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Crown Prince gets Bahrain peer's call on Iran attacks Page 2

THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2026 / DHUL-HIJJAH 18, 1447 AH

emergency number 112

NO. 19220

16 PAGES

150 FILS

IRANIAN BARRAGE KILLS INDIAN EXPAT, 63 OTHERS INJURED

Kuwait airport bleeds again



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah inspects damage at Terminal One of Kuwait International Airport following the Iranian drone attack, directing immediate repairs and reviewing measures to restore operations.



Ministry of Interior photo
1st Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusef Saud Al-Sabah conducts an inspection of Terminal 1, assessing damage and being briefed on the handling of the incident and its aftermath.

- PM inspects T1 damage, orders immediate repairs
- 1st Deputy PM reviews fallout from airport attack
- Armed Forces intercepts 13 missiles, 17 hostile drones
- Health Ministry urges blood donation to support reserves
- Global chorus condemns Iranian assault

By Munif Naif, Marwa Al-Bahrawi and Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah conducted an inspection visit to the Terminal One (T1) at Kuwait International Airport on Wednesday, following the Iranian drone attack on the terminal.

He was accompanied by Director General of the Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) Sheikh Eng. Hamoud Mubarak Al-Hamoud Al-Sabah. During the tour, the PACA officials briefed His Highness the Prime Minister on the circumstances leading to the death of one individual and injuries of many others, as well as an assessment of the extensive material damage in several airport facilities and the initial technical evaluation.

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Opinion

■ Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

In Arab culture, it is said, 'When a thief is asked to take an oath, he replies, 'Relief has come!'

WHEN the sirens wailed in Kuwait the night before last, I recalled Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's apology to the Arabian Gulf states. I also remembered how the Revolutionary Guard retracted that apology within a few hours. This attitude reflects the current state of Iran, and indeed has reflected it for a long time.

Since 1979, this large country has become a multi-headed entity. Iran has not prioritized good-neighborly relations due to its arrogance and expansionist tendencies based on a centuries-old ideology. The Iranian expansionist strategy relies on religious and ideological influence over other countries' populations. It appears that the Iranian mind is oblivious to the developments the world has witnessed since the Middle Ages.

The sectarian Iranian mind, ruled by a group of madmen, thinks they own the world and can do whatever they please.

The ongoing Iranian bombardment of the Gulf states

is part of the terrorist regime's plan, which it has pursued for 47 years, up to the last war.

Iran's objective is not to bomb the United States, which it calls the "Great Satan", nor Israel, which it calls the "Little Satan."

The Iranian regime is working to achieve strategic integration between the two parties. While Israel strives to achieve its vision of a "Greater Israel," Iran seeks complete control over the region to revive its ugly dream of the alleged "glories of the Persian Empire," which vanished some 1,350 years ago.

Because Iran is governed by multiple heads, each faction works according to its own interests. This indicates a lack of internal consensus. This was observed in the Islamabad negotiations, where the Iranian delegation included more than seventy people, each spying on the others and each with their own opinion.

This also applies to current indirect negotiations and

the delay in responses to American messages, which can take several days, as the true decision-maker is absent.

This situation is so dangerous that chaos could erupt in the region at any moment, especially amid Iran's continued threats to close the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and the Strait of Hormuz. This would undoubtedly exacerbate the international economic crisis and increase global inflation.

The continuation of this precarious situation is pushing countries to seek solutions to avoid further losses.

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Embassies advise 'caution' amid security developments in Kuwait

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: In light of the recent security developments, several embassies in the country issued advisories and guidelines to their citizens, urging them to exercise caution, adhere to the instructions of the Kuwaiti authorities, and stay informed through official channels to ensure their safety.

The British Embassy called on its citizens to remain vigilant and follow instructions issued by official bodies, as well as to stay updated on trav-

el advisories. It confirmed the availability of urgent consular assistance services round the clock.

The Italian Embassy advised its citizens to avoid unnecessary travel during this period, remain where they are, follow official instructions, stay away from military sites, monitor flight status, and ensure the validity of their travel documents.

The German Embassy urged German citizens to follow security alerts and travel guidelines, and to register in the emergency system to receive updates and important information.

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3 Sri Lankans among T1 hurt

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff



Ratnayake

at Kuwait International Airport on Wednesday.

Ratnayake told the newspaper

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Post first, arrest later

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Within a few hours after a young man posted a video showing air defenses engaging several missiles, the Ministry of Interior officers arrested him and referred him to the concerned authorities.

In a press statement, the ministry confirmed that the competent authorities apprehended the user of a social media account as he filmed and posted videos showing air defenses engaging several missiles -- a violation that could harm public interest, national security and safety.

The ministry disclosed that the young man used his mobile phone to film while driving, which caused a traffic accident, a violation of relevant laws and regulations.

It emphasized that publishing or circulating images or videos related to military or security sites, or field response and readiness procedures, is an irresponsible behavior that could harm public interest, warning that it will not hesitate to take legal action against violators.

It reiterated its call for citizens and residents to abide by the regulations and instructions issued by the authorities, stressing that the law will be strictly enforced on anyone proven to have violated or disregarded the instructions, especially in light of the exceptional circumstances in the country and the region.



Ministry of Foreign Affairs photo
Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan with the Acting Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of Iran in Kuwait, Counselor Hamid Hameed Yaqoubi.

'Persona non grata'

Kuwait orders two Iranian envoys out within 24 hours

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, represented by Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan, on Wednesday handed a formal protest note to the Acting Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of Iran in Kuwait, Counselor Hamid Hameed Yaqoubi.

The note addressed the continued Iranian attacks and informed the Iranian mission of Kuwait's decision to reduce the number of Iranian embassy personnel, while

declaring two members of the diplomatic mission "persona non grata," requesting that they leave the country within 24 hours.

According to a Foreign Ministry statement, Al-Mashaan said the decision followed the ongoing Iranian ballistic and drones attacks on Kuwait. He said the latest attacks, renewed early Wednesday, targeted several civilian facilities and vital installations, including Kuwait International Airport.

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HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Thrasymachus: Justice is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger

Whoever possesses the greatest power or military influence makes the rules

When the Nazis triumphed, all they commanded was justice

As long as they possess the power, they can subjugate others

Machiavelli declared that there is no moral order in the world

Alfonso, deluded by the strength of his armies, was defeated by the Arabs on his own land

Alfonso died of grief one year after the Battle of Zal-laq

The king lives a life of luxury, while his people starve

The revolution turns on itself, and a new kind of government emerges

Loyalty turns into suspicion, and suspicion becomes enough to warrant a death sentence

Neighbors reported each other to save themselves

Families were torn apart



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:14 Asr 15:21
 Sunrise .. 04:48 Maghrib .. 18:44
 Zohr 11:46 Isha 20:15

Crown Prince role crucial in bolstering stability, progress foundations

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): The Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Minors Affairs Alia Al-Saquer extended Tuesday her highest congratulations and best wishes to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on his second anniversary in office.

His Highness the Crown Prince has an important role in strengthening the foundations of stability and progress and in advancing the path of achievement and development under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Al-Saquer said in a statement to KUNA on Tuesday.

His Highness the Crown Prince possesses strong leadership and exceptional diplomatic skills that support Kuwait's standing and policies across all fields, while further promoting development, accomplishments, and successes at both the national and international levels, she added.

Al-Saquer prayed to Almighty Allah to guide His Highness the Crown Prince in all endeavours for the good of the nation, to bless him with continued health and well-being, and to preserve him as a source of support and strength for His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

PAAAFR chief congratulates

Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) Engineer Salem Al-Hai extended Tuesday the highest and sincere congratulations to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on the second anniversary of assuming office.



Alia Al-Saquer



Salem Al-Hai



Bashar Abdullah

Speaking to KUNA, Al-Hai said that this great and precious occasion shows pride, lauding sincere efforts and national congratulations of His Highness the Crown Prince to backing the development and success of the country.

He prayed to Allah the Almighty to grant His Highness the Crown Prince lasting good health and success for the country's prosperity.

He also asked Allah to maintain security, stability and prosperity to Kuwait under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

PAS chief congratulates

Director General of Public Authority for Sports (PAS) Bashar Abdullah extended on Tuesday

great and sincere congratulations to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on the second anniversary of assuming power.

In a press release, Abdullah wished His Highness the Crown Prince everlasting good health and ongoing efforts to serve the homeland.

His Highness the Crown Prince holds a highly esteemed status among Kuwaitis and plays a key role in backing comprehensive development, he said.

His Highness the Crown Prince also plays a pivotal role in sponsoring and caring sports, a strong push toward enhancing sports accomplishments and creating conditions to empower youth, Abdullah added.

Support provided by the Kuwaiti political leadership to sports has made several successes, he noted, wishing Kuwait further security, stability and prosperity.



Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled

'Women must have more role in leadership, peace'

Kuwait, global leaders partake in Spain confab

MADRID, June 3, (KUNA): Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs Sheikha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah affirmed Kuwait's strong commitment to enhancing women's participation in decision-making positions, diplomatic work, conflict resolution, and peace building, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Kuwait Vision 2035.

This statement was made during her participation (on behalf of Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah) in the high-level session titled "Peace and Democracy Facing 21st Century Challenges: A Feminist Foreign Policy" at the 5th Ministerial Conference on Feminist Foreign Policies, held in Spain on Tuesday and concludes today, Wednesday.

She highlighted Kuwait's efforts to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security through the National Committee she chairs.

Sheikha Jawaher reviewed the significant progress of Kuwaiti women in leadership roles, noting that Kuwaiti women currently hold three ministerial positions, two ambassadorships, and three Assistant Foreign Minister posts.

Women are also increasingly represented in the security, police, armed forces, judiciary, and public prosecution sectors, she added.

She pointed to a historic milestone with the appointment of Awatif Al-Sand as Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice - the first woman to hold this position and the first female member of the Supreme Judicial Council in Kuwait.

She underscored that investing in women and empowering them in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and decision-making is an investment in security, stability, and sustainable development.

Lasting peace, she said, requires utilizing the full potential of all members of society.

Sheikha Jawaher participated alongside several senior international officials, including Spanish and Angolan state secretaries, UN Special Representative Pramila Patten, and United Kingdom and UN Development Programme (UNDP) officials.

In an interview with Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Sheikha Jawaher emphasized that wom-



KUNA photo
 Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs Sheikha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah is presented a memento by Director-General for the UN, International Organizations and Human Rights at Spain's Foreign Ministry, Lucia Garcia.

en's diplomatic role must extend beyond formal representation to direct participation in political negotiations, national reconciliation, and conflict resolution efforts.

Women are often the most affected by wars and crises, making their inclusion essential for achieving sustainable peace, she noted.

Kuwait, she added, calls for strengthening women's presence in all stages of peace processes and expanding their leadership roles in diplomacy and crisis management.

Sheikha Jawaher Al-Sabah, highlighted Kuwait's commitment to further promoting women's participation in decision-making positions, diplomacy and peacebuilding efforts.

This came in a meeting with the Director-General for the UN, International Organizations and Human Rights at Spain's Foreign Ministry, Lucia Garcia, on the sidelines of Sheikha Jawaher's participation, in the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Feminist Foreign Policies.

During the talks, the two sides discussed ways to strengthen cooperation and coordination on issues of mutual interest, particularly within the framework of the UN and international organizations, reflecting both countries' commitment to supporting multilateral action and enhancing inter-

national dialogue and cooperation.

The discussions also addressed issues related to the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

She reviewed Kuwait's national efforts in this regard, including the work of the National Committee for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which she chairs, noting that the committee serves as a national framework that strengthens institutional and participatory approaches in this field.

Sheikha Jawaher also praised Spain's role in supporting women's issues, gender equality and women's participation in diplomacy and related international efforts.

She commended Spain's hosting of the ministerial conference, describing it as an important platform for exchanging expertise and perspectives on challenges and opportunities related to women's empowerment and their role in peacebuilding and strengthening democracy.

The conference kicked off yesterday with Jose Manuel Albares and has brought together more than 700 participants from around the world, including representatives of 60 foreign ministries, government officials, delegates from 140 international organizations and UN bodies, as well as academic institutions and civil society organizations.

Crown Prince gets Bahrain peer's call on Iran attacks

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Wednesday a telephone call from Bahrain Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

During the call, Crown Prince Salman, who also serves as Prime Minister, conveyed the greetings of Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The Crown Prince expressed Bahrain's condemnation of the Iranian ag-

gressions that targeted Kuwait's civil facilities, pointing out significance of continued coordination and communication for mutual safety and stability.

Meanwhile, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled stressed the necessity of such coordination, as well as follow-up to achieve the aforementioned goals in a manner that would buttress joint Gulf action, expressing deepest appreciation for the Bahraini Crown Prince and wishing the brotherly people of the Kingdom utmost safety and stability, read a Diwan statement.

MoCI shuts all branches of 'food distribution' centers

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced the temporary suspension of operations at food distribution branches due to routine maintenance of the automated systems linked to these branches.

In an official statement, the ministry ex-

plained that the suspension began on June 1, 2026. The measure is part of ongoing technical upgrades and maintenance aimed at enhancing system efficiency.

Operations at all food distribution branches will resume once the maintenance work is completed.

The minister called on citizens and beneficiaries for their understanding and cooperation during the temporary suspension.

Over 18,000 citations issued in extended GTD crackdown

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The General Traffic Department conducted intensive field campaigns throughout the country from May 25-31 to instill traffic discipline, enforce the law, and prevent violations that endanger lives.

These campaigns resulted in the issuance of 18,552 traffic citations, dealing with 2,488 traffic reports, and arrest of 24 wanted individuals, 18 who hold expired residency permits and three who failed to present valid identification documents.

This is in addition to the impounding of

24 wanted vehicles and two vehicles found to be in an unusual condition, 431 vehicles and 27 motorcycles were seized, 15 juveniles were referred to the Juvenile Prosecution, and 54 individuals were detained at the Traffic Detention Center.

During these campaigns, the officers also dealt with 913 traffic accidents and 165 other accidents, some of which resulted in injuries.

The department affirmed the continuation of traffic campaigns on the main and secondary roads and taking legal measures against violators in order to protect lives and public and private properties and to enhance road safety.



Farwaniya Governorate photo
 Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi and Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi visited airport workers injured in the attack.

Speedy recovery for injured, hospital staff efforts hailed

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah and Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi on Wednesday visited the victims of the attack on Kuwait International Airport at Farwaniya Hospital to check on their health condition and assess the level of medical care provided to them.

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health Dr. Suleiman Al-Sabah, Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Affairs Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, Director of Farwaniya Health District Dr. Mohammad Al-Rashidi, Director of Farwaniya Hospital Dr. Ali Al-Mutairi, and a number of health officials and

medical staff were present during the visit. The Governor and Health Ministry inquired the health condition of the injured and listened to the explanation of Health Ministry officials about the treatment procedures. They affirmed the commitment of the State to provide everything to ensure that the best possible healthcare is given to the injured.

Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser expressed his wish for the injured to have a speedy recovery, praising the dedication of the medical, nursing and administrative staff at Farwaniya Hospital and their high level of preparedness and efficiency in dealing with the injured from the very first moments.

Other Voices

The origin of customs, traditions, foods, and inventions

By Ahmad alsarraf

REGARDLESS of our educational or religious backgrounds, upbringing, age, or culture, we all, to varying degrees, perform dozens of actions on different occasions, including engagements, weddings, divorces, meals and hospitality, visits, sitting at the table, using its utensils, superstitions about the number 13 or black cats, optimism about specific numbers, and fears of certain dangers.

All of this is done for reasons we do not often question, but rather inherited from those who came before us. It seems that most people cannot escape them unless they choose to live in isolation.

The publisher of the book "Extraordinary Origins of Everyday Things", by researcher Charles Panati, says that the book enriches knowledge, delights readers with discoveries and the interplay of weakness and strength within us, and introduces us to the remarkable origins of many things in our lives.

The book offers a glimpse into the fasci-

inating stories behind more than 500 inventions and the origins of holiday celebrations such as Mother's Day, Labor Day, and Christmas. It explains the meaning of the horseshoe as a symbol of good luck, the reason for knocking on wood, the story of Uncle Sam, the wedding dress, and why some people wear black at funerals while others wear white.

Many cultures, both Western and Eastern, use phrases like "Cheers!" when consuming food or drink, without knowing the origin of the idea. The practice of drinking a toast originated with the Greeks in the early 6th century BC, who used it to reassure their guests that their drink was free from poison.

It was also a preferred method associated with eliminating enemies.

The Romans used to throw a piece of toast into a glass because, for many years, they believed it would sweeten the drink.

Modern scientific research has confirmed that charcoal can reduce a drink's acidity, meaning that a piece of toasted bread can make a sour drink more palatable.

This is where the English word "toast" comes from, derived from the Latin word "tastus", meaning toasted bread, and from which the phrase "making a toast" originates.

Over time, the term came to be used for celebratory drinking toasts. It became so common that refusing to drink a toast to a guest at a meal was considered a form of insult.

Various cultures have traditionally prayed and given thanks to God before or after eating, either for a bountiful harvest or, for example, out of fear among nomadic peoples of potentially unsafe food. Meat might be rotten, and milk sour.

Some plants, such as mushrooms, berries, and tubers, were often poisonous. Spoiled food could cause convulsions, temporary paralysis, fever, nausea, or even death. Therefore, people have prayed, and continue to pray, before eating, either as a grateful gesture or to avoid potential harm.

The surviving artifacts of the peoples of the Middle East and Africa confirm this belief, as they offered sacrifices and offerings to their gods before feasts, not only to express gratitude, but also to avoid potential poisoning.

Later, as humans began cultivating their own crops and tending their own livestock, they gained confidence in the safety of what they consumed.



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HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



Thrasymachus: Justice is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger

THE Greek philosopher Thrasymachus (c. 459-400 BC) was an orator belonging to the ancient Sophist movement. As a key character in Plato's Republic, he is known for his audacious statement, "Justice is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger."

He also said, "Justice depends on how the powerful view things." In other words, whoever possesses the greatest power or military influence makes the rules. Justice is simply what the strongest party commands.

When the Nazis triumphed, all they commanded was justice. When the Stalinists triumphed, all they commanded was justice. Whether the victor is Machiavelli or the bourgeoisie makes no difference, as long as they possess the power to subjugate others. What they command is justice.

Thus, Thrasymachus's view is that justice is the power to coerce. There is no moral order in the world.

This idea is deeply ingrained. Although it was, at least superficially, refuted in the first book of Plato's Republic, it is, like all profound ideas, deeply rooted. Its echoes remained present, albeit implicitly, in the Western political tradition.

Machiavelli boldly declared that there is no moral order in the world. He was among the first to reaffirm Thrasymachus's assertion in the first book of Plato's Republic.

We live in a world of nature, a world of power, violence, and oppression.

Alfonso VI declared, "I will defeat the Arabs on their own land. I have an army that will conquer people and ghosts. Even the angels of heaven will not defeat my army."

Alfonso, king of the Christian kingdoms in Andalusia, stood proud of his army, which numbered over eighty thousand soldiers. He boasted,

Whoever possesses the greatest power or military influence makes the rules

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Machiavelli declared that there is no moral order in the world

Alfonso, deluded by the strength of his armies, was defeated by the Arabs on his own land

Alfonso died of grief one year after the Battle of Zallaqa

The king lives a life of luxury, while his people starve

The revolution turns on itself, and a new kind of government emerges

Loyalty turns into suspicion, and suspicion becomes enough to warrant a death sentence

Neighbors reported each other to save themselves

Families were torn apart

"If I had enough ships, I would cross the sea and fight the Arabs on their own land."

When the Muslim leader Yusuf ibn Tashfin of Morocco learned of Alfonso's words, he sent him a message saying, "We have heard that you wish you had enough ships to cross the sea to us. Do not trouble yourself, for we will cross to you so that you may see the consequences of your wish."

Yusuf ibn Tashfin crossed the sea with an army of 25,000 Muslims. The Battle of Sagrajas (Zallaqa) ensued, where the Muslim forces defeated Alfonso's army. Only five hundred of Alfonso's soldiers survived. Alfonso was wounded in the battle and died one year later, consumed by grief and despair over his defeat.

The revolution overthrew the king in the name of liberty

It is 1789 and we are in France. The king lives a life of luxury, holding lavish banquets, while his people starve. The country is bankrupt, and anger grows among the population. The people demand change time and again, but nothing happens. They take to the streets and storm the royal palace.

The regime falls, and for the first time, the people have rights. For a brief period, liberty spread throughout France. However, the revolution turns on itself, and a new kind of government emerges. The leaders of the revolution believe that protecting it requires eliminating its enemies. Loyalty turns into suspicion, and suspicion becomes enough to warrant a death sentence; even a whisper can lead to execution.

Neighbors reported each other to save themselves. Families were torn apart, and prisons overflowed with accused individuals. Those arrested were denied the right to a trial. Punishment was carried out without due process.

The guillotine worked constantly. No one felt safe anymore, including priests, farmers, and women. In just ten months, 17,000 people were executed.



When you agree with someone completely, you get one of two outcomes either a lifelong friend or a lifelong lesson. You will know what comes next and what you have to do.



The most dangerous stage in a person's life is when they become complacent, not because they do not care, but because they no longer expect anything that does not hurt them. At that point, life becomes meaningless.



They say He who cannot find his place among the great will gather the small and pretend to be their leader. Whoever falls because of his actions will never be saved by excuses.

Deportation for speeder

Expat engineer caught driving at 153km/h

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: An Arab engineer has been added to the list of early deportees for exceeding the speed limit by more than 150 km/h, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the expatriate was observed driving a four-wheel-drive vehicle at a speed of 153 km/h. He admitted

to the violation in the traffic report but claimed ignorance of the new instructions and orders issued by the ministry last Friday afternoon. He has been referred to the Deportation Department and his departure to his home country is expected within the coming days or possibly hours.

The ministry explained that any resident exceeding the speed limit of 150 km/h will be subject to a traffic ticket, vehicle impoundment,

deportation, and escalating fines.

As for citizens, exceeding 200 km/h will result in a traffic ticket, vehicle impoundment, and imprisonment.

The ministry said, "As for citizens driving at speeds of up to 170 km/h, the penalties include issuing a traffic citation, precautionary seizure, and impounding the vehicle. For any citizen exceeding 150 km/h, the penalties include issuing a citation and impounding the vehicle."

