said. "The result gives us the chance of getting third but there are a lot of games still to go. We have a lot to do and it is important we don't feel like we are already in the place we want to be."

Tottenham is still without a league win in 2026 after new coach Igor Tudor made it back-to-back losses in his first two games in charge. Spurs have equalled their longest winless streak in the Premier League - matching a record that dates back to 1994, according to Opta.

Last week's 4-1 rout at the hands of north London rival Arsenal was followed by another defeat at Fulham.

First-half goals from Harry Wilson and Alex Iwobi gave Fulham a 2-0 lead at the break. Richarlison pulled one back in the second half.

Tottenham is 16th - four points and two places above the relegation zone with 10 rounds to go.

Forest is 17th and two points clear after its defeat at Brighton.

Vitor Pereira became Forest's fourth coach of the season when hired last month, but has fallen to two straight losses in the league.



Arsenal's Jurrien Timber, third left, scores during the Premier League soccer match between Chelsea and Arsenal in London. (AP)