PAFN chief visits Jahra market

Strict gov't eye on food safety

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Talal Al-Daihani, Director of the Jahra Inspection Department at the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN), highlighted PAFN's role in overseeing food safety and monitoring establishments, stressing that continuous inspections are being conducted on all food establishments in the area, reports Al-Anba daily.

Al-Daihani revealed that inspectors toured the governorate's fruit and vegetable market, which has 518 stalls, more than 13 restaurants, and 18 warehouses.

He affirmed that PAFN's role includes supervising food products and their safety, verifying the health and fitness cards of workers, and ensuring compliance with health regulations within establishments. Al-Daihani said the PAFN office located in the market operates 24 hours a day, receives complaints, conducts continuous inspections, and issues citations for violations, including the sale of food unfit for human consumption.

In another development, PAFN will celebrate the World Food Safety Day to raise public awareness about the importance of food safety and to promote a culture of healthy eating. It is observed annually on June 7 to highlight the importance of taking action to prevent, detect, and manage foodborne illnesses.

Court cases

Kuwaiti jailed 3 years for inciting sectarian hatred

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: State Security Court of Appeals sentenced a citizen to three years in prison after convicting him of inciting sectarian strife and promoting ideology harmful to national unity. The Court of Appeals overturned the lower court's ruling that had refrained from issuing a sentence against the defendant, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The court acquitted a citizen of charges of insulting the Lebanese Republic, supporting the terrorist organization Hezbollah, and promoting its ideology on social media. The Court of Appeals overturned the lower court's three-year prison sentence.

Meanwhile, the Court of Appeals acquitted a woman of charges of disseminating false news on social media with the intent to incite panic among the public during the recent war. The court overturned the lower court's ruling that had refrained from issuing a sentence against the defendant.

'Grandpa' acquitted: The Misdemeanor Court of Appeals upheld a ruling acquitting a grandfather of charges of assaulting his grandson (his daughter's son), reports Al-Anba daily.

The court confirmed the acquittal after determining that the appeal filed by the child's father was malicious.

It stated in its reasoning that the case file lacked any conclusive evidence to substantiate the accusation against the defendant.

Lawyer Alaa Al-Saeedi insisted

that the complaint was malicious, explaining that the report was filed with the intent to harm the grandfather and the child's mother in relation to a custody case pending before the Family Court.



Expat wife wins case: The Court of Appeals ruled in favor of a woman from a Western North African country who had married a Kuwaiti citizen, overturning a lower court's decision to dismiss her claim for proof of marriage, reports Al-Anba daily.

The court confirmed the marital relationship between the two parties, which took place in a European country, despite the husband's death two years after the marriage contract was signed. The marriage was not officially registered in Kuwait.

Lawyer Jarrah Al-Malik explained that his client married the Kuwaiti citizen through a customary marriage contract concluded in a European country, with a dowry paid and the consent of her guardian. However, the contract was not officially registered in Kuwait by the husband, who died two years after the marriage.

He said the Court of Appeals ruled in favor of his client, confirming her marriage to the deceased relative of the respondents, who had denied the marriage in an attempt to deprive her of her inheritance.



Jarrah Al-Malik

'Be vigilant against cash fraud & terror funding'

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: As part of its ongoing efforts to safeguard the integrity of the banking system and strengthen its anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing framework, the Central Bank of Kuwait has directed banks and exchange companies to enhance their vigilance and take the necessary measures to counter any attempts to exploit the financial system for fundraising or transferring funds to entities that support terrorist activities, reports Al-Rai daily.

The Central Bank emphasized the need for full compliance with the approved regulatory instructions in the field of anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing, particularly when executing transactions or transfers at the request of clients linked to bank accounts outside Kuwait.

It stressed the importance of adhering to the requirements and recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) related to combating money laundering and terrorist financing, thereby reinforcing Kuwait's commitment to international standards.


33 abandoned vehicles lifted in big crackdown

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: An intensive field campaign carried out recently by the Public Hygiene and Road Occupancy Department in Hawally Governorate resulted in the issuance of 35 citations for hygiene and road occupancy violations, the removal of 33 abandoned and illegally parked vehicles, and the issuance of 156 warning and notice stickers, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The department affirmed that inspection teams are working to raise cleanliness levels in their areas and remove any encroachments that negatively affect the public appearance or obstruct road usage.


The Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality stated that field teams from the Public Hygiene and Road Occupancy Departments are continuing intensified inspection campaigns in various governorates to monitor and remove violations of hygiene and road occupancy regulations.

It emphasized that field inspections will continue on a regular basis, with strict legal action to be taken against violators in accordance with applicable regulations.



مفـل محـل
الاصـتـيـار الـأول للـصـومـع
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Farmers seek review of ban on agricultural usufruct transfers

Call to protect farm continuity

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The agricultural sector is one of the most important pillars of food security in Kuwait, reflecting the efforts of farmers who have devoted their lives to reclaiming land, developing agricultural production, and ensuring its continuity despite various challenges, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

With Dr. Reem Al-Fulaij assuming her duties as the Minister of State for Development and Sustainability, farmers are hopeful that a dialogue will be opened with them and that their views will be heard on issues affecting the future of agriculture and the sustainability of national production.

Among the issues farmers believe warrant study and reconsideration is the decision prohibiting the transfer of agricultural usufruct rights to another beneficiary who would continue working and producing on the farm. They say such a measure would help ensure the con-

tinuity of successful agricultural projects and preserve the expertise accumulated through years of hard work and dedication.

Agricultural sector workers emphasize that it took decades of effort for Kuwaiti farms to reach their current levels, both in quantity and quality.

They stressed the importance of preserving these successful experiences to support national food security and sustainable development.

Farmer Mohammed Ali Al-Mutairi is a notable example of accumulated agricultural expertise and success. He spent nearly 40 years working on farms in Al-Wafra, preserving his land and maintaining production year after year.

Farmer Mohammed Badi is among dozens of farmers who followed a similar path, dedicating their lives to agriculture and production and contributing to the availability of local produce

in the market.

Farmers believe that supporting the agricultural sector is not limited to increasing production but includes preserving accumulated national expertise and encouraging the continuity of productive farms that have proven success over many years. They say this would strengthen Kuwait's ability to achieve its food security and sustainability goals.

Farmers also hope that Minister Reem Al-Fulaij will visit Kuwaiti farms to see firsthand their achievements and successful experiences and hear directly from farm owners and workers.

They believe such engagement would help build a comprehensive vision that supports this vital sector and aligns with the state's efforts to enhance sustainability and develop national resources.

Agriculture is no longer merely an economic activity, but it has become an integral part of the food security system. Supporting farmers and ensuring the continuity of farm production represent a national investment in Kuwait's future and its food security.



Dr. Al-Fulaij

Technical Committee okays MPW, MoF, MoSA and PAAET proposals

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The Technical Committee at the Municipal Council, under the leadership of Munira Al-Amir, held a meeting on Tuesday, during which it approved all eight items on its agenda.

Following are the major approvals:

■ Proposal of the Ministry of Public Works for the preliminary design and route of a road linking the Sixth Ring Road, from Salil Al-Jahra Resort, to Sector (N2) in Mutlaa residential area,

■ Request of the Ministry of Finance to establish bank branches outside the district center, which was previously transferred from Kuwait Finance House (KFH) to a ministry,

■ Request of the Ministry of Social Affairs to set up kiosks and booths on the ground floor of the central market serving cooperative societies,

■ Initiative of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) to expand the Entrepreneurs and Small Enterprises Center in Shuwaikh Industrial Area.

PAMA achieves 100% Kuwaitization target

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The acting Director General of the Public Authority for Minors' Affairs (PAMA), Alia Al-Saqer, announced the completion of the implementation of Kuwaitization policy with the increase in the percentage of Kuwaiti nationals in targeted positions to 100 percent by June 1, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press statement, Al-Saqer said the completion of the nationalization plan is part of PAMA's ongoing efforts to develop its operations and enhance its institutional efficiency, in line with the state's directives to support Kuwaiti nationals in various administrative and technical positions.

She affirmed that PAMA is committed to modernizing its work mechanisms and developing its internal procedures to optimize the utilization of Kuwaiti nationals and enhance the quality of services provided to beneficiaries under its care.

Kuwait, Pakistan FMs discuss regional challenges via phone

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held a phone call on Tuesday with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Pakistan Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

During the call, the two sides discussed

the latest developments in the region and reviewed efforts being made to address current events and challenges.

The conversation also included an exchange of views on issues of mutual concern amid ongoing regional developments.

Zakat House carries out water distribution project nationwide

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): Kuwait's Zakat House has carried out a water distribution project through "smart refrigerators" at several key sites across the various governorates of Kuwait.

The step comes as part of humanitarian and community efforts aiming to provide drinking water to visitors, employees, and the public throughout the year, Zakat House told KUNA in a news statement.

It added that the project includes the daily distribution of bottled water, as needed, through 20 vital locations in all governorates.

The project's capacity is up to 9,800

bottles a day to enhance the values of social solidarity and consolidates the concept of sustainable charitable action, it added.

The refrigerators are placed at key service bodies including the Public Authority for Civil Information and the Public Authority for Civil Aviation, some hospitals and other facilities, it stated.

Donors can contribute to this project through Zakat House website, its app, Sahl, Zakat House booths at The Avenues and 360 Mall, or Zakat House revenue collection centers operate from Sunday to Thursday during both morning and evening shifts, it noted.



Al-Najat Charity distributes aid packages to beneficiaries during a humanitarian initiative in Egypt. Al-Najat photo

Charity expands housing support

Al-Najat builds 10 homes in Egypt

CAIRO, June 3, (KUNA): Kuwait's Al-Najat Charity announced on Tuesday the inauguration of 10 new homes for underprivileged families in Egypt, while confirming that work is continuing to complete an additional 60 houses as part of its efforts to provide suitable housing for those most in need.

Speaking to KUNA during a visit by the charity's delegation to Egypt, Director General Dr. Jaber Al-Wandah said the total number of homes constructed by the association across various Egyptian governorates has reached nearly 500.

He noted that the visit aims to follow up on humanitarian and development projects, assess beneficiaries' needs and enhance the impact of the charity's assistance programs.

Al-Wandah noted that the association distributed sacrificial meat to 3,500 beneficiaries in Egypt as part of an Eid Al-Adha project implemented in 15 countries and benefiting around 325,000 people.

It also provided food baskets to 500

Egyptian families.

He added that the delegation inspected a number of economic empowerment and development initiatives carried out by the charity, including small retail kiosks, livestock projects and sewing machine programs, in addition to visiting Quran memorization centers.

The delegation also visited several charitable organizations and orphan care institutions. Al-Wandah said the charity currently sponsors around 8,500 orphans in 16 countries and is committed to ensuring that support reaches them on a regular basis.

During the visit, gifts were distributed to students at Quran memorization centers and children residing in orphan care facilities.

The program also included tours of several humanitarian and healthcare facilities, including Ahl Masr Foundation, as well as visits to the World Islamic Council and other community institutions serving vulnerable groups.

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In Arab

Frankly, the Arabian Gulf states are not the only ones affected. According to strategic assessments, the Gulf states are among the least affected, as Europe and other regions are expected to be more severely impacted by fluctuations in oil and gas prices, as well as raw materials that contribute to global food security.

The world must realize that Iran is pursuing a systematic policy of starvation. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the current unrest threatens approximately 363 million people with acute hunger, including 45 million at risk of immediate famine.

This means that Iran's terrorist practices do not threaten just one country, but the entire world. Everyone must confront the Iranian threat of causing millions of people to face starvation and exerting further pressure to disrupt the global economy.

The world must recognize the fact that engaging with Iran through diplomatic frameworks is like the Arabic proverb: "When a thief is asked to take an oath, he replies, 'Relief has come!'"

The world must confront the rogue Iranian regime, which never ceases to threaten nations. The world must punish the Iranian regime so that Iran returns to democratic, civilian governance and so that the region, as well as the entire world, can dispose of this terrorism.

Finally, may God bless the efforts of the Kuwaiti armed forces that dealt with the recent attack on Kuwait International Airport. I wish a speedy recovery to the wounded and pray that God have mercy on the civilian martyr who fell in the aggression.

Embassies advise

The Belgian Embassy called on its citizens to exercise caution and vigilance and to comply with the directives issued by the Kuwaiti authorities. It affirmed the availability of communication channels and emergency services to assist citizens, if needed.

The French Embassy stressed the importance of adhering to official guidelines and seeking shelter upon hearing air raid sirens.

It also urged its citizens to monitor flight status through the airlines, refrain from approaching debris or suspicious objects, and immediately report them to the concerned authorities.

The embassies emphasized in their statements that the safety of their citizens is a top priority, calling on everyone to obtain news and information from official and reliable sources in Kuwait and to fully abide by the instructions of the relevant authorities.

Kuwait orders

The attacks resulted in one fatality, dozens of injuries, and material damage to vital facilities and diplomatic premises.

Al-Mashaan said this constitutes a flagrant violation of Kuwait's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the Charter of the United Nations, principles of international law, and UN Security Council Resolution 2817.

He reiterated Kuwait's strong condemnation and denunciation of the attacks, stressing the country's categorical rejection of the use of its territory or airspace for hostile acts against any state.

He added that Iranian allegations were unfounded and unsupported by evidence, stressing that repeating such claims could not justify attacks against Kuwait's territory or its civilian and vital facilities.

Al-Mashaan affirmed Kuwait's inherent right to self-defense and to take all necessary measures to preserve its sovereignty, safeguard its security, and protect its territory, airspace, citizens and residents in accordance with international law.

3 Sri Lankans

that the injured Sri Lankan workers were carrying out maintenance work on the elevator inside the airport at the time of the explosion.

He disclosed that the injuries were concentrated in the head, arms and legs as a result of the shattering glass, indicating the injured were rushed to the hospital.

He added that their health condition is stable and they are under observation. He is hoping that they will be discharged from the hospital within a day or two, while clarifying that their injuries are not serious.

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Kuwait airport

His Highness emphasized the importance of taking all the necessary measures to ensure the safety of employees and those present at the site.

He issued a directive to immediately carry out repairs at the terminal to ensure the resumption of operations as soon as possible.

He expressed his gratitude and appreciation to all the airport staff and emergency teams for promptly dealing with the aftermath of the attack, commending their quick implementation of procedures and their high level of efficiency in handling the situation.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah also conducted an inspection tour of Terminal 1 (T1) at Kuwait International Airport to assess the damage caused by the recent Iranian aggression.

In a press release on Wednesday, the Ministry of Interior said Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef inspected the extent of the damage to the terminal building and its facilities, underscoring the need for a comprehensive technical evaluation and the implementation of all necessary measures within their respective jurisdictions.

During the visit, he received a detailed briefing from concerned officials on the incident and the actions taken to confront and contain its effects.

In the meantime, the Kuwait Armed Forces intercepted 13 hostile ballistic missiles and 17 drones in the wee hours Wednesday when Iran attacked the country once again, including civilian and vital facilities.

Official spokesperson of the Ministry of Defense Colonel Saud Al-Atwan disclosed in a media briefing on the latest developments that the Armed Forces detected and engaged 13 hostile ballistic missiles within Kuwaiti airspace, intercepting them over several residential areas, resulting in the fall of some debris.

He added that military forces also detected and dealt with 17 hostile drones as part of ongoing defensive operations.

He stated that the Iranian attacks on civilian and vital installations, including the airport, resulted in the death of an Indian, injuries to several people and huge material damage. He expressed condolences to the family of the deceased and wished speedy recovery for all those injured.

He urged the citizens and residents not to approach, photograph, publish or circulate images and videos of damaged locations, debris impact sites or remnants of interception op-

erations on social media platforms to maintain public security and safety.

He stressed the importance of adhering to safety instructions issued by the relevant authorities and to obtain information from official sources only.

He confirmed that the Armed Forces remain fully prepared and continue carrying out their duties in coordination with other concerned State authorities, taking the necessary measures to maintain national security and guarantee the safety of citizens and residents.

In addition, Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah on Wednesday visited those injured in the recent attacks.

The ministry disclosed that Sheikh Abdullah checked on the condition of the injured and assessed the medical care being provided to them.

During the visit, the medical teams briefed the minister on the health condition of the patients and the treatment plans for them, wishing them speedy recovery and continuous good health.

Moreover, the Ministry of Interior called on the public to stay away from damaged sites and avoid gathering near affected areas to ensure their safety and to allow specialized teams to conduct field operations efficiently.

Official spokesperson and Director General of the Public Relations and Security Media General Department at the ministry Brigadier Nasser Bousalaib made the statement at the media briefing.

Bousalaib pointed out that the continuous targeting of residential areas, civilian locations and vital facilities by Iran is a hostile approach aimed at undermining national security and endangering lives and properties.

He disclosed that Terminal One at the airport was targeted by several hostile drones, causing the death of one passenger, injuries among airport staff and passengers, and enormous damage to airport facilities and infrastructure.

He indicated that the warning sirens were activated five times over the past hours, increasing the total number of activations since the beginning of the attacks to 188.

He added that the explosive ordnance disposal teams dealt with 36 reports related to falling debris and unidentified objects linked to defensive interception operations, raising the total number of such reports handled since the start of the attacks to 975.

During the briefing, he presented visual footage highlighting the procedures followed in responding to reports about debris and unidentified

objects.

He reiterated the warning against touching or tampering with unidentified objects, fragments or remnants resulting from interception operations due to the serious risks they pose, urging the public to immediately report such items through the Emergency Hotline (112) so that specialized teams can take the appropriate action.

Furthermore, Brigadier General Mohammad Al-Gharib, official spokesman of Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), revealed that KFF dealt with nine exceptional incidents early morning Wednesday. He said these incidents include four fire outbreaks caused by falling debris, along with securing five sites in coordination with the other concerned agencies.

He stressed that residents and citizens must avoid touching suspicious items or dealing with fires caused by falling debris.

He urged the public to report such incidents immediately through the emergency hotline number 112 for the experts to handle the situation.

Meanwhile, the Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) announced later on Wednesday the resumption of all Kuwait Airways flights through Terminal Four, following the completion of damage assessments and the implementation of measures to ensure operational safety.

It also affirmed the resumption of Jazeera Airways flights at Terminal Five.

In a press statement, PACA explained that the decision to resume operations was issued after field inspections and technical evaluations conducted by the relevant authorities in coordination with various government entities to ensure the terminal is ready for flights and passengers.

It advised travelers wishing to continue their journey to contact Kuwait Airways to confirm flight schedules and travel details.

It stressed that the safety of passengers and airport personnel remains its top priority, affirming that it will keep on coordinating with all concerned authorities to ensure uninterrupted operations in accordance with the highest security and safety standards.

Also, Chief Executive Officer of Jazeera Airways Parathan Basubathy affirmed the full commitment of the airline to ensure the safety and comfort of passengers and crew members, indicating that some flights might be delayed or cancelled due to the evolving situation.

Earlier, PACA suspended air traffic and flights, while transferring flights to alternative airports after the attack on Terminal One.

PACA spokesperson Abdullah Al-Rajhi indicated that the authority activated its emergency plan and the concerned authorities dealt with the attack according to protocol in order to guarantee the safety of workers and passengers while securing facilities at the airport.

He confirmed that air traffic was suspended and flights were transferred to nearby airport until further notice, explaining that these measures were taken along with the implementation of security and technical plans to guarantee the immediate resumption of operations at the airport.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly denounced the continuous Iranian attacks using ballistic missiles and drones, the latest of which targeted civilian and vital facilities, including the airport.

In an official statement, the ministry disclosed these attacks led to the death of one individual, injuries to many others, and damage to vital facilities, such as the diplomatic missions.

The ministry reiterated Kuwait's categorical rejection of the blatant Iranian aggression that further escalated regional tensions and undermined security and stability – a flagrant violation of the international law, the United Nations (UN) Charter and UN Security Council Resolution No. 2817.

It stressed that the security and sovereignty of Kuwait, and the safety of its citizens and residents are considered a 'red line' that cannot be compromised. It indicated that the repeated attacks are akin to a systematic aggressive approach that the country will not accept or tolerate.

It stressed that Kuwait reserves its full and inherent right to take appropriate measures in response to the repeated Iranian attacks, in accordance with the international law.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Health declared a state of high health alert from the early hours on Wednesday.

It affirmed the activation of the emergency plan and raised the readiness level in health facilities, while mobilizing medical, nursing and technical staff to ensure rapid response to emergencies and take care of the injured.

Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad, official spokesperson of the ministry, stated that medical emergency teams were immediately dispatched to the airport, supported by 25 ambulances. He added that the teams administered first aid and transported the injured to hospitals as per the procedures stipulated in the national emergency plan.

He revealed that 63 injured individuals were admitted to various hospitals -- 34 at Farwaniya Hospi-

tal, 17 at Jaber Hospital, five at Jahra Hospital, three at Adan Hospital, two at Amiri Hospital, and one each at Sabah Hospital and Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital.

He said the injured included civilians, airport staff and travelers, some of whom sustained serious and multiple injuries like fractures, head trauma, brain hemorrhage, amputations, and injuries caused by the explosions, as well as smoke inhalation cases.

He added that the medical teams performed seven major emergency surgeries, while the Accident and Emergency, Intensive Care and Operating units continue to operate on high alert round the clock, in coordination with the relevant authorities.

He emphasized that the ministry is continuously monitoring the health situation, pointing out that the local health system proved its high level of preparedness and ability to handle major incidents and exceptional circumstances, thanks to the concerted efforts of various health entities and State agencies.

The Ministry of Health announced on Wednesday that the Central Blood Bank is receiving blood donors at several affiliated centers to support the country's strategic blood reserves and enhance healthcare preparedness.

In a press statement, the ministry said the Jabriya Blood Bank receives donors from Sunday to Thursday between 7:30 am and 8:30 pm; on Fridays from 2:00 pm. to 8:00 pm., and on Saturdays from 7:30 am to 8:00 pm.

The Cooperative Societies Blood Donation Center, located near Adan Hospital, operates during the same hours. Meanwhile, the Sheikh Salwa Al-Sabah Center, adjacent to the Maternity Hospital, receives donors from Sunday to Thursday between 7:30 am. and 8:30 pm.

The blood donation units at Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital and New Jahra Hospital receive donors from Sunday to Thursday between 7:30 am and 8:30 pm.

The ministry added that the blood donation unit at Hamad Al-Humaidhi and Sheikh Al-Sudairawi Medical Center (Shuwaikh Clinic) receives donors from Sunday to Thursday between 7:30 am and 1:00 pm

Gulf, Arab and international leaders issued strong condemnations on Wednesday of Iranian missile and drone attacks targeting Kuwait and Bahrain, warning of a dangerous escalation that threatens regional security and violates international law.

Kuwait denounced the attack on Bahrain as a "dangerous escalation" and a blatant breach of international

law, urging an immediate halt to such actions to prevent further instability. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed Kuwait's full solidarity with Bahrain and its support for all measures taken to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Saudi Arabia condemned the attacks on both Bahrain and Kuwait, including strikes on Kuwait International Airport and other vital facilities that left one person dead and several injured. Riyadh described the attacks as a clear violation of Gulf states' sovereignty and international law, reiterating its full support for both countries and extending condolences to Kuwait.

The United Arab Emirates also strongly condemned the strikes on Kuwait, which caused casualties and damage to key infrastructure, including the airport and diplomatic missions. The UAE said the targeting of diplomatic premises constituted a grave violation of international norms, particularly the Vienna Convention, and warned of the broader threat to regional stability.

Qatar condemned the attacks on civilian facilities in both countries, calling them a serious breach of international humanitarian law, including the prohibition on targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure. Doha stressed the need for de-escalation and renewed its full solidarity with Kuwait and Bahrain.

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun also condemned the attacks, describing them as a violation of sovereignty and international law, and called for intensified efforts to de-escalate tensions and protect regional stability.

The United Kingdom joined the growing international condemnation, with Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper describing the attack on civilians at Kuwait International Airport as "shocking."

"My thoughts are with all those affected," Cooper said in a statement posted on X. "Our total solidarity is with the people of Kuwait and our partners in the Gulf who deserve security. It is vital the ceasefire is sustained and we urge Iran to engage fully in dialogue to achieve peace."

Belgium also condemned the Iranian attacks on Kuwait and Bahrain, reaffirming its solidarity with both countries.

Belgian Foreign Minister Maxime Prevot described the targeting of civilian facilities as unacceptable and warned that such actions risk further destabilizing the region. He called on Iran to halt its attacks and stressed the need for an immediate end to the violence, a successful conclusion to ongoing negotiations, and a return to regional calm.



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Rubio optimistic on eventual Iran nuclear talks despite congressional skepticism

WASHINGTON, June 3, (AP) — US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Tuesday that he is optimistic about the potential for a resumption in nuclear talks with Iran despite a shaky ceasefire in the war that is looking increasingly in doubt.

Rubio defended the Trump administration's approach to Iran and other global hotspots in back-to-back hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a House Appropriations subcommittee. He was briefly disrupted by protesters at each session.

In his first public testimony since the Iran war began at the end of February, Rubio said the Iranians have agreed to negotiate on nuclear points that they had not been willing to address in the past but would not offer an assessment on what those talks might produce.

"They have agreed to negotiate aspects of their nuclear program that just a month ago, just a year ago, they were refusing to even mention," Rubio told the Senate. He noted, however, that there was no guarantee "it will lead to a deal that's acceptable" and that negotiations have been made difficult by the instability of Iran's leadership.

Rubio's optimism ran counter to



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio testifies before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing to Review the FY27 State Department Budget Request on Capitol Hill, on June 2, in Washington. (AP)

pessimistic reports from two semi-official Iranian news agencies that Iran has stopped communicating with mediators after Israel threatened to bomb Beirut as it fights the Hezbollah militant group. President Donald Trump disputed that Iran has cut off communication with mediators, call-

ing the Iranian reports "false and erroneous."

Rubio's wide-ranging testimony was met with fierce objections from Democrats, including tough questions about the status of US foreign assistance to respond to diseases such as the Ebola outbreak in Africa.

Chan advances in bid to replace Pelosi

LA Mayor Bass advances to Nov runoff

LOS ANGELES, June 3, (AP) — After a tough first term framed by the most destructive wildfire in city history and an ongoing struggle with widespread homelessness, Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass advanced to a November runoff Tuesday as she fights to stay in City Hall against challengers from both ends of the political spectrum.

"I appreciate you for standing with me when others doubted me, because you know who I am," she told supporters. "I have devoted my entire life to serving the city that I love, where I was born, and I'm going to continue to do that all the way to victory in November."

The Associated Press has not yet called a second candidate to advance to the runoff. California has a history of substantial vote updates after Election Day that can sometimes shift the outcome as late-arriving mail and drop-off ballots are counted.

Spencer Pratt, a Republican and former star of the reality television show "The Hills," was second in early returns. Pratt accuses Bass of letting the fires get out of control and failing to make enough progress on the homelessness crisis.

Speaking to reporters outside a restaurant where he gathered with



Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass speaks during an election night event on June 2, in Los Angeles. (AP)

supporters, Pratt signaled he would welcome a matchup with Bass, a former member of Congress and the first Black woman to serve as mayor.

Also:

WASHINGTON: San Francisco Supervisor Connie Chan has advanced to the November ballot in a bid to fill the congressional seat being vacated by former House

Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Pelosi, who is retiring, endorsed Chan as her successor in a crowded primary that sent San Francisco Democrats scrambling for the safe, liberal seat.

In another development, **San Diego City Councilwoman Marni von Wilpert**, a Democrat, has advanced to the November election for a San Diego-area US House seat.

'Advanced AI capabilities make our Nation stronger'

Trump signs executive order that invites vetting of top AI models for nat'l security risks

WASHINGTON, June 3, (AP) — US President Donald Trump signed an executive order on oversight of artificial intelligence Tuesday, less than two weeks after postponing a White House ceremony over his concerns that a similar policy could dull America's technological edge.

The order establishes a framework for the federal government to vet the national security risks of the most advanced AI systems for up to a month before their public release. Participation by AI developers would be voluntary, the order says.

"Advanced AI capabilities make our Nation stronger, but also introduce new national security considerations that require coordinated action across executive departments and agencies," the order says.

It was not immediately clear to what extent the order differed from the one Trump declined to sign on May 21.

The order says the government would have only 30 days to review

an AI system, a shorter time frame than some in the industry were expecting. A longer time period might have been seen as too burdensome for a fast-moving and highly competitive industry.

Trump canceled an Oval Office event with tech industry executives last month because he did not like what he saw in the earlier version of the order's text. "We're leading China, we're leading everybody, and I don't want to do anything that's going to get in the way of that lead," Trump told reporters at the time.

That directive was characterized as a voluntary collaboration with participating US-based tech companies, including Anthropic, OpenAI and Google, which are sometimes described as "frontier labs" because they are building the most advanced AI systems. Several companies had been planning to have executives present at the May 21 signing event. Trump ended up signing it without any ceremony.



US President Donald Trump, (left), and Kevin Warsh arrive at a swearing-in ceremony for Warsh as Chairman of the Federal Reserve in the East Room of the White House, on May 22, in Washington. (AP)

The White House said in a social media post Tuesday that the executive order "creates a process for frontier labs to voluntarily share cutting-

edge cyber models in order to secure critical infrastructure and strengthen the government's own cyber defenses. We are NOT conducting over-

sight of all new models, as that level of government overreach would have chilling effects on free speech and innovation."

Juan Londoño, a policy analyst at the libertarian-leaning Cato Institute, said the order is imperfect but "a step in the right direction to prepare the nation for the release of advanced AI systems."

He applauded the White House's characterization of the process as voluntary but said he was concerned about the vagueness of how the government, led by the director of the National Security Agency, will decide which AI models qualify for scrutiny, and how it will decide which "trusted partners" get early access to them.

Londoño said in an interview that giving so much discretion to the NSA director was a "dangerous precedent" that could enable the government to "weaponize" the policy against companies it is clashing with, like Anthropic.

Plans for a new AI cybersecurity directive followed Anthropic's April announcement of its most advanced AI model, called Claude Mythos, in the middle of the company's legal fight with the Trump administration over a contract dispute with the Pentagon.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and outgoing Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell soon after convened an urgent meeting with Wall Street CEOs, warning them about the risks posed by Mythos' apparent ability to find cybersecurity vulnerabilities in the world's software. Anthropic has limited access to Mythos only a small group of trusted partners, such as big tech companies and banks, though it said Tuesday it has expanded that group by another 150 organizations.

Anthropic called Trump's new order "an important step in strengthening America's leadership in AI" and said it looks forward to collaborating with the White House to support its implementation.



A plumes of black smoke is seen over the port of St. Petersburg, Russia on June 3, after a Ukrainian drone attack. (AP)

Ukrainian drones hit St Petersburg oil terminal ahead of 'Russian Davos'

KYIV, June 3, (AP) — Ukrainian long-range drones struck an oil terminal in St. Petersburg and set it ablaze, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Wednesday, as the Russian city hosts an annual international economic forum that is a banner event for President Vladimir Putin.

The drones flew more than 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) to hit the terminal, Zelenskyy said on social media. Clouds of black smoke rose over the city's port after the attack. St. Petersburg is Russia's second-largest city and is where Putin was born.

Russian authorities said only that the Ukrainian drone strike targeted the city's infrastructure, without providing further details. The airport of St. Petersburg briefly suspended flights overnight because of the attack. Authorities also cut off mobile internet services.

With the front line changing little as swarms of drones hinder battlefield movement, both sides have sought an edge by increasingly launching long-range strikes. The war that followed Russia's invasion of its neighbor has

now stretched into its fifth year, with no end in sight.

The latest strikes are an embarrassment for Putin, weeks after he last month pruned back an annual Victory Day parade in Moscow due to fears of Ukrainian drone attacks.

Putin is set to speak on Friday at the economic forum in St. Petersburg that the Kremlin views as a prestige event. The gathering has for decades been Russia's leading event for attracting foreign capital. It is sometimes called Russia's Davos, likening it to the World Economic Forum held in Davos, Switzerland.

Major Western investors and officials have stayed away since Russia invaded Ukraine more than four years ago. Saudi Arabia is a special guest country this year and is due to send a large business delegation.

The strikes came a day after Russian forces launched a massive drone and missile attack on Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities, killing at least 22 civilians and wounding 138, as Moscow followed through with its threat of escalating its regular barrages.

Top EU official tells Western Balkan countries that bloc's enlargement is real

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina, June 3, (AP) — European Council President Antonio Costa said Monday that this week's European Union summit with Western Balkan candidate nations aims to show that the opportunity for enlargement is real.

Speaking in Bosnia at the start of a pre-summit tour of the Western Balkans, Costa said that amid global geopolitical uncertainty and economic instability, "enlargement is a geostrategic interest for Europe."

"It (enlargement) is an investment in the peace, stability and security of our continent," Costa added. "This tour is a clear sign that the commitment of the European Union to the Western Balkans is real. As real as the opportunity for enlargement."

Costa will co-chair the summit in Montenegro on Friday that will gather EU leaders and top officials from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro.

The six nations are each at a different stage of the accession process with Montenegro and Albania leading the way. The EU has recently sought to encourage reform in the



European Council President Antonio Costa arrives at the Srebrenica Memorial Center in Potocari, Bosnia, July 11, 2025. (AP)

candidate nations fearing growing influence of Russia and China.

Ukraine and Moldova are also among about ten countries aspiring to join the bloc.

Candidate countries must bring their laws into line in 35 policy areas, or "chapters," ranging from justice standards to farm and fishing rules.

All 27 EU members must agree before each chapter can be opened, and then again for it to be closed.

Friday's event in the Adriatic Sea resort of Tivat will be "a clear demonstration of our determination to bring forward our cooperation and build on the momentum of the European Union's enlargement," Costa said.

UK government condemns violence at protest over teen's stabbing death

LONDON, June 3, (AP) — Britain's interior minister accused activists of hijacking a tragedy to stir up violence after police were attacked at a protest over the death of a teenager who was handcuffed as he lay dying while his killer stood nearby.

Police were pelted with chairs, cans, rocks and flares late Tuesday by some of the hundreds who attended a protest in the southern English coast city of Southampton, where Henry Nowak was killed in December. Two people were arrested and 11 officers and a police dog were injured, police said.

Nowak's death has triggered debates about policing and knife crime, and has spurred claims by far-right activists and politicians that there is bias against white people in the justice system.

Nowak's killer, Vickrum Digwa, who is Sikh, falsely claimed he was the victim of a racist assault by 18-year-old Nowak, who was white. When police officers arrived, they initially treated the wounded man as a suspect, before noticing his injury and trying to resuscitate him.



In this image taken from PA Video, police and protestors clash during a protest following the death of Henry Nowak, a 18-year-old student stabbed to death with a Sikh kirpan ceremonial by Vickrum Digwa, in Southampton, England on June 2. (AP)

Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood said Tuesday night's violence was "completely unacceptable."

"The Nowak family made a powerful call to us all yesterday to not let Henry's death be used to create further division, hatred or tension," she said. "There can be no justification for hijacking this tragedy to stir up

violence and disorder. Those responsible can expect to face the full force of the law."

Digwa, 23, was convicted of murder and sentenced Monday to life in prison with a minimum term of 21 years. The judge said he didn't believe Nowak had said anything racist to his attacker.

Europe

37 injured in France multi-vehicle pileup: Thirty-seven people were injured in a massive vehicle pileup triggered by a heavy truck in the southern French city of Antibes on Tuesday.

The semi-truck carrying construction equipment tumbled down a slope without braking at around 2:00 p.m. (1200 GMT) in the Alpes-Maritimes department, reported French daily Le Figaro.

The truck first crashed into a police car, slightly injuring the three officers inside, before plowing into 22 other vehicles in a cascading chain-reaction collision, injuring a total of 37 people, who were rushed to the hospital for treatment. (Xinhua)

□ □ □

Police in Italy arrest 2: Italian police on Tuesday arrested two people accused in the deaths of four migrant farmworkers who were burned alive in a car, a gruesome attack captured on video surveillance cameras, police and news reports said.

According to the video, which was broadcast Tuesday on RAI state television and other Italian media, assailants poured liquid into the back of the car and set it ablaze as it was parked at a gas station in Amendolara, near Cosenza in the southern Calabria region, RAI said.

One of the apparent assailants was then seen trying to keep the doors of the car closed. One man escaped from the car and was treated for burns at a nearby hospital, RAI said. (AP)

'Conservatives' support base has been fractured in wake of Yoon's impeachment'

S.Koreans vote in local elections seen as gauge of support after President Lee's first year

SEOUL, South Korea, June 3, (AP): South Koreans voted Wednesday in mayoral and other local elections that are seen as a gauge of support for President Lee Jae Myung's year-old liberal government.

Opinion surveys suggested Lee's Democratic Party is certain to win more races than its main rival, the conservative People Power Party, which remains in disarray after President Yoon Suk Yeol was removed from office and convicted of rebellion over his martial law debacle in late 2024.

Given its favorable political landscape, experts say the Democratic Party must score a landslide victory and win some key races such as the mayoral vote in Seoul, the capital, so as to give Lee a clear boost.

"The conservatives' support base has been fractured and weakened in the wake of Yoon's impeachment, while the liberals' support

base has grown stronger. Considering that, results of the elections will determine whether their dominance would prolong for a considerable time," said Jeong Han-Wool, director of the Korean People Research Institute.

Up for grabs in Wednesday's polls are 16 mayoral and provincial gubernatorial posts, 12 of them held by the PPP. Fourteen new members of the 300-member National Assembly will also be chosen in by-elections.

The polls opened at about 14,300 stations at 6 am and are to close at 6 pm. As of noon, the voter turnout rate stood at 19%, according to the election commission. South Korea has 44.6 million eligible voters.

Some earlier surveys indicated the Democratic Party would win up to 15 of the 16 posts. But newer surveys showed opposition or independent candidates were closing



A woman casts her votes for the nationwide simultaneous local elections at a polling station in Seoul, South Korea on June 3. (AP)

the gap with their Democratic Party competitors or even overtook them in five to seven races.

The Democratic Party entered the elections with a clear advantage because the public still has strong neg-

ative feelings about Yoon's martial law imposition, said Choi Jin, director of the Seoul-based Institute of Presidential Leadership. In addition, voters likely view the Lee administration as a new government that deserves a chance to implement its agenda, he said.

Thursday will mark one year in office for Lee, whose approval ratings hover over 60%. A key factor attributing to Lee's popularity is what he describes as "pragmatic diplomacy" that eased concerns that his rule would hurt ties with the US and Japan. Whatever the outcome of Wednesday's election, Lee's foreign policy agenda will likely remain unchanged, experts say.

Choi said that a resounding victory for the Democratic Party would be it winning at least 12 races in the elections. He said the party must also win the hotly contested Seoul mayoral race or the Lee government

would suffer "a tremendous blow."

The Seoul race pits the Democratic Party's Chong Won-o, a former Seoul district head who rose politically after Lee publicly praised his governance last October, against current mayor and political heavyweight Oh Se-hoon with the PPP.

A Seoul mayor "isn't a post that someone whose campaign solely relies on the president's coattails can afford," Oh told reporters Tuesday.

In a separate news conference Tuesday, Chong said he expected Seoul voters to deliver "a stern verdict" on Oh over what he called the mayor's incompetent and irresponsible governance style.

The PPP is still struggling with internal feuding between reformists who joined the Democratic Party-led push to impeach Yoon and his loyalists who attempted to protect the embattled leader.

Ex-Thai PM Thaksin freed early from parole after receiving royal pardon

BANGKOK, June 3, (AP): Thailand's former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra formally completed all his obligations related to a prison sentence on Wednesday, when a royal pardon ended his four-month probation early.

The 76-year-old billionaire populist, who was a dominant force in Thai politics for more than two decades, was released from a Bangkok prison last month to cheering crowds. There has since been speculation that he might continue to exert his strong influence over the Pheu Thai Party, which is part of the governing coalition, though his family has said he may want to step back from politics.

The decree by King Maha Vajiralongkorn was published in the Royal Gazette late Tuesday and became effective Wednesday. Thailand is a constitutional monarchy, giving the king the final word on pardons of convicted criminals.

The king's decision was made on the occasion of Queen Suthida's birthday. It applied broadly to eligible convicts who met specific conditions. Thaksin qualified for full release be-



Former Thailand prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra hugs his grandson with his daughter Pinthongta Shinawatra, (not seen), following his release on parole from a Bangkok prison in Bangkok, Thailand on May 11. (AP)

cause he had been released on probation and had less than a year remaining on his sentence.

Thaksin was a telecommunications magnate who founded his own politi-

cal party in 1998 and served as prime minister from 2001 until a military coup ousted him in 2006 while he was abroad.

His ouster triggered nearly two decades of political polarization, even as parties aligned with him repeatedly returned to government during his self-imposed exile. His populist policies won strong support among poorer voters, particularly in the rural north and northeast, but his popularity and sometimes high-handed style created deep fractures between his base and the country's urban elites, royalists and the military.

Thaksin was released May 11 after serving eight months of a one-year sentence for corruption-related charges. As part of his parole conditions, he was required to wear an electronic monitoring bracelet and originally was scheduled to remain on probation for four months.

Thaksin's lawyer, Winyat Chatmontree, confirmed to The Associated Press that Thaksin has been fully released from his legal obligations, but said there are some procedures to remove his bracelet, which could take several days.



The mouth of the swollen Koza River is seen in Kushimoto town, Wakayama prefecture, central Japan on June 3, following a severe weather system in the area. (AP)

Heavy rain from tropical storm raises flood risks in Tokyo region

A tropical storm dumped heavy rain and raised flood risks around east-central Japan as it moved into the heavily populated Tokyo region Wednesday.

Heavy rain already paralyzed street traffic in the city, hundreds of flights were cancelled and train services were suspended or delayed. More than 5,000 homes lost power,

according to Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings, which serves the capital region.

In downtown Tokyo, residents near the Zenpukuji River were advised to take shelter. Television footage showed the swollen muddy water on the verge of overflowing.

Tropical Storm Jangmi was east of Shima city and moving northeast

around midmorning while packing maximum sustained winds of 90 kph (55 mph), the Japan Meteorological Agency said.

The agency issued the highest-level flood warning in a number of areas in central and eastern Japan, urging people living along rivers and in vulnerable areas to move to higher ground for safety. (AP)



Firefighters douse a fire in a hotel in New Delhi, India on June 3. (AP)

New Delhi building fire kills 21, says police

A fire swept through a building in a New Delhi neighborhood Wednesday, killing at least 21 people and injuring several others, police said.

The building in the Malviya Nagar neighborhood in the southern part of the city had a restaurant on the ground floor and a hotel above. The predominantly residential area

is densely populated and is popular with students and young professionals.

The blaze was extinguished with the help of eight fire engines, and more than 40 people were rescued and taken to nearby hospitals, Delhi police said in a statement.

The cause of the blaze was not

immediately known.

Images from the scene showed firefighters trying to douse the blaze as thick smoke billowed from the building. Some people trapped inside were seen hanging from windows and shouting for help as flames and smoke swept through parts of the building. (AP)

EU observers reject Petro fraud claims, calling Colombia's vote 'transparent'

BOGOTA, Colombia, June 3, (AP): The European Union's Electoral Observation Mission to Colombia on Tuesday dismissed President Gustavo Petro's claims of fraud in Sunday's bitterly contested presidential election, saying the vote count was carried out in a "transparent, orderly and fluid" manner.

The mission's chief, Esteban González Pons, said none of the 12 candidates in Sunday's election came to his mission with claims of irregularities. A second round of voting is scheduled for June 21 pitting lawyer Abelardo de la Espriella against Sen. Iván Cepeda, the candidates who garnered the most votes.

Cepeda, the candidate representing Petro's party, the Historical Pact, refused on Sunday to acknowledge a quick count of the election results, in which he placed second, saying he would wait for a more detailed vote count that is overseen by judges and notaries to comment on the results. Shortly before Cepeda made his statement, Petro published a message on X, where he argued that 800,000 vot-



President Gustavo Petro speaks after voting during the presidential election in Bogota, Colombia on May 31. (AP)

ers had been illegally added to voter rolls. More than 23 million voters participated in Sunday's election, in which de La Espriella received 43.7% of the votes, followed by Cepeda's 40.9%, according to official results.

On Monday, Cepeda appeared to

soften his tone, saying that election monitors deployed by his party had not found "irregularities of a sufficient dimension to speak of fraud." The candidate also said he would defeat de La Espriella in a second round of voting, challenging him to a debate.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Rahman elected President of UN General Assembly

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: In the election held on 02 June 2026 at the United Nations Headquarters, candidate of Bangladesh Dr. Khalilur Rahman secured 99 votes from the 193 Member States of the United Nations, defeating the candidate of Cyprus, who received 91 votes. This landmark victory is a strong testament to the confidence and trust that the international community places in Bangladesh, as well as to the country's growing diplomatic stature and constructive engagement within the multilateral system.

This achievement is not only the election of a Bangladeshi candidate to one of the most distinguished positions within the United Nations; it also constitutes a significant international recognition of Bangladesh's longstanding commitment to multilateral diplomacy, international peace and security, sustainable development, and global cooperation.

The successful outcome reflects the convergence of three key factors: the visionary leadership and timely guidance of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, the coordinated and intensive diplomatic efforts undertaken by Bangladesh within a limited timeframe, and the extensive experience, professional excellence, and international standing of Dr. Khalilur Rahman.

Bangladesh's campaign has been spearheaded by Foreign Minister Dr. Khalilur Rahman, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam, and the Prime Minister's Adviser on Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir, supported by Bangladesh's missions and embassies worldwide.

The distinguished professional experience, diplomatic acumen, and proven leadership credentials of Bangladesh's candidate contributed significantly to this landmark achievement. A major milestone in the campaign came on 13 May



UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, (left), and 80th President of the United Nations General Assembly Annalena Baerbock, (right), flank Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman, newly elected President of the 81st UN General Assembly on June 2.

2026, when Bangladesh's candidate Dr. Khalilur Rahman participated in the Interactive Dialogue organized by the current President of the General Assembly, Annalena Baerbock. During the two-and-a-half-hour session, Dr. Rahman presented his vision statement and outlined his priorities and work plan for leading the General Assembly. The dialogue was widely praised within diplomatic circles.

Following these extensive engagements and consultations, nearly 30 Member States formally conveyed their support for Bangladesh's candidacy, reinforcing growing confidence in the country's vision and leadership. This broad-based endorsement placed Bangladesh on a clear and credible path towards electoral success.

Bangladesh's campaign has placed particular emphasis on strengthening effective multilateralism, safeguarding the interests of

developing countries, enhancing international cooperation for climate-vulnerable states, advancing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, supporting UN peacekeeping efforts, and amplifying the voice of the Global South. The campaign has been widely viewed as issue-based, inclusive, and grounded in principles.

The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh expresses its profound appreciation to the Member States of the United Nations for the trust and confidence reposed in Bangladesh through this historic election. The Government further reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and to working constructively with all Member States in advancing multilateralism, international peace and security, sustainable development, and effective global cooperation.

Africa

Senegal's ousted PM boycotts new govt: Senegal's ousted prime minister Ousmane Sonko said his ruling majority party will not participate in the new government after months of tensions with President Bassirou Diomaye Faye, threatening political deadlock in a country already buckling under record debt.

The two were former allies from the party known as Pastef, an acronym from its French name, Patriotes Africains du Sénégal pour le Travail, l'Éthique et la Fraternité. The party, which is headed by Sonko, holds a strong majority in parliament with 130 deputies out of 165. (AP)

Zimbabwe justice minister introduces bill: Zimbabwe's justice minister on Tuesday introduced a constitutional amendment bill in Parliament that would extend the tenure of the country's 83-year-old president and shift presidential elections from a direct popular vote to selection by lawmakers.

The proposal would defer elections due in 2028 by two years and extend President Emmerson Mnangagwa's term to 2030. It would also lengthen the terms of the president, MPs, councilors and mayors from five to seven years.

The move has heightened political tensions in a country where critics of the government have often been detained or harassed. (AP)

Oil price down \$12.48 to \$105.03 pb

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went down by USD 12.48 to reach USD 105.03 per barrel on Tuesday, compared to USD 118.35 pb last Friday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Wednesday.

In global markets, Brent crude rose by USD 1.02 to USD 96.00 pb, while West Texas Intermediate rose by USD 1.60 to USD 93.76 pb.

Business

Reaffirming its commitment to youth development

Gulf Bank celebrates over 20 years of partnership with INJAZ Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Gulf Bank announced the renewal of its strategic partnership with INJAZ Kuwait, reaffirming its long-standing commitment to empowering Kuwaiti youth and equipping them with the skills required to succeed in a rapidly evolving labor market.

The renewed partnership reflects Gulf Bank's continued focus on investing in young people through impactful training and entrepreneurship programs that enhance students' practical capabilities, strengthen their leadership potential, and prepare them to become active contributors to Kuwait's future development.

Spanning more than 20 years, the partnership between Gulf Bank and INJAZ has supported thousands of high school and university students, helping to develop a new generation of future leaders, entrepreneurs, and skilled professionals.

On this occasion, Gulf Bank's Chief Marketing Officer, Mrs. Najla Aleisa, affirmed that the partnership forms an integral part of the Bank's five-year strategy and aligns with Kuwait Vision 2035, both of which place strong emphasis on youth development, human capital, and sustainable national progress.

She said: "At Gulf Bank, we believe that investing in youth is a true investment in the future of Kuwait. Our partnership with INJAZ goes beyond institutional cooperation. It represents a long-term commitment to empowering students with the practical, financial, and leadership skills they need to enter the labor market with confidence and contribute meaningfully to the country's development."

The successful partnership between Gulf Bank and INJAZ contributed to training nearly 25,000 male and female students during the 2025/2026 academic year, with the participation of Gulf Bank employee volunteers. Through their involvement, volunteers supported youth across a variety of programs, including Innovation Camp, More than Money, Career Success, How to Start, Job Shadowing, and Com-



A group photo of the Gulf Bank and INJAZ teams, with Najla Aleisa and Laila Hilal AlMutairi in the center.



Najla Aleisa and Laila Hilal AlMutairi during the signing of the partnership agreement.



Najla Aleisa and Laila Hilal AlMutairi shake hands after signing the partnership agreement.

pany Program.

For her part, Chief Executive Officer of INJAZ, Mrs. Laila Hilal AlMutairi, said: "Our partnership

with Gulf Bank extends over many years and stands as an exceptional example of collaboration. It has enabled INJAZ to reach thousands of students and

Najla Aleisa:

■ Investing in youth is a true investment in the future of Kuwait

Laila AlMutairi:

■ Our partnership with Gulf Bank is a successful model of private sector collaboration

provide them with quality programs in entrepreneurship, work readiness, and financial literacy."

She added: "We are proud of this cooperation, which reflects Gulf Bank's belief in the importance of investing in youth. This partnership represents a successful model of collaboration between the private sector and nonprofit organizations, and contributes to preparing a new generation of future leaders while supporting entrepreneurship through programs that equip students to establish startups and pursue successful careers."

Since its establishment in 2005, INJAZ has trained more than 150,000 male and female students through programs focused on three key areas: work readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy. The association continues to support young people by preparing them with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to address future challenges and pursue meaningful career paths.

INJAZ is a nonprofit organization affiliated with Junior Achievement Worldwide and operates with the support of Kuwait's private sector. Through its strategic partnerships with the business and education sectors, and with the support of qualified volunteers, the association delivers educational programs in Arabic and English on entrepreneurship and leadership skills, with the aim of building successful career pathways for Kuwaiti youth.

KIPIC-KNPC integration speeds up development

Kuwait to approve \$10 bln Zour petrochemical complex budget in FY 25/26

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: In view of the merger of Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) and Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), the budget for the petrochemical complex project, which will be affiliated with Zour Refinery, will be approved within the 2025/2026 fiscal year, say reliable sources.

Sources affirmed this is one of the important major projects of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), which aims to position Kuwait among the largest producers and exporters of petrochemicals in the world by 2030.

Sources pointed out that the merger will expedite the implementation of the project, with an estimated cost ranging from \$10 billion to \$10.5 billion.

Sources said KPC is keen on providing high-quality petrochemical products that meet global environmental standards through the complex, which will play a major role in supplying enormous quantities of automotive fuel to meet the needs of the local market, taking into consideration the growing population of Kuwait.

Sources added "it will supply the local and global markets with petrochemical products, such as aromatics and polypropylene. These two materials are among the most widely used petrochemicals in the world, as they are essential components in manufacturing numerous consumer and industrial products, including plastics, automobiles and medical devices. Polypropylene, in particular, is a strong and safe thermoplastic capable of withstanding high temperatures."

Meanwhile, the Secretariat General of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development explained the mega development projects on its website, indicating that

the objective of the third olefins and second aromatics project, integrated with the Zour Refinery, is to expand petrochemical activity in and outside Kuwait in order to maintain the leading position of the country in the olefins and aromatics industry and diversify its exports and services as a production base.

This will be achieved by encouraging downstream oil industries, while meeting the need of the local and global markets for petroleum products, in accordance with international standards and specifications.

The project will develop the petrochemical industry in the country and expand the product range of the country, specifically through the annual production of 945,000 tons of polypropylene, 1.4 million tons of paraxylene aromatics, 2.0 million tons of gasoline (car fuel) and 421,000 tons of benzene.

The Secretariat General stated that the initial budget for the project has been approved, a team of experienced young Kuwaitis has been formed, and project consultants with the necessary expertise have been selected to ensure the objectives are realized within the specified timeframe.

It added that the selection of technology licensors has been completed, and contracts have been awarded for the main and auxiliary fluid catalytic cracking units, polypropylene unit, propane unit, and paraxylene and benzene unit.

It confirmed that the preliminary design phase, which is necessary for preparing the overall project budget, commenced before the issuance of the engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) tenders.

Sources added the implementation of this project will stimulate the private sector to actively participate in downstream industries, given its dynamism.

S&P GCC composite index declined by 1.0%

Markaz: Kuwait equities hold steady in May amid geopolitical uncertainty



KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" stated in its Monthly Market Review that Kuwait equities remained resilient in May, despite ongoing geopolitical uncertainty in the region. The Kuwait All Share Index was flat in May 2026, with a mild 0.5% decline. The performance of Banking stocks was mixed, with National Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Finance House declining by 1.0% and 1.3% m/mr respectively. Gulf Bank posted gains of 3.2%, underpinned by strong Q1 2026 earnings. Among premier market stocks, Boursa Kuwait Securities Company and Aayan Leasing and Investment Company were the top gainers, with monthly gains of 9.1% and 8.7%, respectively. Boursa Kuwait Securities Company's net profit increased by 16.8% q/q, despite a decline in revenue due to geopolitical challenges.

Kuwait's real estate sales recovered partially in April 2026, increasing by 91% m/m to KD 278 million, but remained -2.8% on a y/y basis. Residential sales increased by 44% m/m to reach KD 131 million, compared to KD 91 million in March 2026. Commercial and investment sales also increased significantly, recovering from the near standstill seen in March. Kuwait's macro backdrop shows rising inflation alongside weakening growth momentum. Inflation accelerated to 2.6% y/y in April 2026, driven by war-related supply disruptions. Kuwait's Real GDP growth slowed to 2.4% y/y in Q4 2025, according to government statistics, down from 4.7% in Q3 2025. The contraction in the non-oil sector of 1.4% y/y offset stronger oil output, although full-year growth recovered to 2.7% in 2025.

All major GCC equity indices, except Oman, did not show major moves for the month. Oman's MSX 30 index declined the most at 7.3%, losing some of the gains that it had accumulated during the year. The fall was driven by ongoing geopolitical concerns and liquidity being redirected towards the IPO of

Oman India Fertilizer Company. Overall, the S&P GCC Composite index declined by 1.0% during the month. Ongoing uncertainty surrounding peace negotiations and the lack of a clear resolution kept regional equity markets largely flat during the month. Saudi Arabia's Tadawul Index declined slightly by 1.0%. Saudi Arabia's largest Bank, Al Rajhi Bank, fell by 1.9% during the month. UAE's equity markets also stayed flat with Dubai's DFM and Abu Dhabi's ADX declining by 0.1% and 0.8%, respectively.

Saudi Arabia's economy showed signs of moderation in Q1 2026, with Real GDP growth slowing to 2.8% y/y as regional geopolitical tensions and weaker oil sector activity weighed on momentum, while the fiscal deficit widened to a multi-year high of SAR125.7 billion amid lower oil revenues and elevated spending on Vision 2030 projects. Despite these pressures, inflation remained contained at 1.7% y/y in April, supported by stable fuel prices and easing housing costs, highlighting the resilience of domestic demand. Meanwhile, the UAE's sovereign credit profile remained resilient, with Fitch Ratings affirming the country's AA- rating with a Stable Outlook, citing strong fiscal and external buffers, low government debt, and robust hydrocarbon revenues, despite risks from ongoing regional conflict and potential disruptions to trade and energy flows.

The MSCI World Index and the S&P 500 gained 4.4% and 5.1%, respectively, during May 2026, supported by optimism over a potential extension of the U.S.-Iran ceasefire and continued strength in technology stocks. The Nasdaq Composite index gained 10.5% supported by sustained AI-driven technology optimism, strong earnings from semiconductor and

software companies, and improving sentiment amid easing geopolitical tensions. Emerging Markets, as measured by the MSCI EM Index, gained 9.5% during the month, primarily due to gains in heavily weighted blue-chip stocks. Samsung Electronics and Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing, which together account for roughly 20.2% of the index (as of April 2026), increased by 43.8% and 10.3%, respectively, for the month. Among EM markets, South Korea and Taiwan gained 28.4% and 14.9%, respectively, in May 2026.

The yield on the 10-year U.S. Treasury notes slightly increased by 5 bps during the month to 4.45%, as sticky inflation and higher-for-longer rate expectations outweighed the easing of geopolitical and oil-price risks associated with U.S.-Iran ceasefire extension talks.

Oil (Brent) prices declined over the month, settling at USD 92.05/bbl, reflecting an 19.3% monthly drop, as expectations of a U.S.-Iran ceasefire extension eased concerns over Middle East supply disruptions and reduced the geopolitical risk premium embedded in oil prices. Improved prospects for diplomatic negotiations, alongside expectations of stable crude supplies, outweighed lingering concerns over global demand and inflation.

The key driver of market movements in June 2026 is expected to be geopolitical developments surrounding the U.S.-Iran war. Although risk sentiment improved after reports of an agreement, the ceasefire still awaits U.S. President Trump's approval, leaving room for uncertainty. Consequently, GCC equity markets may remain sensitive to geopolitical developments, capital-flow risks, inflationary pressures, and sector-specific challenges across real estate, aviation, tourism, and logistics. Globally, markets are likely to remain highly responsive to energy price movements and diplomatic progress, with any setback to the ceasefire process potentially reigniting volatility across asset classes.

All indices decline

Boursa Kuwait closes lower

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Wednesday's trading session in negative territory, with all major indices recording losses amid moderate trading activity.

The All Share Index declined by 35.92 points, or 0.41 percent, to settle at 8,728.39 points. Trading activity totaled 339.6 million shares across 22,746 transactions, with a combined value of KD 74.5 million (approx-

mately USD 227.9 million). The Main Market Index fell by 39.61 points, or 0.46 percent, closing at 8,655.74 points. A total of 242.7 million shares were traded through 12,906 transactions, valued at KD 35.8 million (approximately USD 109.5 million).

The Premier Market Index also declined, shedding 37 points, or 0.40 percent, to reach 9,196.80 points, with 96.9 million shares traded in

9,840 transactions worth KD 38.6 million (approximately USD 118.1 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index recorded the steepest drop among the indices, falling by 50.96 points, or 0.52 percent, to close at 9,685.63 points. Trading on the index amounted to 216.3 million shares across 10,987 transactions, with a total value of KD 32 million (approximately USD 97.9 million).

MTC sweeps 10 prestigious awards

Al Mulla Motors named Mitsubishi MEA 'Distributor of the Year 2025'

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Maseelah Trading Company, MTC - (Al Mulla Motors), a member of Al Mulla Group and the sole authorized distributor of Mitsubishi vehicles in Kuwait since 1972, is thrilled to announce that it has been honored with the "Distributor of the Year" Award - 2025 in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) for the third time from Mitsubishi Motors Corporation (MMC). In addition, Al Mulla Group claimed 9 other prestigious accolades, divided between Al Mulla Motors in Kuwait and Diamond Motors in Egypt, for a total of 10 exceptional meritorious awards announced at the recent awards presentation ceremony.

The awards were announced at Mitsubishi Motors Middle East and Africa's Annual Business Excellence Program, a professional initiative designed to drive excellence among Mitsubishi Motors MEA distributors across the region. This comprehensive program evaluates performance in key business areas, including sales, marketing, product, customer experience, and after-sales. Through a rigorous competition, the program recognizes and celebrates the outstanding contributions of individual distributor partners, highlighting their crucial role in Mitsubishi Motors' regional success.

Commenting on this outstanding achievement, the Board Mem-



ber and Chief Executive Officer of Al Mulla Group, Mr. Talal A. Al Mulla said, "We are honored by this remarkable recognition by the Mitsubishi Motors Corporation (MMC) of our dedication to excellence and commitment to outstanding and unparalleled customer service experience in the region. Our strategic partnership with MMC over the past more than half a century has always been driven by our mutual adherence to the core values of the

business, and together we aim to take the reputation of the Mitsubishi brand to new heights of excellence and remarkable performance." He added, "These recent awards are a mere reflection of our unique model of operation at Al Mulla Group, which is built on core values of Innovation, Excellence, and Professionalism; three characteristics that have always been synonymous with Al Mulla's reputation since its establishment in 1938."

Supporting the entrepreneurial community through opportunities that encourage growth & sustainability to local businesses

stc organizes the fifth 'weyak' gathering for entrepreneurs and SMEs in Kuwait



Ahmed AlNowaibet, surrounded by a number of entrepreneurs and business leaders.



Anowd Muthaib with a number of initiatives.

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, rganized the fifth edition of the “weyak” gathering, bringing together a large number of entrepreneurs, startup founders, and owners of local SMEs The gathering comes as part of stc’s ongoing efforts to support Kuwait’s entrepreneurial ecosystem and create meaningful opportunities that contribute to the growth and sustainability of local businesses.

The event was organized under the ‘weyak’ initiative, a program dedicated to supporting entrepreneurs and SMEs through platforms and activities that encourage collaboration, professional networking, and the exchange of knowledge and expertise. The gathering aimed to strengthen communication with business owners to better understand the evolving needs of entrepreneurs in Kuwait. Discussions were also held on some of the most prominent challenges and opportunities faced in the sector, as well as the potential areas of collaboration among members of Kuwait’s growing entrepreneurial community.

The discussions were highly interactive, where attendees were given the opportunity to exchange experiences, build valuable professional relationships, and connect with entrepreneurs and business owners from various industries and sectors. The event also created an open platform for meaningful discussions around entrepreneurship, innovation, and the importance of collaboration in supporting the continued growth of SMEs in Kuwait.

Commenting on the gathering, Ahmed AlNowaibet, Director of Public Relations and Social Media atstc, said, “Through ‘weyak’, we aim to continue creating valuable platforms that bring together entrepreneurs, startup founders, and SME owners to exchange experiences, build meaningful relationships, and explore new opportunities for collaboration. We strongly believe that supporting the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Kuwait goes beyond providing services, as it also involves fostering communicationand enabling business owners to connect with like-minded individuals and industry experts.”

AlNowaibet added,“At stc, we remain committed to supporting entrepreneurs and SMEs through initiatives that contribute to their growth and sustainability while helping them adapt to the evolving business and digital land-

scape. The continued success and growing participation witnessed across the ‘weyak’ gatherings reflects the importance of such initiatives in empowering business owners and strengthening Kuwait’s vibrant entrepreneurial community.”

As part of the event, participants explored future opportunities for collaboration and partnership, while also learning more about the integrated ecosystem of services and digital solutions offered by stc to support the business sector. Through ‘weyak’, stc continues to introduce initiatives that aim to empower entrepreneurs and provide them with the tools, resources, and connections needed to support the growth and development of their businesses in an increasingly competitive market.

The ‘weyak’ gathering forms part of a wider series of activities and events organized throughout the year by stc in support of entrepreneurs and SMEs. These initiatives include workshops, panel discussions, networking events, and collaborative activities designed to encourage innovation, facilitate the exchange of expertise, and provide business owners with opportunities to learn from industry experts and experienced entrepreneurs.

Strategic project exceeds KD 825 mln

Kamco Invest facilitates landmark digital infrastructure investment

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Kamco Invest, a regional non-banking financial powerhouse with one of the largest assets under management in the region, acted as the financial advisor for the Kuwait Fixed Telecommunications Network Development Project, one of the largest digital infrastructure projects in the country. The letteragreement for the project was recently signed between the Ministry of Communications, the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP), and Beyon Group, the winning bidder for the project.

The project aims to develop a modern national fixed telecommunications network through an advanced operating model based on the establishment of a specialized company responsible for managing and operating wholesale telecommunications infrastructure. The project is expected to support the digital economy, cloud services, artificial intelligence, and smart cities, with anticipated investments exceeding KWD825mn.

As part of its mandate, Kamco Invest played a key role throughout the various stages of the project. This included contributing to the preparation of marketing materials, developing qualification and evaluation criteria, assisting in the preparation of tender documents and financial and commercial requirements, participating in the project’s marketing roadshow and investor presentations, supporting the management of the competitive bidding process, evaluating financial proposals, and assisting in negotiations with the preferred bidder. These efforts contributed to the development of a balanced and sustainable financing and operating structure in accordance with the highest professional standards.

Commenting on Kamco Invest’s role, Abdullah M. AlSharekh, Managing Director of Markets and Investment Banking, said, “We are proud to have contributed to this strategic project, which represents a significant milestone in the development of Kuwait’s digital infrastructure and reflects the country’s direction towards enhancing public-private partnerships and attracting long-term strategic investments. This role further demonstrates the ability of Kamco Invest to provide specialized advisory services for large and complex projects, leveraging our extensive expertise across capital markets, investment banking, and corporatefinance.”

The project reflects the growing role of Kamco Invest in providing advisory services for major strategic projects and



Abdullah AlSharekh

public-private partnership initiatives by leveraging its expertise in structuring complex transactions, developed through its extensive track record of transactions in general and the privatization of Kuwait Stock Exchange (Boursa Kuwait) in particular. The Company continues to support clients through the development of financial and investment frameworks, as well as the management of tendering and evaluation processes in accordance with the highest standards of transparency and efficiency.

The project also demonstrates the Company’s ability to support development initiatives and contribute to the implementation of the country’svision aimed at advancing critical infrastructure, accelerating digital transformation, and promoting sustainable economic development in Kuwait and the wider region.

AlSharekhconcluded,“We would like to extend our appreciation to the Ministry of Communications and the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects for their trust and collaboration throughout the various stages of the project. We would also like to thank all participating entities, advisors, and stakeholders for their constructive efforts and cooperation, which contributed to the smooth and efficient selection of the winning bidder and the signing of the letteragreement. We wish Beyon Group and KAPP every success in implementing this strategic national project, given its significant value to the national economy and its important role in strengthening Kuwait’s position as a leading regional digital infrastructure and sector hub.”

It is worth noting that Kamco Invest recently received the “Best Investment Bank for Financial Services/Banking in the Middle East 2026” award from Global Finance in recognition of its outstanding performance across debt and equity capital markets, mergers & acquisitions, and its growing role in developing capital markets in Kuwait and the region.

Global economy faces severe hit from energy supply crunch

OECD sees recession risks if Gulf disruptions persist

FRANKFURT, June 3, (AP): Prolonged disruption of energy supplies from the Middle East due to the Iran war would deal a severe blow to the global economy, sending some countries into recession and spreading inflation and higher unemployment, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development said in a report Wednesday.

Hardest hit would be Asian economies that depend on crude oil, fuel and natural gas from the Persian Gulf, supplies that have been largely choked off by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz due to the risk of Iranian attack. And poorer countries where people spend more of their incomes on fuel and food would also be severely affected, the OECD said.

But the consequences of sharply higher energy prices and inflation would be felt around the world. Global growth would slump to levels not seen except for major setbacks like the COVID-19 pandemic and the global financial crisis and recession of the late 2000s. Under the OECD’s prolonged disruption scenario, global growth slows from 3.4%



The logo at the entrance of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) headquarters in Paris, France, Wednesday, June 7, 2017. (AP)

last year to 2.1% this year and 1.8% in 2027, potentially pushing some economies into or close to recession.

Under a different OECD scenario for a time-limited disruption, in which energy production and shipments from the Gulf start to return to pre-war levels in the middle of this year, growth would slow to 2.8% this year and rebound to 3.1% next year.

“The global economy entered 2026 with robust momentum, but the outlook has weakened significantly since the start of the conflict in the Middle East, with effects likely to be felt for some time,” OECD Secretary-General Mathias Cormann said. “The longer

the disruptions last, the larger the economic and social costs become.”

Cormann warned that government spending aimed at relieving energy costs needed to be aimed at those most in need and temporary, to avoid running up excess government debt and preserving incentives to save energy.

Despite repeated outbreaks of violence, a declared ceasefire in the war between the US and Iran remains officially in place. The ongoing risk to shipping however means that traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has dwindled to a trickle, down more than 90% compared to before the war. That has disrupted about a fifth of the world’s supplies of crude oil and fuel products as well as of natural gas.

The OECD report follows a UN study warning that higher energy prices will impact almost billion people in poorer countries and small island states that depend on imported fuel, forcing tradeoffs between covering energy bills and investing in essential public services. More than 30% of people in those countries already live below the extreme poverty line, defined as living on \$3 or less a day.

The OECD is an international intergovernmental organization and policy forum of 38 democracies with market-based economies, headquartered in Paris.

Jazeera Airways resumes operations following temporary airport closure

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Jazeera Airways has announced the resumption of its flights from and to the Jazeera Terminal 5 (T5) following a temporary closure earlier today. Following full security clearance, Jazeera restarted operations under the direction of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

As always, Jazeera Airways remains committed to the safety and wellbeing of its passengers and crew. Due to the evolving situation, some flights may be affected by delays or cancellations. Passengers booked to travel today are requested to check their flight status through the Jazeera Airways website before proceeding to the airport.

Barathan Pasupathi, Chief Executive Officer of Jazeera Airways, said:

“We are deeply saddened by the events that unfolded this morning and stand in solidarity with all those affected. As we resume operations following comprehensive safety and security assessments, and in close coordination with the DGCA and relevant authorities, we want to assure our customers that their safety and security remain our highest priority. We thank our passengers for their understanding and patience, and we remain committed to serving Kuwait with the utmost care, responsibility, and resilience.”



Jazeera Airways - Aircraft and T5

For any assistance, passengers may visit the Jazeera Airways website: jazeeraairways.com, Jazeera App or contact customer service at customer.relations@jazeeraairways.com or the call center 177.

Grand prize totaling KD 1.5 million

KFH announces winners of Al-Hassad and Al-Rabeh monthly draws

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has announced the May 2026 monthly draw winners for its Al-Hassad and Al-Rabeh accounts.

Al-Hassad account offers total annual prizes of KD 3 million, while Al-Rabeh account awards KD 1,000 each to 30 winners every month, reflecting KFH’s commitment to rewarding customer loyalty and trust.

KFH conducted two draws, awarding 31 winners a total of KD 130,000 in cash prizes, distributed as follows:

- Al-Hassad Account: One winner received KD 100,000.
- Al-Rabeh Account: 30 winners received KD 1,000 each.

The full list of winners is available on KFH’s official social media channels. The new campaign for Al-Hassad account features substantial prizes, headlined by a KD 1.5 million Grand Prize, a KD 500,000 semi-annual prize, and a KD 100,000 monthly prize.

Effective January of this year, the new Al-Hassad prize campaign coincided with the resumption of investment account draws conducted under the supervision of independent auditors appointed by the bank to ensure the highest standards of integrity and transparency.

KFH continues to enhance the features of its Al-Hassad account, one of the bank’s



Al-Hassad draw

flagship products that has gained remarkable popularity and strong customer trust.

Al-Hassad account offers increased chances of winning, with one entry for every KD 50 deposited. The longer the balance is maintained, the greater the number of entries, bringing customers closer to the title of “KFH Millionaire”.

As for Al-Rabeh account, it is a dedicated salary account. To qualify for the draws, customers must deposit at least three salaries over the three months preceding the draw and maintain a minimum monthly closing balance of KD 50 throughout that period. The account awards 30 winners KD 1,000 each month.

KFH remains committed to offering premium banking products that fulfill customer aspirations and provide unique opportunities to win significant cash prizes. This makes the account a highly appealing savings and investment solution.

Based on the Wakala investment structure, Al-Hassad account allows the bank to invest the full balance at a pre-agreed expected profit rate, in addition to the monthly, semi-annual, and annual prize draws.

Customers can open Al-Hassad and Al-Rabeh accounts through KFH branches, KFHonline, or ATMs to enjoy exclusive draw opportunities and a wide range of banking benefits.

Trump administration eyes 10–12.5% tariffs on key trade partners

US proposes new tariffs over forced labor concerns

WASHINGTON, June 3, (AP): The Trump administration is proposing that tariffs of 10% or more be imposed on products from dozens of major trading partners following a probe into imports of goods allegedly made with forced labor.

The report released early Wednesday by the U.S. Trade Representative said Canada, Mexico, Taiwan and the United Kingdom and some other countries and territories would face 10% additional tariffs for allegedly failing to enforce a forced labor import ban.

A 12.5% additional tariff would be imposed on China, Japan, India, South Korea, Brazil and Switzerland and dozens of other countries.

"The failure of our most important trading partners to address the importation of goods made with forced labor is unacceptable. This creates a dynamic where American workers are forced to compete globally on an uneven playing field," USTR Ambassador Jamieson Greer said in a statement.

He added that "each of our trading partners must do more to ensure that trade does not perversely encourage and entrench forced labor globally."

The USTR said failure to prevent such imports is "unreasonable and burdens or restricts U.S. commerce."

This latest barrage of tariffs is likely to unsettle key trading partners that have been hit by waves of tariffs since President Donald Trump returned to office early last year.

Just two weeks ago, the European Union approved a tariff deal with the United States to cap tariffs on most EU exports at 15% following intense debates among the EU's 27 nations and threats by European lawmakers to block the agreement.

Trump recently returned from a visit to China, where he and his leader Xi Jinping discussed expanding market access for American businesses in China and increasing Chinese investment into U.S. industries. The two leaders agreed to set up separate boards of trade and investment - though few details were provided.

A Chinese government spokesperson denied the forced labor allegation and called for resolving economic issues through dialogue, saying a trade war



Goods imported from Brazil are displayed at Amazonia Brasil, a Brazilian goods store, in Newark, N.J., Aug. 7, 2025. (AP)

doesn't serve anyone's interests.

"There is no such thing as forced labor in China, and we oppose using it as an excuse to engage in political manipulation," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said in Beijing.

The new tariffs would not take effect immediately. They are subject to public comment and review. Public hearings on the proposed duties are due to begin on July 7.

The investigation into alleged failure to prevent imports of goods allegedly made by forced labor was conducted under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974. The strategy would enable Trump to skirt limits on his tariffs imposed

by the Supreme Court.

It found that 60 countries investigated had failed to enforce a prohibition on the importation of goods produced with forced labor.

The report defined forced labor as "work or service exacted from a person under the menace of any penalty for its nonperformance and for which the worker does not offer himself voluntarily."

It cited an estimate by the UN's International Labor Organization that as of 2021, 27.6 million people were engaged in forced labor.

Rice imported from Myanmar, tobacco from Malawi, beef from Brazil, and cotton and polysilicon from China were among the many products it said are prone to involving forced labor.

The U.S. has long said imports of goods that include material from China's far-western Xinjiang are at risk of using forced labor. Beijing denies allegations of forced labor in the Muslim majority region.

The Supreme Court ruled in February that Trump had overstepped his authority by using a different law - the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) of 1977 - to impose sweeping tariffs on U.S. trading partners.

The Trump administration has said it would appeal a federal judge's order making all companies that paid the duties on those earlier tariffs eligible for refunds.

Earlier this week, the administration separately proposed 25% tariffs on imports from Brazil, charging that the world's 10th-biggest economy engages in trade practices that are "unreasonable" and that "burden or restrict U.S. commerce."

The USTR said its investigation showed Brazil had lax anti-corruption enforcement and unfair tariffs of its own, among other things.

In its nearly 100-page report on forced labor, the USTR said that even if a country enforces a ban on forced labor domestically, importing goods made with forced labor violates the rules of fair trade.

It said some key items would be exempt from the additional tariffs or subject to lower tariffs, including certain textiles, tomatoes, bananas, coffee and some metals.

USMCA renewal talks intensify ahead of July deadline

Canada calls for US & Mexico free trade agreement to be renewed for 16 years

TORONTO, June 3, (AP): Canada is calling on the United States and Mexico to renew the free trade agreement among their three countries for another 16 years just as U.S. President Donald Trump revives talk of making Canada the 51st state.

Dominic LeBlanc, Canada's minister for U.S. trade, sent a letter Tuesday to U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer and Mexico's Economy Secretary Marcelo Ebrard conveying Canada's recommendation.

"The Agreement is highly beneficial to each of our countries and to the integrated North American economy," LeBlanc wrote.

LeBlanc said Canada also received letters from Greer and Ebrard. Ebrard said on Tuesday that Mexico would also like it to be extended to 16 years.

The letters come ahead of the scheduled July review of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA, the latest iteration of a North American free trade pact that has intertwined the economies of the United States, Mexico and Canada since the early 1990s. It can either be subject to annual reviews going forward, or renewed for 16 years.

LeBlanc and Canada's Chief Trade Negotiator Janice Charette were in Washington on Tuesday for a meeting with Greer. LeBlanc said he presented a series of proposals to Greer that responded to a number of issues the U.S. has raised with Canada for some time.

"On July 1 as Ambassador Greer has said publicly, if there is no consensus amongst the three parties to extend for 16 years, the agreement remains in place for 10 more years and there is a series of annual reviews," LeBlanc said.

LeBlanc has previously said he believes the U.S. might want to have the trade agreement subject to annual reviews, and that the Trump administration might seek to cause uncertainty about the trade pact's permanence.

Trump has repeatedly said he believes Canada would be better off as a U.S. state - prompting repeated pushback and annoyance from Canadian politicians who have made a point of defending their country's sovereignty. On Monday, Trump posted "51st State!" on social media linking to a news article reporting that Canada is falling into a technical recession. The post was later reposted by U.S. Ambassador to Canada, Pete Hoekstra.



Canada-U.S. Trade Minister Dominic LeBlanc and Chief Trade Negotiator Janice Charette speak during a press conference on the roof of the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C., on Tuesday, June 2, 2026. (AP)

Ontario Premier Doug Ford issued a peeved response Tuesday: "I can't believe I have to say this again, but Canada will never be the 51st state. Canada is not for sale."

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney was asked Tuesday if Ambassador Hoekstra should leave the country, but the Canadian leader said no.

"It's an administration that we have to work with. It's our biggest trading relationship. It's our biggest security relationship... we take the administration as it is," Carney said, adding that Trump posts a lot on social media. "We're not going to respond to, react to, everything that he posts."

Carney earlier acknowledged some weakness in the country's economy as he walked into a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday. Carney said the U.S. has about 30 different trade irritants with Canada compared to nearly 60 with Mexico.

The U.S. could withdraw from the agreement

with six months notice.

"There is a possibility of a new partnership there," Carney said.

The USMCA has allowed Canada and Mexico to avoid much of Trump's protectionist measures because many Mexican and Canadian goods are covered by the free trade agreement. But there are some key specific tariffs on things like aluminum that are damaging the integrated North American economy.

Trump's talk of making Canada the 51st state has infuriated Canadians, who have been canceling trips to the U.S. in big numbers.

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker, one of the Democratic Party's leading presidential prospects, said Trump has tried to destroy the relationship with America's northern neighbor with "chaotic tariffs and mindless cruelty." Pritzker made the comments in a zoom call with Democrats Abroad on Tuesday.

Hormuz crisis chokes Afghanistan's supply routes

KABUL, June 3, (AP): When landlocked Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan started fighting late last year and their border crossings closed, Afghans turned to their western neighbor, Iran, for an alternate to Pakistan's major shipping hub of Karachi.

They rerouted shipments through Iran's port of Bandar Abbas, but not for long. The port lies on the Strait of Hormuz, where war has stranded hundreds of ships and thousands of their crew. Meanwhile, thousands of Afghanistan-bound containers were stuck in Pakistan.

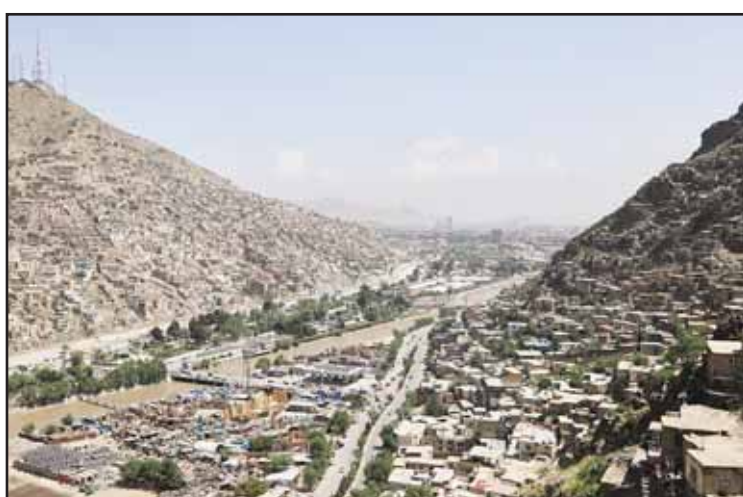
For Afghan businesses and aid groups, losing both trade routes has been devastating.

The United Nations' World Food Program, whose Afghan operations include life-saving nutritional supplements for malnourished mothers and children and fortified high-energy biscuits for schoolchildren, has seen transportation costs skyrocket and supplies choked off.

Most of WFP's nutrition supplies were sourced from Pakistan, the organization said. After that border closed in October, it began rerouting shipments by sea through Dubai and Iran. Now that route is effectively closed as Tehran controls the strait and the U.S. blockades Iranian ports.

The nutritional supplements began to dwindle. By mid-April, they had run out.

"At a time when malnutrition is already at near-record levels, weakened and desperate mothers and children are being turned away from health clinics, as we have no food to give them," said John Aylieff,



A general view of a road commonly used by cargo trucks entering eastern Kabul, Afghanistan, Wednesday, May 13, 2026. (AP)

WFP's country director in Afghanistan.

Even before the crisis, the organization had struggled with aid cuts. It has received only 8% of its annual funding this year.

"On top of a funding crisis, conflict in the Middle East and the closure of the border with Pakistan are choking WFP's operations - blocking supply routes, driving up costs and straining markets at the worst possible time," Aylieff said in emailed comments.

Now supplies must be routed by land through Central Asia, far from any ocean. WFP's transportation costs have tripled, while its cost of supplements for malnourished mothers and children has jumped by 35%, Aylieff said.

The outbreak of the Iran war in

late February saw one of the organization's shipments of high-energy fortified biscuits stuck in the United Arab Emirates.

Instead of being shipped from Dubai to Iran and into Afghanistan, it has been taking a long, circuitous route through Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan and across the Caspian Sea into Turkmenistan, the organization said.

It's been on the road for three weeks.

Lutfullah Akbari runs a small company in Kabul importing construction equipment. With his supplies from China stuck on ships unable to transit the Strait of Hormuz and costs for the logistics company transporting them rising, "I have nothing else to use to continue my

business here," he said.

He's now considering abandoning his cargo if the waterway doesn't reopen soon.

"The Iran-U.S. war has had a huge impact on my business," he said. Other traders have rerouted shipments through Central Asia, but it's longer and more expensive.

"The logistics company now wants more than the value of our goods and the capital we had invested in them. We can't afford it," Akbari said.

"Even if I bring them here, I'll have to sell them all at a loss. I can't afford to lose twice."

Gul Meer Amini, director of logistics at freight company Etifaq Bamy-an International Transport and Trade Forwarding, said the Iran war has dramatically increased costs. Some of the cargo his company handles includes humanitarian aid.

Before the war, the cost of renting a container was about \$3,000 to \$3,600 per shipment but it has now surged to over \$7,000. For some goods, it has topped \$11,000, he said.

"The impact is reaching all traders," Amini said.

Mohammad Murtaza Ishaqzai, who sells electronics in Kabul, said delivery for his goods from China via Iran cost about \$1,100 to \$1,500 before the war. That's now shot up to more than \$15,000.

"We can't export and we can't import," he said, and appealed to the Taliban government to resolve its conflict with Pakistan, which would allow border trade to resume.

If the situation continues, he said, "our business will be finished."

World Cup outlook dims as travel demand softens

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

By Hunter Kim
College of Charleston

When the U.S. last hosted the World Cup in 1994, the event drew unexpectedly large crowds. At that time, soccer wasn't as popular among Americans as it is now, so expectations for attendance had been fairly low.

So as the U.S. prepared to host the World Cup again in 2026, expectations for tourism were high.

But in the run-up to this year's World Cup, the ongoing war in Iran has resulted in soaring inflation and high fuel prices, neither of which bodes well for tourism or event attendance.

Recent tourism reports indicate there will be fewer hotel reservations than anticipated due to reduced international travel confidence and a growing uncertainty related to U.S. immigration policies, geopolitical instability, tariffs and inflation.

We are a professor of hospitality and tourism management and a professor in international sports management. We believe there is good reason for concern in the 11 World Cup host cities in the U.S. An additional five cities in Mexico and Canada are likewise hosting games, and the next 10 days leading up to the event will be crucial for them to capitalize on it.

The month leading up to the world's largest sporting festival should be a period of excitement and celebration. But a few factors are putting a damper on that.

First, the price of tickets, plus parking and public transportation to games, is incredibly high. This has led to widespread criticism, with even President Donald Trump stating that he would not pay the \$1,000 ticket price for matches once he learned of the high prices.

In Boston, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority plans to charge \$80 for a ride to Gillette Stadium that would typically cost \$20. New Jersey Transit originally set fares for train tickets from Penn Station in New York to MetLife Stadium at \$150 for World Cup travel, which it reduced to \$105 this month after public backlash - still way above its normal fares.

According to a survey from the American Hotel and Lodgings Association, hotel bookings are softer than expected in all 11 U.S. cities hosting World Cup events. Miami is in the best position, with only 45% of local hotel owners projecting a shortfall. That's compared with 75% reporting bookings below expectations in cities like Philadelphia and San Francisco. The worst off is Kansas City, with a whopping 85% to 90% of hotel owners reporting fewer bookings than expected - lower than even a normal summer without a mega event coming to town.

Based on early 2026 forecasts for hospitality and tourism, Miami was expected to welcome millions of visitors during the World Cup period. However, many tourism analysts project that economic gains may fall short if current negative trends do not improve dramatically.

Hotel reservations in South Florida made by international travelers are weak compared with previous mega events. This is particularly the case when it comes to visitors from Latin American

and the Middle East. The American Hotel and Lodgings Association survey notes that current U.S. immigration procedures and visa delays may be discouraging international visitors, thus causing the majority of cities to report shortfalls as of May 2026.

With Trump's Mar-a-Lago Resort just 75 miles (120 kilometers) north of Miami, perceptions of heightened security in the area may be exacerbating safety concerns about attending World Cup matches. Indeed, civil rights groups like the Florida Immigrant Coalition have warned international travelers of risks of detention when visiting Florida in particular.

Despite these challenges, we believe Miami still has strong potential to maximize economic benefits if strategic actions are implemented immediately for short-term and pre- and post-event lodging, food and tourism experiences.

Miami's international brand recognition, multicultural environment and entertainment infrastructure remain significant advantages over other U.S. host cities. It also helps that the city is home to one of world soccer's most recognizable faces: Lionel Messi. Messi's presence in Miami has been worth billions to the regional economy, according to The Wall Street Journal.

Miami's success will heavily depend on active and agile planning, leadership and administration from government and organizational officials. The next 10 days will be critical in determining whether Miami can fully capitalize on the economic opportunities associated with one of the world's largest sporting events.

Aggressive destination campaigns between tourism boards, airlines and hotels, especially those targeting Latin America, could help rebuild traveler confidence and increase advanced bookings. In particular, expanded Spanish-language marketing and multilingual communication strategies are an important competitive advantage both for the World Cup and beyond. Telemundo, one of the two main U.S. Spanish-language networks, is headquartered in Miami.

And even with many travelers feeling price-sensitive due to inflation and economic uncertainty, bundled offers can help stimulate tourism. Affordable travel packages and value-added promotions may encourage longer stays and higher visitor spending, even for travelers on a budget.

Campaigns and travel packages that encourage visitors to explore local neighborhoods, cultural attractions, culinary tourism and sustainable tourism activities - in addition to the World Cup games - can help distribute economic benefits more broadly throughout the city.

The hospitality industry can help allay the fears of travelers worried about safety by prioritizing safety communication and visitor assistance services. Transparent communication and multilingual services go a long way toward assuaging international travelers' anxiety about security and immigration. People feel more comfortable traveling when there are clear rules and requirements around airport procedures, visas and security measures.

We believe that the key to success of the 2026 World Cup in the U.S., including Miami, is to understand current economic and political concerns fairly and correctly first, and then implement innovative short-term strategies before the event kicks off. (AP)

He-Man reboot swings hard, misses often



This image released by Amazon MGM Studios shows Nicholas Galitzine and Camila Mendes in a scene from 'Masters of the Universe.' (AP)

Nostalgia without direction: 'Masters of the Universe' flexes but never lands

Masters of the Universe might not know who its audience is. Sure, yes, perhaps "everyone" is the goal. Modern blockbusters are usually aiming for those golden four quadrants that might justify spending hundreds of millions of dollars to make a movie about an old toy. But as far as beautiful, blond Mattel products go, He-Man is not and was never going to be Barbie.

It's a character and aesthetic - bodybuilder muscles, pageboy haircuts and all - that is about as rooted in the 1980s as you can be. The toy launched in 1982, apparently an attempt to compete with Star Wars products.

The animated series came the next year, and in 1987, a movie was released with Dolph Lundgren. It was a critical and box office flop, and that was around the height of its popularity.

Yes, some have reclaimed that "Masters of the Universe" as a campy cult classic, and there have been some animated series in the last few decades, but culturally speaking, He-Man seems to have stayed in that decade. It's a relic that went the way of Saturday morning cartoons - aside from that meme set to "What's Up?" by 4 Non Blondes, which is referenced in the new movie. But even that's a little long in the tooth: It was made in 2005.

This "Masters of the Universe" was directed by Travis Knight, who did spin something charming off "Transformers" in "Bumblebee." But this is a film that doesn't seem to know what it wants to be. It's, paradoxically, a big-budget B-movie. It's cartoony and campy, which it is also constantly apologizing for. It's also violent enough to probably rule out the under-10 crowd. It's aiming for something in the vein of a Taika Waititi "Thor" or a "Guardians of the Galaxy," but it doesn't fully commit to the thing that the HEYY-EYAAEYAAAAYAEYAA video understood so well: He-Man is extremely silly. Not just the character. The whole thing: the look, the names, even the phrase "by the power of Greyskull, I have the power."

The script and story, which is laboriously credited to so many people it's probably not worth going into, attempt to turn much of this into a one-note joke. Here, they excuse cringy names like Fisto and Ram Man as the product of a young boy's imagination. The film sets up a world where Prince Adam (played as a boy by Artie Wilkinson-Hunt) is sent away from Eternia for his protection as the kingdom fell to Skeletor (Jared Leto). And for 15 years he's been stranded on Earth, working a dull job in human resources, living with a roommate and obsessively looking for the Power Sword that is his only hope of getting back home. He's also grown into a hunk (Nicholas Galitzine), but an extremely awkward one who isn't shy with his origin story. Naturally, everyone thinks he's basically crazy.

Thankfully, our time with him on Earth is short (but perhaps not short enough in a movie that runs a bloated 142 minutes, including a Lundgren cameo) and, soon enough, he's back on Eternia and trying to help return the kingdom to its former glory. Everyone is very dismissive of him, including his old friend Teela, who has grown into a model-y warrior (played with cool girl jadedness by Camila Mendes), until he figures out how to use the sword that instantly transforms him into a superhuman. It's difficult to stress how not exciting or dramatic this quick fix is.

The large cast is doing the best they can. Galitzine is

quite awkward and sweet, but his character is deeply underdeveloped. Idris Elba brings some goofy gravitas to a fallen warrior whose confidence was shaken. As Skeletor, Leto has gone full camp with a theatrical British accent that reminded me less of Bane and more of Paul F. Tompkins' Andrew Lloyd Webber. This isn't a bad thing - Leto and Alison Brie, as his abused henchwoman, seem to be having the most fun of all, like exiles from an episode of "Power Rangers" - but it does make you wonder why they didn't just cast an English character actor in the first place. Others aren't so lucky: Morena Baccarin is mostly there for vibes as The Sorceress, and Kristen Wiig is mostly forgettable as a warrior robot.

It also tries to weave in threads about expectations of masculinity and power, but even that is messy and confused and fails to incorporate the female characters into the dialogue.

The movie might have worked better if it had just gone full Saturday morning cartoon with fewer self-deprecating jokes. But that would have required more conviction about what everyone was making in the first place.

"Masters of the Universe," an Amazon MGM Studios release in theaters Friday, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association for "sequences of violence and action, some suggestive material and language." Running time: 142 minutes. Two stars out of four. (AP)



This image released by Amazon MGM Studios shows Nicholas Galitzine in a scene from 'Masters of the Universe.' (AP)



Left: This image released by Amazon MGM Studios shows Jared Leto stars as Skeletor in a scene from "Masters of the Universe." Right: This image released by Amazon MGM Studios shows Idris Elba in a scene from "Masters of the Universe." (AP)



Cinema's darkest corner finds bright future in Bleak Week

LOS ANGELES, June 3, (AP) Bleak Week, a film festival celebrating "cinema of despair," started as a contrarian response to cries for feel-good movies after the pandemic.

Programmers at the American Cinematheque, a nonprofit arts group that curates for several historic theaters in Los Angeles, heard the cries for comedies and thought, well, what if they did the opposite? Bleak Week, which would conveniently coincide with the city's June Gloom, could be the art house version of Shark Week.

"We didn't know how it was going to go," said Grant Moninger, the group's artistic director. "People may like this ... or people may look at it and somehow be offended."

In 2022, he and Chris LeMaire programmed wall-to-wall selections of world cinema's most austere offerings, from Elem Klimov's anti-war epic "Come and See" to Béla Tarr's 439-minute "Sátántangó." LA-based film

critic Katie Walsh was one of the early champions of the concept. When it was announced she remembered tweeting the "sickos" meme.

"I was just like, yes, this is for me, this for the sickos," Walsh said. "We were really enthusiastic about it online. I think that they were like, OK, great, this is like a concept that is going to translate."

Five years later, Bleak Week has gone global. Across June, there will be Bleak Weeks taking place in 100 theaters in 73 cities spanning eight countries, from the United Kingdom and Canada to Puerto Rico and Latin America. In the United States, it's not just the biggest cities either: There are versions in Columbia, Missouri (Ragtag Cinema), Pittsburgh (Row House Cinema), Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, (Cinema Art Theatre), Brookline, Massachusetts (Coolidge Corner Theatre) and Albuquerque, New Mexico, (Guild Cinema), to name a few.

"Although Bleak Week sounds depressing, it's really a celebration of the human experience," Moninger said. "It's really what cinema is about: empathy and understanding the world."

Ennui at the movie theater wasn't niche after all. Those nearly 7 1/2-hour showings of "Sátántangó" regularly sell out. It's not uncommon to see famous people both on the stage and in the audience (Sean Baker and Mikey Madison were spotted at a screening one year of "In a Glass Cave," about an ex-Nazi pedophile). Even Tarr, the great Hungarian filmmaker who died earlier this year and once said he'd never come back to the United States, made an exception and attended Bleak Week in year two. Expansion soon followed to The Paris Theatre in New York and The Prince Charles Cinema in London.

"The thing about cinema is that you get to experience all the colors of human experience," said Walsh, who has both at-

tended and served as a moderator over the years. "Bleak Week offers a chance to kind of like revel in this specific feeling in a lot of ways. I just really love it. I see stuff that I would never ever see elsewhere."

At the end of the movies, Walsh said, "I usually have to go stare at a wall for like 30 minutes."

The fifth edition is already underway in Los Angeles at the Egyptian Theatre, the Aero Theatre and the Los Feliz 3. On the schedule are appearances by the likes of Isabelle Huppert, who will do Q&As for several films, including "The Piano Teacher" and "Heaven's Gate," filmmaker Ari Aster, showing his director's cut of "Midsommar" and Denis Villeneuve on behalf of his breakout film "Incendies."

One of the most liberating aspects about the concept is that there's no genre stranglehold on the idea of bleak cinema. It can be wartime. It can be interpersonal drama. It can be fantasy.

It can even be family friendly. They've empowered local programmers to make their own selections; This year there are over 300 movies being shown globally.

"They know their audience. They know what films will resonate," said LeMaire. "It's fun for us to see all the different approaches."

The Gene Siskel Film Center in Chicago is focusing on animation, playing movies like Hayao Miyazaki's "Princess Mononoke," Martin Rosen's "Watership Down" and Michael Schaack's "Felidae." The Argentina program will include both local films and a retrospective of Aster's works. At Vancouver's historic Park Theatre, selections were made by local filmmakers and "friends of the venue." Actor Finn Wolfhard elected "The Celebration," "Sinners" cinematographer Autumn Durald Arkapaw chose "The Deer Hunter" and "Anora" producer Samantha Quan picked

"The Suicides."

The most programmed film this year is Isao Takahata's animated "Grave of the Fireflies," about a boy and his sister fighting for survival in post-World War II Japan after losing their parents. One movie they make a point to show every year is "Come and See," which Moninger said is "the bleakest of the bleak experience."

The concept is open to interpretation, as long as it's a narrative film. The one thing it can't be is a documentary.

"There's something still yet triumphant about taking horrible experiences or someone's personal tragedy and being able to turn it into art," Moninger said. "That's really one of our only rules is that we just don't do docs."

When it's all said and done, at least in Los Angeles, they make sure to close with something sweet: The three "Paddington" movies. It's what they like to call a "marmalade chaser."

Archaeology

Archaeologists uncover Roman relics and medieval mysteries beneath cathedral square

Notre Dame dig unearths 2,000 years of Paris history

PARIS, June 3, (AP): Wilting in the summer sun, a line of tourists waits to climb Notre Dame cathedral and meet its gargoyles.

Four meters (13 feet) beneath them, a team of archaeologists is digging the other way - straight down and back in time, to Roman Paris 2,000 years ago.

In 2019, fire brought Notre Dame's spire crashing down as the world watched. The cathedral was rebuilt and reopened in late 2024, and now Paris wants to soften the hot, bare square in front of it with trees and shade.

But in a city this old, the soil cannot be turned until what lies beneath it is excavated, in case it is damaged during works.

So a slice of Notre Dame's forecourt has become an excavation site - an open pit ringed by barriers and crossed by a wooden walkway, a few steps from the line-up.

French media have dubbed it the "dig of the century."

"It's a rare opportunity for us to work on something that's tangibly going to make a difference to the history of Paris," Lucie Altenburg, a conservator with the Paris archaeology unit, told The Associated Press.

Among the hundreds of objects already found: a fourth-century coin stamped with the face of the Emperor Constantine, and shards of medieval pottery painted on the inside with marks no expert has yet deciphered - like a modern Da Vinci Code.

"It makes Notre Dame feel alive again," said Emily Carter, 34, a tourist from Manchester waiting in line with her two children. "You come to see the cathedral, then realize there's another city under your feet. That's almost more moving."

The first traces appear 50 centimeters (20 inches) down; 4 meters (13 feet) lower, the team is still pulling up the past. Some days they fill 15 crates - from ground that has lain untouched for decades.

This is the bargain in every old city: The past is not in a museum down the street - it is under the street.

Cities rise. Each age builds on the rubble of the last, and the



Camille Colonna, archaeologist in charge of operations, wearing a safety helmet, poses in front of Notre-Dame Cathedral during excavations in Paris, on June 1, 2026. (AP)

ground climbs with it; in Rome, it has risen about 9 meters (30 feet) since the empire fell in the fifth century AD.

When Athens built its metro for the 2004 Olympics, it set off the largest excavation in Greek history and turned up tens of thousands of objects, now shown in the stations themselves. Paris is no different.

It all comes from the island in the Seine, the Ile de la Cite, where Paris began.

Centuries later, Notre Dame rose on the same ground.

At the cathedral's birth in 1163, the entire square was packed with medieval houses, split by a single street, said Camille Colonna, the

archaeologist leading the dig.

Digging down, her team has reached their cellars - and therefore also the time in history they represent.

Below them lie Merovingian and Carolingian grain pits, from the sixth to the 10th centuries; below those, darker and deeper still, a dense Roman quarter from the fourth and fifth centuries.

Twenty centuries are stacked in 4 meters (13 feet) of earth - or about the height of two-and-a-half Napoleon Bonapartes standing on top of one another.

"Here you can see the layers - medieval Paris, Roman Paris, maybe even before that," said Yasmine

Benali, 22, an archaeology student watching from behind the barriers. "It makes the city feel less like a postcard and more like something still being discovered."

The richest finds here come from the foulest place: the deep pits beneath the medieval houses, old latrines that doubled as rubbish dumps.

Out of them the team keeps lifting whole jugs and cups - thrown away centuries ago, yet still intact - among the broken plates and animal bones.

It's "rare to find complete ceramics," said Valentine Breloux, an archaeologist with the unit.

Here the soft waste cushioned

them, and centuries later they miraculously came up whole.

Then some other objects came that confounded experts. As conservators cleaned what looked like ordinary medieval pottery, they found faint reddish writing painted on the inside - the same mysterious markings on shard after shard.

What they mean has yet to be deciphered.

Of everything she has cleaned from Notre Dame, Breloux said, these are the most "astonishing."

The coins came up as black discs, eaten by rust. But under an X-ray, a face returned: it was Constantine, the Roman emperor who ruled in the early 300s AD.

Such objects also "can be invaluable in giving us the date of the (underground) layer," Altenburg said.

The Roman finds are the ones the archaeologists value most - the deepest, oldest and least understood. In Roman times, the town was called Lutetia, and its center lay across the river, on the Left Bank.

As the Roman empire collapsed, people pulled back to the Ile de la Cite, where Notre Dame would later rise, and fortified the island with walls of stone taken from earlier buildings.

Colonna's team found some proof: a Roman doorstep found in the dig, taken from a much bigger building, carried over, turned upside down, and laid in a road as paving.

Every find leaves the pit and travels north, to the city's archaeology center - what Colonna calls "a huge archaeological store," a treasure house of Paris.

For archaeologists, the cathedral dig is a rare treat. In France, like elsewhere, they work only where building work is about to begin - a bit like how industrial quarry workers end up unearthing dinosaur remains.

"This only happens because the city of Paris decided it wanted to beautify the area," Altenburg said.

The new square should be mostly finished by 2028: a kind of woodland clearing, with 160 new trees and a thin film of water sliding over the stone to cool it in summer - part of how Paris is bracing for ever hotter summers induced by global warming.

The tourists who now wait in the bare sun beneath the gargoyles will, in a few summers, line up in the shade.

The old underground parking lot will reopen as a visitor center looking onto the Seine.

Until then, the Notre Dame team wants to go deeper still - past the Romans, toward whoever came before them, the Gauls who gave the city its first name.

"The hope is that we are able to go back in time even further than we've ever been before," Altenburg said.



Archaeologist Valentine Breloux, holds ceramic fragments discovered during excavations outside Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, on June 1, 2026. (AP)



Archaeological workers wearing hard hats dig 4 meters (13 feet) underground during excavations outside Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, Monday, June 1, 2026. (AP)



A fragment of a Roman column is photographed among other artifacts uncovered during archaeological excavations outside Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, on June 1, 2026. (AP)



Archaeologist examines a coin under a microscope after it was discovered during excavations outside Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, on June 1, 2026. (AP)



A fragment bearing an inscription is photographed among artifacts discovered during excavations outside Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, on June 1, 2026. (AP)



Archaeologist shows a coin discovered during excavations outside Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, on June 1, 2026. (AP)



Archaeologist shows a drawer containing archaeological artifacts uncovered during excavations outside Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, on June 1, 2026. (AP)

Obituary

Voice of Disney classics passes away at 75

Grammy winner Peabo Bryson dies

NEW YORK, June 3, (AP): Peabo Bryson, the two-time Grammy Award-winning R&B singer best known as the voice behind the Oscar-winning Disney film duets "Beauty and the Beast" with Celine Dion and "A Whole New World" with Regina Belle from "Aladdin," has died. He was 75.

His family said in a statement that Bryson died Tuesday evening, days after having a stroke.

"While our hearts are broken, we find comfort in knowing how deeply Peabo was loved and how many lives were touched by his voice and his generous spirit," the family's statement said. "His legacy and music will live on for generations to come."

Internationally celebrated for his Disney classics, Bryson also built a career over five decades as one



Bryson

of R&B's premier balladeers, recording hits including "Feel the Fire," "I'm So Into You" and "Can You Stop the Rain." "For more than five decades, Peabo's extraordinary voice served as the soundtrack to some of life's most cherished moments," the family's statement said. "His music carried generations through joyful celebrations, great love stories and enduring moments of comfort and inspiration."

Born and raised in South Carolina, the singer, songwriter and bal-

leader launched his career with the group Moses Dillard and the Text-Town Display in the 1970s. Shortly afterward, Atlanta label Bang Records signed him as a solo artist.

He recorded for Capitol, Elektra and Columbia Records and became one of music's most sought-after duet partners. Aside from Belle and Dion, he also collaborated with artists including Roberta Flack and Natalie Cole.

His duet with Flack, "Tonight, I Celebrate My Love," became one of the defining love songs of the 1980s, while "If Ever You're in My Arms Again" helped expand his audience beyond R&B radio. He later scored No. 1 R&B hits with "Show & Tell" and "Can You Stop the Rain."

Beyond music, Bryson appeared in stage productions including "Raisin," "The Wiz" and "Porgy and Bess."

Culture

New era in China-France cultural exchange

Shaanxi culture comes to Paris

PARIS, June 3, (BUSINESS WIRE): On May 29, two cultural events focused on exchanges between China and France were held in Paris. Both events were guided by the Information Office of the Shaanxi Provincial People's Government. Among them, one was hosted by the Information Office of Xi'an Municipal People's Government, and the other was co-hosted by the Information Offices of Xi'an and Tongchuan Municipal People's Governments.

The events drew more than 100 guests from various sectors, including Mehrdad Shabahang, Head of UNESCO's Silk Roads Programme, and Marie-Pierre Boucher Hollier, special adviser to the UN World Tourism Organization.

At the "Silk Road Civilization: Tang Poetry Culture and Shaanxi Intangible Cultural Heritage Day" event held at UNESCO Headquarters that morning, representative works of Shaanxi intangible cultural heritage, including dough figurines, tie-dyeing, paper-cutting, and Yaozhou porcelain, were displayed, immersing guests in the craftsmanship and cultural traditions of Shaanxi. During the event, Chinese and French guests engaged in discussions on "The Contemporary Value of Tang Poetry and Mutual Learning Between Chinese and French Cultures," sharing perspectives on the natural imagery and humanistic spirit reflected in Tang poetry, as well as the French literary and artistic treatment of nature and humanity.



Guests attend the Shaanxi Culture Day exhibition in Paris. (BUSINESS WIRE)

That afternoon saw the Shaanxi Culture Day and "Eternal Dialogue: Cultural Heritage Protection and Urban Renewal" Exhibition. Structured around three sections, "Deep Roots of Civilization," "Safeguarding Cultural Heritage," and "Renewal and Rebirth," the exhibition highlighted preservation cases like Xi'an City Wall, Yaozhou Kiln and Yan'an revolutionary sites, and folk art innovations such as Huxian County peasant paintings and Fengxiang clay sculpture.

HEALTH/SCIENCE

As Congo grapples with Ebola, volunteers cook up meals to support patients and health workers

BUNIA, Congo, June 3, (AP): For patients in an Ebola outbreak with no approved medicine or vaccine, there is little comfort. But Arlette Baskawike, a volunteer for the UN food agency, is doing her best.

Her hair covered by a pink bonnet, Baskawike prepares porridge, omelets and bread for breakfast in a shed outside the Evangelical Medical Center in Bunia, the heart of the outbreak in eastern Congo. Lunch and dinner might include fresh fish with fufu, made of mashed plantains, finished off by fruit. She feeds both patients and health workers.

"Even though the patients have this disease, they still feel better when they eat, and the doctors have the energy to treat the sick and give them medication," Baskawike told The Associated Press as she prepared vegetables and potatoes with goat meat in a large pot. "I'm here for them like a parent, preparing food so they feel comfortable."

Her contribution may appear like a simple task, but it has become a critical support for the remote region as it grapples with the rapidly spreading Bundibugyo virus, the rare species of Ebola confirmed in May.

As of Tuesday, 321 cases including 48 deaths had been confirmed in the Central African nation's three eastern provinces of Ituri, North and South Kivu, according to the World Health Organization. WHO spokesman Christian Lindmeier said the number of suspected cases has dropped to 116 from 906 last weekend as many were ruled out after investigation.

Neighboring Uganda's has had 15 cases and one death confirmed, its health ministry said Tuesday. Uganda closed its border with Congo last week despite WHO guidance not to do so.

Meanwhile, Congolese authorities reopened Bunia's airport on Tuesday for domestic flights, requiring passengers to undergo temperature checks and respect strict sanitary measures.

The International Organization for Migration on Tuesday urged governments to strengthen cross-border coordination instead, warning that border closures could drive people's movement underground and increase transmission risks.

"Viruses do not stop at borders, and neither should our response," said Ugochi Daniels, IOM deputy director-general for operations. "When borders close, people often continue moving through informal routes where health screening and surveillance are limited."

The Congo-Uganda border has numerous footpaths beyond formal border posts.

Before the outbreak, the region already faced one of the world's most severe food crises, because of an ongoing conflict that has displaced millions of people as government forces fight rebels. The United Nations has warned that might complicate efforts to manage the spread of the virus among an already wary population.

"Ebola is an additional crisis on top of a crisis," said Olivier Nkakudulu, who heads the World Food Program in Ituri province.

WFP is facing a critical choice as aid cuts by the US and other major partners have disrupted operations in the vulnerable region. Efforts to contain the disease, which WHO has deemed a public health emergency of international concern, have been hampered.

Meanwhile, attacks by suspicious residents on health workers and the slow delivery of aid because of the conflict have been challenging.

Responders say they have ensured patients' nutritional demands are met as "comfort food" takes on a more significant meaning.

"Today we need to increase the amount because the number of patients has gone up," said Esther Bao, a nurse and one of the volunteers. She worried about patients who, because of their health situation, "don't eat just any meal."

Among the rare signs of optimism, at least five people have recovered in the outbreak, which continues to spread.

More than 400 meals have been served since the food assistance began on Thursday, according to Nkakudulu.

But "without more funding, we might not be able to prioritize every suspected case," Nkakudulu said. "We might have to focus on some and not have food to give to others."



Kavugho Hortense, a cook, delivers meals to the medical staff and ebola patients at the Evangelical Medical Center (CEM) in Bunia, Congo on June 1. (AP)

'This is a meaningful climate signal'

Warmer world creates bigger and more damaging hailstones, says study

WASHINGTON, June 3, (AP): A warmer world will likely make bigger and more damaging hail, a new study said.

Because climate change from the burning of fossil fuels should make more high-energy unstable air, which is conducive to hail forming, global storms pelting roofs, cars and the ground with hail bigger than a large marble will increase between 38% and 47% by the end of the century, depending on how much heat-trapping gas the world spews, a study in Wednesday's journal Nature said. And storms that produce smaller hail will shrink by 4% to 8%, researchers found.

Hail generally doesn't kill people, but it is expensive. It already costs the US about \$10 billion a year and around \$80 billion globally, said study co-author John Allen, a meteorology professor at Central Michigan University.

Hail does more damage than tornadoes and generally costs "more than a couple hurricanes a year now," Allen said in the morning from Guymon, Oklahoma, before he ventured out with scientists who drive into the heart of hail storms to figure out what makes them tick. "We've seen record hailstones in recent years. I find this extremely concerning because we're not really building our environment to be resilient to hail. We don't include this in our design standards, for example, for built homes in the US or indeed internationally."

Allen's computer simulations show the mix of larger stones will grow with climate change. Those are the ones that cause more damage, he and outside scientists said.

Bigger stones weigh more and fall through the air faster to hit with more power.

While small hail can damage crops, large hail of around 2 inches (5 centimeters) "can cause major damage to vehicles, roofs, solar panels, and other infrastructure," said Andreas Prein, a climate scientist at ETH Zurich, who wasn't part of the study.

One hole on a roof from a single hailstone can be patched, but many large stones hitting that roof usually means an expensive roof replacement, Allen



Tony Illenden, a member of Northern Illinois University's Husky Hail Hunter team, picks up hail during a Project ICECHIP operation on June 6, 2025, near Morton, Texas. (AP)

said.

What happens is there's more water vapor in a warmer atmosphere - nearly 4% more per degree Fahrenheit (7% per degree Celsius) - and "that increases the available energy to the atmosphere and so we tend to get end up with stronger updrafts," Allen said. "And that leads to more thunderstorms with

updrafts capable of producing hail."

But with warmer air, there's less cold as high up for smaller hailstones and they tend to melt more, where bigger ones don't, Allen said.

Previous studies have mostly focused on hail in the United States - which has the most hail - and didn't do the three-dimensional modeling of hail formation that the new study has done with lead authors out of China, Allen said.

Other studies have looked at potential increase in frequency instead of size. Argentina, Europe, Canada and the US Northern Plains will likely see the biggest increase in larger hail, while parts of the tropics should see a reduction because of smaller stones melting, Allen said.

"Hail is not just a US problem," Allen said. "Yes, we do see large losses here, but the global hail losses seem to be something that is really spiraling in recent years."

Study authors looked at hail bigger and smaller than 1.2 inches (30 millimeters) in diameter, which is somewhere between a marble and golf ball, and about the size of a U.S. 50-cent coin. The team looked at three scenarios based on carbon emissions from the burning of coal, oil and gas. In a slightly optimistic scenario of not so much carbon pollution, larger hail increases by 38%. In a more pessimistic scenario, where temperatures rise nearly 2 degrees Fahrenheit (1 degree Celsius) even warmer than the other scenario, larger hail jumps by 47%.

"This is a meaningful climate signal," said Walker Ashley, a Northern Illinois meteorology professor who wasn't part of the study. "But disaster losses are not driven by the peril alone."

As more people, more houses, more solar farms and more infrastructure move into areas prone to hail, the risk and damage increases, Ashley said. He added: "Climate change may be increasing the potential for larger, more damaging hail in some regions, but the future loss signal will also depend heavily on where people build, what they build, how resilient those structures are, and how land use changes."

WADA to continue work with CHINADA in education and scientific research

BEIJING, June 3, (Xinhua): The World Anti-Doping Agency leadership recognized China as a strong partner as the two sides collaborated in areas including education, scientific research, and building a global anti-doping network.

With the revised International Standard for Education coming into force along with the new World Anti-Doping Code in 2027, WADA president Witold Banka and Director General Olivier Niggli were pleased that China took education "very seriously".

"It's very important. CHINADA is a strong partner, and the Chinese government as well. And we see the solid fundamental," said Banka, referring to the government's stance on zero tolerance on doping.

"Education is an important tool. We want to balance the system, not only catch and punish, but also prevent and support. And this is the role of education."

"So we see the new and stronger force from CHINADA to instill the culture, to strengthen the educational actions and programs, to make sure that at least aware of the responsibilities and the rules. So education plays definitely a bigger role in the CHINADA policy," noted Banka, who is in Beijing for the WADA Asia and Oceania Intergovernmental Ministerial Meeting and Asia and Oceania Symposium from June 1 to 3.

CHINADA carried out 1259 qualification programs in 2025 alone, which translates to around 50,000 provincial-level athletes and 135,000 from sports schools passing anti-doping exams before they were allowed to participate in domestic and international competi-



WADA President Witold Banka makes an opening speech at the 21st Asia/Oceania Region Intergovernmental Ministerial Meeting on Anti-Doping in Sport at the Beijing National Conventional Center on June 1. (Xinhua)

tions.

Niggli recalled the leadership's visit to the Guangdong anti-doping base last year during China's National Games in the southern province.

"Education is key for the long-term solution, especially in a country like China with such a big population, and it's very important to be able to educate as many as possible, not only the elite athletes, but also lower level and the young people coming to the market," said Niggli.

"I think CHINADA is doing a good job. During the National Games, we were presented with their education program in one occasion, which was very impressive. I think CHINADA takes that very seriously, which is

good," he added.

Niggli noted that the collaboration between WADA and China goes beyond education.

"There are many fields of activity where we have collaboration and continue to have. One of the areas is the scientific aspect. You have a lot of very good brains in China. [We hope to] benefit from research that can be conducted in Chinese university," Niggli said.

"We talk about technologies, development of AI, and all of these. China is going to play a big role worldwide in the years to come. So I think we will work closely with CHINADA to see how all of this can benefit anti-doping and how we can bring that to the world."

Astronomers trace mysterious cosmic signals to rare binary star system

SYDNEY, June 3, (Xinhua): Astronomers have identified the clearest evidence for the origin of mysterious cosmic signals, linking them to a rare binary star system that offers a natural laboratory for extreme physics.

Using Australia's ASKAP radio telescope, a University of Sydney-led team discovered a white dwarf star shredding material from its larger, less dense companion red dwarf. The system, named ASKAP J1745-5051, produces powerful radio and X-ray bursts every 1.4 hours, according to a university statement released on Monday.

The discovery marks the first confirmed identification of so-called long-period radio transients, previously observed in only about a dozen locations in our galaxy, said Kovi Rose from the University of Sydney, lead author of the study published in Nature Astronomy.

As material from the companion star spirals toward



Rose

the dense white dwarf, it emits X-rays, while interactions between the stars' magnetic fields generate regular radio bursts. The radio and X-ray signals do not peak simultaneously, indicating they originate in different regions of the system, Rose said.

Scientists had earlier suggested long-period radio transients were slow-spinning neutron stars, but the new findings support an alternative explanation involving accreting white dwarfs.

The system could serve as a "Rosetta stone" for interpreting similar signals, Rose said, likening it to the ancient Egyptian artifact that unlocked hieroglyphics.

The discovery by the international team, comprising researchers from Australia, the United States, China, Canada, Spain, and Israel, also offers insights into extreme plasma physics and magnetic interactions under conditions impossible to replicate on Earth.

"These systems are natural laboratories. They allow us to test our understanding of how matter behaves in strong magnetic fields and under intense gravitational forces," Rose said.

Africa deadliest place in world to have a baby, while its population booms

BIRAO, Central African Republic, June 3, (AP): The agony began for Maude Ahmad Fadala shortly after sunset.

Her baby was coming. She was in a refugee camp, weakened by typhoid. There were no camp facilities for what was about to happen, and she had no money to travel. She struggled to her feet and started walking.

She stopped every few minutes, gripped by pain from contractions, then could go no farther.

"I gave birth in the street," she said. "There was no doctor, no midwife, and no one holding my hand."

Nearly two-thirds of maternal deaths worldwide occur in countries affected by conflict or "fragility," the World Health Organization said this year. For women like Fadala, fleeing Sudan's war to countries like Central African Republic, the danger doesn't stop at the border.

Displacement can mean missed prenatal appointments, dangerous journeys and weakened health systems, often in remote settings.

Women in Central African Republic are 40 times more likely to die in pregnancy or childbirth than in the United States, the United Nations has said. For every 100,000 births in the country, one of the world's poorest, 829 women die.

Years of internal conflict have made Central African Republic and its health system fragile. Despite its vast reserves of gold, health services are scarce outside major cities. One in three people live on less than \$2 a day.

The government, aware of its maternal mortality problem, announced a plan in 2024 to increase spending for resources such as



A nurse gives painkillers to patient Anna Adam Hessen, whose baby was delivered stillborn the previous day, at the Birao District Hospital in the Central African Republic, on March 25. (AP)

skilled birth attendants. Officials did not respond to questions about how it's working.

Now, sweeping cuts in humanitarian aid funding by top donor the United States and other countries have made it even harder for women to find care.

In the remote town of Birao near the Sudan border, where Fadala shelters, four local midwives who had been supported by the U.N. Population Fund lost their jobs last year as the Trump administration cut every US funding agreement with the UN sexual and reproductive health agency.

Opposite Fadala's tent is a former UNFPA-funded "safe space" providing transport for pregnant women to the district hospital. It was one of four such spaces in Birao serving nearly 50,000 women. Those have closed without US funding, along

with two US-backed health facilities.

Now, "some women run the risk of dying in pregnancy situations that are not medically managed," said UNFPA program officer Marie Justine Mamba Ibingui.

UNFPA's budget in Central African Republic has been halved in the past two years to \$6.5 million, country director Victor Rakoto said. UNFPA was the only provider of reproductive health products in Birao. "The risk of maternal death is going to increase if there is no solution," Rakoto said.

Conflict-affected settings like Birao account for six in 10 maternal deaths globally, according to the U.N.

The district hospital, which Fadala had tried to reach, is a few kilometers (over a mile) away over dirt roads.



Scarlett Camberos of Mexico's America lifts the trophy after winning the Women's CONCACAF Champions Cup final soccer match against The United States' Washington Spirit in Pachuca, Mexico on May 23. (AP)

FIFA launches women's health and performance project

WASHINGTON, June 3, (AP): FIFA launched a women's health and performance project on Monday to fill the void of information and research into the specific needs of female athletes as women's soccer continues to grow.

The initiative, a series of online modules, provides peer-reviewed research, data and knowledge on 13 topics that impact female athletes, from pregnancy and fertility to recovery and nutrition.

Currently, only 6% of sports science research exclusively focuses on women, according to FIFA. As a result, women are often trained using methods developed for male athletes because of the lack of available information on optimizing female performance.

In addition to athletes, the FIFA Female Health and Performance Project seeks to educate coaches and administrators at all levels of the sport, as well staff from teams, leagues and federations.

Robinson eyes aggressive new-ball role for Poms

England seeks reset at Lord's ahead of New Zealand test

LONDON, June 3, (AP) — The past is fiercely protected at Lord's Cricket Ground.

The Long Room, the slope of the field, the bell before play, dress codes and honors boards.

But inside this normally comforting time capsule, England will try to escape its recent past when it begins its first home test of the year against New Zealand on Thursday.

An occasion that should herald a fresh start is enveloped by a stench of dissatisfaction lingering from England's humiliating tour to Australia.

A team that was groomed for two years to end Australia's grip on the Ashes was crushed in 11 days before Christmas; tied for the quickest Ashes series defeat in 104 years. England's slack preparation and wrong tactical approach were aggravated by reports of excessive drinking under relentless local media scrutiny.

None of the leadership group paid a price. Director of cricket Rob Key, coach Brendon McCullum and captain Ben Stokes survived a review of the Ashes tour. That didn't go down well with team supporters, and McCullum understood.

"You have got to handle a little bit of the backlash," he told the BBC.

Fixes since the Ashes include reimposing a curfew and hiring more back-room staff, including fielding coach Sarah Taylor, the wicketkeeping great and first woman to coach an England men's test team.

Nothing banishes a putrid odor like the sweet smell of success, and England can take heart from its response to a similarly dire state in 2022 when McCullum, a former New Zealand captain, took charge.

England had lost the Ashes 4-0 in Australia and lost to the West Indies 1-0 in the Caribbean, prompting Joe Root to quit as captain. New Zealand arrived and Bazball was launched; England scored 279, 299 and 296 in consecutive second innings to sweep the series.

England has run out of patience with top-order batters Zac Crawley and



In this file photo, England coach Brendon McCullum hits the ball to England fielders during a practice session ahead of the fifth and final Ashes cricket test between England and Australia in Sydney. (AP)

Ollie Pope and replaced them with Durham opener Emilio Gay and Jacob Bethell, who scored his maiden century in January in the last Ashes test in Sydney. Gay has three hundreds in the ongoing County Championship. He'll be a dual international after playing three Twenty20s for Italy last year.

Ollie Robinson will try to be the confrontational new-ball bowler England consistently lacked in Australia during the Ashes. Robinson has an excellent record of 76 wickets at 23 in 20 tests but was dropped in 2024 because his

fitness and attitude cost him trust. But the captaincy of Sussex this season has matured him, and he's been recalled while Jofra Archer and Brydon Carse are sidelined.

Meanwhile, New Zealand will unleash its twin peaks, Kyle Jamieson and Will O'Rourke, in a test for the first time in a full-strength pace attack.

Jamieson is 2.07 meters (6-foot-8) and O'Rourke is 1.97 meters (6-foot-4). They have played together for Canterbury and in one-day internationals but both are returning from back injuries. Jamieson's last test was in February 2024 after which O'Rourke emerged with nine wickets against South Africa on debut. But then O'Rourke broke down and hasn't played a test since July 2025.

The pair were held back from the warmup test against Ireland in Belfast last week, along with attack leader Matt Henry, to travel to England early and train with bowling coach Jacob Oram. Allrounder Nathan Smith took eight Irish wickets and looks set to be the fourth pacer.

White ball captain Mitchell Santner recovered quicker than expected from an April shoulder injury in the Indian Premier League and is vying for a spot in the middle order with fellow allrounder Glenn Phillips, fresh from helping Gujarat Titans reach the IPL final.

There's been media speculation that this tour may be Kane Williamson's last for New Zealand. He opted out of his national contract in 2024 to freelance, and the 35-year-old batter's availability is series by series. The prospect of 14 tests over the next 12 months hasn't grabbed him even though he's 500-odd runs from the 10,000 milestone. He's admitted this will be his fifth and last test appearance at Lord's, where he's yet to taste victory.

"You only get a handful of opportunities to come to Lord's," Williamson said. "The way they maintain the tradition is quite special. You notice those differences to all other grounds. Walking out to the pitch through the Long Room, bumping into a few members, and obviously the lunches are iconic. It is a special place to play."

More than just cricket

India to tour New Zealand in blockbuster 12-match series

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, June 3, (AP) — India will play 12 international cricket matches in New Zealand later this year in a tour billed as the biggest in New Zealand in a generation.

The all-format tour will feature India playing the Black Caps in five Twenty20 internationals, five one-day internationals and two test matches.

India will play more international matches than any inbound team ever on a tour of New Zealand. The tour begins with a T20 international at Hagley Oval, Christchurch on Oct. 22 and concludes after the second test, which begins in Christchurch on Nov. 27.

"This will be about more than just the cricket on the field. It will be a celebration of New Zealand's shared history and culture with India and our burgeoning rivalry and friendship through cricket," New Zealand Cricket Marketing and Commercial Officer Glenn Critchley said.

"The passion and the following this team has is staggering, not to mention some of the players expect-



In this file photo, New Zealand's Blair Tickner celebrates after bowling to Ireland's Stephen Doherty who was caught out by Devon Conway during day three of the test match between Ireland and New Zealand in Belfast, Northern Ireland. (AP)

ed to tour such as Virat Kohli and Jasprit Bumrah. So we're bracing for the intensity and fandom that will accompany the tour."

New Zealand will then embark on a four-test tour to Australia, before returning home to play Sri Lanka in three ODIs, three T20s and two tests in January and February.

"We're delighted to be able to bring 42 days of international cricket to Kiwi cricket fans across eight cities," Critchley said.

Leclerc signs new deal with Ferrari

MARANELLO, Italy, June 3, (AP) — Charles Leclerc has signed a new contract with Ferrari "for the coming seasons," the Formula 1 team announced Wednesday.

The 28-year-old Leclerc has driven for Ferrari since 2019, having joined its academy in 2016.

Only Michael Schumacher has had more F1 races for Ferrari than Leclerc, who also ranks second for most pole positions for the team. He is yet to win a drivers' title, though.

Leclerc said he "couldn't be happier to continue this journey" with Ferrari.

"Together we've shared incredible moments and some tougher ones," he said in a statement, "but I believe in this team more than ever, and I'm deeply grateful that we will keep pushing side by side toward our shared goal of bringing the world championship back to Maranello."

The announcement comes ahead of his home grand prix at Monaco this weekend, when Leclerc will look to back up his win from the 2024 race.

Leclerc has been racing alongside Lewis Hamilton at Ferrari for the past year and a half and has consistently outperformed the seven-time champion.

Leclerc finished ahead of Hamilton in the drivers' standings in the 2025 season and is third in the 2026 standings, one place and three points ahead of Hamilton after five rounds.

"Over these seasons, we have seen him grow," Ferrari team principal Fred Vasseur said of Leclerc, "to become not only one of the strongest drivers in Formula 1, but also a person who is completely at one with the team and everything Ferrari represents."

Best of the Rest

UEFA removes Azerbaijani club from CL: UEFA removed Azerbaijani club Turan Tovuz from next season's Conference League because of past match-fixing by players, the European soccer body said Wednesday.

The club said in a statement it will challenge the decision at the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Turan finished third in the Azerbaijani league to earn a place in the second qualifying round of the third-tier Conference League. The draw is made in two weeks and first-leg games are on July 23.

Entry rules for the Conference League require clubs "not have been directly and/or indirectly involved" in fixing domestic or international games in the previous 10 years.

Seven Turan players were banned in 2019 by the Azerbaijani soccer federation, the club acknowledged in a statement. (AP)

Ellis shines in Australia series leveling victory over Pakistan



Pakistan's Arafat Minhas, right, plays a shot as Australia's Josh Inglis watches during the second one-day international cricket match between Pakistan and Australia, in Lahore, Pakistan. (AP)

Inglis and Green hit half-centuries

LAHORE, Pakistan, June 3, (AP): Fast bowler Nathan Ellis grabbed a career-best 4-33 on yet another tricky wicket and led Australia to series-leveling 41-run win over Pakistan in the second one-day international.

Pakistan, which won the first game by five wickets on a turning wicket, was bowled out for 190 after Australia had scored 231-9 on a pitch that had plenty of turn for the spinners and variable bounce for the seam bowlers.

"It's definitely different to the traditional one-day cricket we see around the world at the moment," Ellis said in reference to Pakistan's ploy to make rank-turners for the series against an under-strength Australia.

"It's no secret that today it was pretty low and slow ... we saw the cutters and the slow balls working a lot today, and the ball started to tail and reverse swing through the 35-to-45-over mark."

Half-centuries from captain Josh Inglis (51) and Cameron Green (53) were supported by Matthew Renshaw's run-a-ball 43, while 19-year-old Oliver Peake added 31 off 32 balls after Pakistan captain Shaheen Shah Afridi won the toss and elected to field.

Left-arm spinner Arafat Minhas, who became the first Pakistani bowler to take five wickets in his debut ODI at Rawalpindi last Saturday, returned figures of 2-27.

Leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed had 2-34 while the pace duo of captain Afridi (3-36) and Haris Rauf (2-49) shared five wickets between them.

All-rounder Shadab Khan scored 71 off 104 balls to make amends for his wicketless return of 0-56 and took the Pakistan chase deep before he was the last man dismissed - stumped down the legside by Inglis off leg-spinner Tanveer Sangha.

Ellis struck in his first over when Maaz Sadaqat played the ball back onto his stumps, and then the fast bowler had Babar Azam (16) lbw off a delivery that nipped sharply into Pakistan's premier batter in the fifth over.

Pakistan's middle-order struggled to cope with the spin of Matthew Short (3-36) and slumped to 78-6 before Shadab and Arafat Minhas (33) re-



Australia's Nathan Ellis plays a shot during the second one-day international cricket match between Pakistan and Australia, in Lahore. (AP)

lived the chase with a 59-run partnership.

But Ellis broke the stand when he had Minhas trapped lbw in the 32nd over. Shadab got to his fifth half-century in ODIs and struck two sixes against Green.

The series concludes Thursday at the same venue.

"It was a pretty good total in the end," Inglis said. "It would have been nice for someone to go on and get a big score, but ... we thought anything over 200, we were right in the game."

"You can always call on Nello (Ellis) on those sort of pitches, his variations are outstanding, and when you've got on-pace at 145 and then your slow balls at just over 100k an hour, it's really tough."

The slowness of the wicket was evident after Alex Carey had dragged Afridi's first ball of the match back onto his stumps and the Pakistan skipper didn't hesitate to introduce his two best spinners - Minhas and Abrar - from both ends inside the power play.

Abrar had an early success when he found the leading edge of Short's bat for a comfortable return catch and Marnus Labuschagne once again failed to bat on turning tracks when he top-edged a sweep against Minhas and fell for 5.

Inglis and Green then shut out expansive shots and shared a 51-run stand off 93 balls. Inglis raised his half-century with a reverse swept boundary against Abrar before he was undone by low bounce and was clean bowled by Minhas.

Thornton hits 5 threes as Valkyries rout Fire

Aces surge past Los Angeles behind Wilson double-double

LOS ANGELES, June 3, (AP) — A'ja Wilson had 25 points, 15 rebounds and five blocks, Jackie Young added 16 points and nine assists, and the Las Vegas Aces beat the Los Angeles Sparks 79-69.

Chelsea Gray added 12 points and 11 assists for Las Vegas (6-3). Wilson moved into eighth on the WNBA career blocks list, passing Tammy Sutton-Brown with 555.

Rae Burrell scored a career-high 22 points and Nneka Ogwumike had 12 points and 12 rebounds for Los Angeles (4-5). Burrell was 7 of 10 from the field for 17 points through three quarters, while her teammates combined to go 8 of 38 for 34 points.

Ogwumike took sole possession of

fifth on the WNBA career rebounding list, passing Tamika Catchings with 3,315.

Las Vegas went on an 8-0 run in the third quarter to build a 57-42 lead, and Young made a floater in the lane with 5.6 seconds left in the frame for a 13-point advantage.

Valkyries 95, Fire 77

In San Francisco, Kayla Thornton made five 3-pointers and had 19 points and eight rebounds, Janelle Salaun came off the bench to contribute 18 points and the Golden State Valkyries jumped out to a big lead before holding off a late rally by the Portland Fire for a 95-77 win in a Commissioner's Cup game.

Thornton shot 6 for 13 and made 4

of her first 7 3s for the Valkyries, who set a franchise record with 18 3-pointers. They shot 52.2% from deep in the first half and led 56-36 at the break. Salaun went 6 for 10 from the floor with three 3s.

Veronica Burton added 10 points and nine assists playing nearly 23 minutes after she came into the game questionable with a bruised right quadriceps muscle that she injured in Sunday's 91-81 loss to defending WNBA champion Las Vegas.

Megan Gustafson had 13 points and eight rebounds for the Fire, who had won four of five and dropped to 2-2 on the road.

Dream 9, Sun 75

In College Park, Ga., Rhyné How-

ard had 36 points with eight 3-pointers, Alisha Gray added 26 points, and the Atlanta Dream beat the Connecticut Sun 91-7 for their fourth straight win in the series.



Thornton

Howard and Gray combined for 40 of Atlanta's 50 points in the first half. Howard was 8 of 14 from the field, with five 3-pointers, for 22 points. Gray went 5 of 10, including three 3-pointers, for 18 points. The rest of the team combined to go 4

of 8.

Angel Reese made her first 3-pointer with the Dream to begin their 7-0 run to close the third quarter for a 68-65 lead. Atlanta scored the opening seven points of the fourth for a 10-point lead.

Howard's seventh 3-pointer came with 3:26 left for an 80-69 lead and her eighth banked in for a 12-point advantage. Aneesh Morrow had 20 points and 13 rebounds for Connecticut (2-9). Saniya Rivers and Leila Lacan each added 11 points, and Olivia Nelson-Ododa scored 10.

Connecticut was scoreless for over six minutes, spanning the third-quarter break. The Sun's first points of the fourth came with 4:39 remaining.

Reese finished with 12 points and 13

rebounds for Atlanta (6-2). Jordyn Canada had 12 points and 10 assists. Atlanta was 14 of 37 from 3-point range.

Mystics 90, Sky 72

In Washington, DC, Shakira Austin scored 17 points, Kiki Iriafen had 15 points and 11 rebounds, and the Washington Mystics beat the Chicago Sky 90-72.

Iriafen notched her fourth double-double of the season and 20th of her career. Austin also grabbed eight rebounds to help the Mystics rebound Chicago 46-29.

Michaela Onyenwere added 13 points for Washington (4-4). Angela Dugalic, Lauren Betts and Alicia Florez Getino each scored eight points off the bench.

Arteta describes demands on players as accident waiting to happen

Messi, Mbappé and Yamal all going to World Cup after injury scares

WASHINGTON, June 3, (AP): Injuries to some of soccer's star players, including Lionel Messi, Kylian Mbappé and Lamine Yamal, sparked concern ahead of the World Cup.

All three have been included in their national team squads for the tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico, but others have not been so fortunate.

France striker Hugo Ekitike sustained an Achilles injury in April that could take more than six months to heal, ruling him out of the World Cup and probably the start of next season with Liverpool.

Brazil stars Rodrygo and Éder Militão are out. So is Bayern Munich and Germany forward Serge Gnabry after injuring his adductor in training.

Messi caused the biggest scare after the Argentina great left the field injured while playing for Inter Miami last month. He has been included in coach Lionel Scaloni's squad as defending champion Argentina aims to retain its trophy, but it is still not known whether he has fully recovered from what was described as muscle fatigue.

Yamal, Spain's new superstar, missed the final weeks of the season for Barcelona because of a hamstring injury that made him fear he would miss out on his first World Cup.

"I remember the play in which I got injured," he said. "I was praying inside for it not to be serious, for it to be a cramp or something like that, because I knew the World Cup was very close."

Players and coaches have increasingly warned about the impact of an ever-packed schedule, and the expanded World Cup comes a year after the re-launched, supersized Club World Cup. The Champions League has also been expanded in recent years.



In this file photo, Argentina's Lionel Messi dribbles during a friendly soccer match against Zambia in Buenos Aires, Argentina. (AP)

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta describes the demand on players as "an accident waiting to happen."

Argentina: Joaquín Panichelli (ACL)

Brazil: Éder Militão (hamstring), Rodrygo (ACL)

England: Ben White (medial ligament)

France: Hugo Ekitike (Achilles)

Germany: Serge Gnabry (adductor)

Netherlands: Xavi Simons (ACL)

United States: Cameron Carter-Vickers (Achilles), Patrick Agyemang

(Achilles), Johnny Cardoso (ankle)

Scotland: Billy Gilmour (knee)

Spain: Fermin Lopez (foot)

Argentina: How soon Messi will be involved is not known. Cristian Romero sustained a knee injury at the end of the season, but has been included in Argentina's squad.

Canada: Star left back Alphonso Davies injured his hamstring and it is not certain he will recover in time for his team's opening game against Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Croatia: Veteran midfielder Luka Modrić broke his cheekbone in April. He was back playing for AC Milan well in time for the World Cup, but was wearing a protective face mask. Defender Joško Gvardiol returned to training for Manchester City in early May after four months out with a broken leg, but is going to the World Cup.

United States: Gio Reyna made just four league starts this season for Borussia Mönchengladbach, and none since Dec. 19. "He can help because he's a different player, different talent, and I think in all the roster you need to have a player like him," U.S. coach Mauricio Pochettino said.

After 60 years of hurt England turns to German coach to end title drought



In this file photo, England players pose for a team photo before the start of the International friendly soccer match between England and Japan in London. (AP)

'Everyone believes we can win the World Cup'

MANCHESTER, England, June 3, (AP): In a bid to end its decades-long wait to win a second World Cup, England has put its fate in the hands of a German.

It's fair to say the appointment of Thomas Tuchel was not universally well received.

"I'm sorry I have a German passport," the serial-winning former Paris Saint-Germain, Chelsea and Bayern Munich coach quipped at his official unveiling in 2024.

He had woken that morning to some unflattering headlines in the British media.

The Daily Mail described it as a "dark day for England" and said the national team had gambled on a "GERMAN."

The leader of the right-wing Reform Party Nigel Farage asked on X: "Why can't we have an English manager?"

Never mind that Tuchel was a Champions League winner who had lifted trophies in three different countries. Or the fact that England has gone down the foreign route before: a Swedish coach in Sven-Goran Eriksson and an Italian in Fabio Capello. And in the days before Tuchel's appointment, there were rumors that Pep Guardiola was also a leading candidate.

A point of contention was the fact that Germany has long-been England's biggest soccer rival. Since winning the 1966 World Cup final against West Germany, England has often struggled against the Germans in major tournaments. Some England fans have brought 20th-century history to the rivalry with provocative chants taunting Germany about World War II.

Debate about Tuchel's nationality, however, dissipated quickly, helped by his easy-going charm when dealing with the media and a perfect winning record during England's World Cup qualifying campaign.

According to professor Jan Rüger, author of the upcoming book "Great Powers: A History of Britain and Germany," the wider reaction to Tuchel's appointment points to a change in Anglo-German relations after the tensions that prevailed in the decades following two world wars.

"There were questions, but it certainly hasn't turned into an ongoing saga in the way in which it would have in the 1990s or even around the turn of the century," Rüger told The Associated Press. "Then it would have been unthinkable to have a



In this file photo, England's head coach Thomas Tuchel looks on before the start of the International friendly soccer match between England and Japan in London. (AP)

German manager.

"Germany really isn't the bad guy anymore. That's long since passed. I don't think it works portraying Germany as the bogeyman."

Time will tell if Tuchel is portrayed as a hero or villain at the World Cup. If England fails, his nationality might be raised again. But England managers of the past have been the subject of brutal criticism by fans and media, regardless of what it says on their passport.

Tuchel's predecessor Gareth Southgate was widely credited with making England fans fall back in love with the national team during his eight-year spell, yet he faced a torrent of abuse from sections of supporters during the 2024 European Championship, with plastic beer glasses thrown in his direction after one match.

Southgate departed after leading England to back-to-back Euros finals and the World Cup semifinals in 2018.

He goes down as the nation's second most successful manager after Alf Ramsey, who led England to World Cup victory in 1966.

If Tuchel can end England's trophy wait, he would become a national treasure.

"Everyone in the squad, the staff, everyone believes we can win it," midfielder Kobbie Mainoo said.

Tuchel stunned some fans and players with his

squad selection for the World Cup, leaving out big names including Phil Foden, Cole Palmer and Trent Alexander-Arnold.

It was evidence that he would not be swayed by public opinion, which has been a criticism of previous coaches.

"Everything I know about international football tells me that tournaments are won by teams, not individuals," he said. "What we're trying to achieve in the summer can only be achieved as a team."

Midfielder Jordan Henderson was one of the surprise inclusions at the age of 35.

Tuchel is the 14th coach tasked with the challenge of ending England's trophy drought, which now stretches to 60 years.

After Southgate's departure the English Football Association said it was looking for a candidate to "win a major tournament". That might sound obvious, but even coaches who had won big prizes with club teams such as Bobby Robson, Terry Venables, Eriksson and Capello could not emulate that success with England.

Southgate got closer than anyone since Ramsey despite a modest coaching career before being handed the national job.

His success appeared to be grounded in developing a connection both within his squad and with supporters. As a former player who missed a penalty in a semifinal shootout defeat to Germany at Euro 1996, his emotional understanding of what it means to represent England appeared to resonate with a new generation.

As a foreign coach - albeit one who coached in the Premier League with Chelsea - Tuchel cannot bring that same dynamic to the role.

He does, however, fit the description of a winner of major tournaments, having led Chelsea to the Champions League in 2021. He was also Champions League finalist with Paris Saint-Germain.

He won league titles in France with PSG and Germany with Bayern Munich.

In Harry Kane, Jude Bellingham and Declan Rice, he has three of the biggest stars in European soccer and enough talent at his disposal that he felt able to leave out the likes of Foden and Palmer.

"I love the difficult decisions and I love the tough decisions because they bring in the end clarity, they bring a certain edge, and it's what you need to go all the way," Tuchel said. "From day one, we said we will always try to select and build the best group, which is maybe not necessarily just to collect the best talents."

Five teen stars to watch at World Cup

Rising teenage talents set for global breakthrough

MADRID, June 3, (AP): Some famous teenagers have had their breakthrough moment at the World Cup, including Pelé, who became one of soccer's all-time greats.

Pelé was 17 when he helped lead Brazil to the World Cup title in 1958. Kylian Mbappé was 19 when he cemented his superstar credentials by leading France to the World Cup title in 2018. Two decades earlier, England's Michael Owen had a coming-of-age moment as an 18-year-old at the 1998 World Cup in France.

The 2026 tournament will feature 22 teenagers, according to the official rosters of the 48 teams published by FIFA.

A few of them have already established themselves with top European clubs, including 18-year-old Lamine Yamal and 19-year-old Pau Cubarsi, the Spaniards who have been thriving with Barcelona for some time. Germany's 18-year-old Lennart Karl just had his breakthrough season with Bayern Munich.

Other already established players are older than 19 but are set to make their first World Cup appearances, including 20-year-old Warren Zaïre-Emery and 21-year-old Désiré Doué, the France internationals who have been regulars with two-time defending Champions League winner Paris Saint-Germain.

Other 21-year-olds who have been around for some time but will possibly debut at the tournament include England's Nico O'Reilly of Manchester City and Turkey's Arda Güler of Real Madrid. Nico Paz, another 21-year-old, made Argentina's World Cup squad after thriving with Como in the Italian league, helping the club qualify for the Champions League for the first time.

Here's a look at five up-and-coming teenagers who could have breakthrough performances during soccer's showcase event:

One of Mexico's most promising prospects in years, Mora could become the youngest Mexican player to appear in a World Cup at age 17. He is the youngest player among the rosters of the 48 teams playing at the tournament this year.

The midfielder has been making waves in Liga MX with Tijuana. He started for the Mexico team that won the Gold Cup in 2025.

In August 2024, he was the youngest to start and score in the Mexican first division at age 15. In January 2025, he was the youngest to debut for Mexico at 16.

Some of the top clubs reportedly scouting the teenager include Real Madrid, Barcelona and some Premier League teams.

The 19-year-old winger will star for Ivory Coast at the World Cup after impressing with Leipzig in the German league.

He moved to the United States at a young age and excelled while playing high school



In this file photo, Mexico's Gilberto Mora controls the ball during a FIFA U-20 World Cup quarter-final soccer match against Argentina at National Stadium in Santiago, Chile. (AP)

soccer in Florida. Diomande had trials with Major League Soccer teams Colorado and Charlotte but ended up moving to Spanish club Leganes in 2024.

It wasn't long before Leipzig signed the promising star last year. He also debuted for the national team last year, featuring in the Africa Cup of Nations.

The 19-year-old striker will have a chance to shine with Brazil after finishing the season well with Lyon in the French league.

Endrick thrived with Brazilian club Palmeiras before moving to Real Madrid as the next top prospect from Brazil. He had a rough start with the Spanish powerhouse and was sent on loan to Lyon, where he thrived this last season.

It was enough for new Brazil coach Carlo Ancelotti to include him on the World Cup squad, where he will compete with the likes of Neymar, Vinícius Júnior, Raphinha and another up-and-coming teenager in 19-year-old Rayan, who impressed with Bournemouth in his first Premier League season.

The 18-year-old Mbaye became the youngest Senegalese goal scorer in the Africa Cup of Nations earlier this year, helping Senegal reach the final. He was 17 at the time.

The forward was a member of PSG's academy and made his French league debut as a 16-year-old in 2024.

He made his Champions League debut last year and progressively got more playing time with PSG this season, including in the top European club competition won by the French club.

The 19-year-old attacking midfielder has been a regular with Ecuador.

Chelsea struck a deal in 2023 to sign Páez from Ecuadorian club Independiente del Valle when he turned 18 in 2025. Chelsea loaned him to French club Strasbourg last year, and he is currently playing on loan with Argentine powerhouse River Plate.

A strong World Cup is likely to bring Páez, who is known for his nifty dribbling and explosive changes of pace, back to Europe.

US grants visa to Haitian player ahead of World Cup

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, June 3, (AP): The U.S. government has given a visa to Woodensky Pierre, the only member of Haiti's national soccer team who lives in the Caribbean country, to travel and participate in the World Cup, an official said.

Thecieux Jeanty, Haiti's soccer federation spokesperson, told The Associated Press that Pierre was traveling to Florida.

"It was a great moment for him, a moment of happiness," he said.

Supporters gathered around Pierre as he arrived at the airport in Port-au-Prince, telling the AP that

he had "a happy heart."

Airport workers sought to have photos with him, while his mother hugged him several times before he left.

Among the fans was Guy Ernst Phillipe, who hugged Pierre: "We could not be any more proud. ... I'm touching history right now."

He also had a personal message for Pierre: "At least 10 goals," he said as both of them laughed.

Pierre's teammates arrived in Florida last week to start preparing for the World Cup. It is the second time that Haiti has qualified. The last time it

appeared on soccer's biggest stage was more than half a century ago.

Pierre had been training with local players in an upscale area of Port-au-Prince as he awaited the visa. The team's stadium in Haiti's capital was considered too dangerous, so Haiti was forced to play its "home" World Cup qualifiers in Curaçao.

Pierre is from Cite Soleil, a seaside neighborhood that has long struggled with hunger, massacres and gang violence. It is located in western Port-au-Prince, which is 70% controlled by gangs.



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Switzerland's soccer players arrive at the Fairmont Grand Del Mar hotel in San Diego, Tuesday June 2, 2026, for the World Cup soccer tournament. (AP)

Sports

General Assembly gives green light to Kuwait boxing plans

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The Ordinary General Assembly of the Kuwait Boxing Federation approved the financial and administrative reports for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026, during its meeting held at the federation's headquarters in Sabah Al Salem. Members also endorsed the federation's action plan for the 2026-2027 season and authorized the Board of Directors to appoint an external auditor for the new financial year.

The meeting was chaired by federation president Abdullah Khaled Al-Otaibi and attended by Assistant Secretary Abdullah Al-Dhafiri and Assistant Treasurer Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, alongside representatives of Kuwait, Al-Qurain, Al-Tadamon, Burgan, Al-Sulaibikhat, Al-Jahra, Al-Sahel and Al-Nasr clubs.

Assembly members reviewed and approved all agenda items after discussing the federation's achievements over the past year, as well as the challenges facing the sport and future development plans aimed at advancing boxing across all levels.

Al-Otaibi emphasized the importance of continuing efforts to sup-



Al-Otaibi chairs boxing General Assembly meeting.

port athlete development programs and nurture emerging talents, noting that such initiatives would enhance the competitiveness of Kuwaiti boxing and strengthen its presence at Gulf, Arab and continental competitions.

The General Assembly also reaffirmed its backing of the Board's development strategy for the upcoming season, expressing confidence that its implementation would help expand the sport's reach and further strengthen boxing's standing within Kuwait's sporting landscape.

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No withdrawals

Asian Club Handball Championship to proceed as scheduled in Kuwait

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The Asian Handball Federation President Bader Al-Deyab has confirmed that the 28th Asian Men's Club League Handball Championship will go ahead as scheduled from June 6-15 in Kuwait, with Kuwait Club hosting the continental event.

Al-Deyab said preparations are progressing smoothly and stressed that no participating club has withdrawn from the tournament, with all teams having officially confirmed their participation in the championship, which serves as a qualifier for the IHF Men's Club World Championship (Super Globe).

Saudi Arabia's Al-Khaleej Club has already arrived in Kuwait and begun preparations for the competition. Meanwhile, host Kuwait Club continues its training camp, while Burgan has returned from its camp in Cairo and recently played



Asian Handball Federation President Bader Al-Deyab



Tournament Director Sameh Al-Hajri

a friendly match against Kuwait Club. The remaining teams are expected to arrive today ahead of the

tournament's opening.

Tournament Director Sameh Al-Hajri also confirmed that all arrangements for the championship have been finalized in coordination with the Asian Handball Federation.

"The tournament will be held on schedule and there are no changes to the program," Al-Hajri said. "Al-Khaleej has arrived, while the rest of the participating clubs are due to reach Kuwait today."

He added that the security developments witnessed in the country early yesterday had not affected preparations for the event, but instead strengthened the organizing committee's determination to successfully host the continent's top club competition and welcome participating teams to Kuwait.

Al-Hajri concluded by thanking the Kuwait Club Board of Directors and the various organizing committees for their dedicated efforts in ensuring the successful staging of the championship.

Top-ranked Sabalenka goes out of French Open

Shnaider and Chwalinska advance

PARIS, June 3, (AP): Top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka wasted a lead of a set and two breaks to lose 3-6, 7-5, 6-0 to Diana Shnaider in the French Open quarterfinals on Wednesday.

The four-time major winner led 4-1 in the second set and was two points from victory when serving for the match at 5-4 before completely collapsing against a player appearing in her first Grand Slam quarterfinal.

"Well, honestly I am speechless. Super happy," Shnaider said. "I feel like I was trying to focus point by point. Not thinking about the score. She is the world No. 1, so I just trying to do my best. I just had to fight for every point."

Sabalenka stood still and screamed loudly after losing a



Poland's Maja Chwalinska reacts after winning the quarterfinal tennis match against Russia's Anna Kalinskaya at the French Open in Paris. (AP)

point to fall 0-30 down in the sixth game of the decider and, although she saved two match points at 0-40 down, she lost the match when she sent a shot into the net. In all, she lost 12 of the last 13 games on Court Philippe-Chatrier.

Earlier, Maja Chwalinska extended her remarkable French Open run by beating No. 22-seeded Anna Kalinskaya 7-6 (3), 6-3 Wednesday.

For Sabalenka, her struggles were reminiscent of last year's final against Coco Gauff, when she remonstrated loudly, shouting to herself and glaring at her team box before losing to the American.

Sabalenka had already looked agitated when serving for the first set but still looked in control as she served for the match in the second, holding a 30-15 lead.

But Shnaider, who was already on her best run at a major, broke Sabalenka before taking complete control.

Sabalenka looked increasingly frustrated as the third set wore on, and when she missed a volley at the net in the fourth game of the decider she crouched and rested her head on her racket.

The momentum had changed and the Belarusian was unable to find a way back.

It was another big upset in a tournament where defending champion Gauff (third round) and four-time winner Iga Swiatek (fourth round) already tumbled out.

Defending men's champion Janik Sinner served for the match in a second round defeat, and 24-time major winner Novak Djokovic wasted a two-set lead in a third round loss.

That opened things up for lesser-known players.

The unseeded Chwalinska came through three qualifying rounds to become only the second Polish



Russia's Diana Shnaider returns to Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus during the quarterfinal tennis match at the French Open in Paris. (AP)

woman to reach the semifinals at Roland Garros, along with Swiatek.

"I don't process it, you know," Chwalinska said. "But definitely after the tournament finishes, I will have time to be grateful for what happened and process it as well."

She said British player Emma Raducanu's run to the 2021 U.S. Open title as an 18-year-old qualifier had inspired her.

"It was such an impressive run, you know," Chwalinska recalled. "Also, she was so young."

When Kalinskaya's big forehand from the back of the court went out, the 24-year-old Chwalinska had her biggest win.

She put her hand over her mouth and then her face in her hands in near disbelief. Chwalinska had never been beyond the second round at

any major before this tournament.

Whatever happens next, she has already doubled her career earnings.

Chwalinska's total prize money before this tournament was \$864,030 and reaching the last four here earns her 750,000 euros (about \$872,000).

After they traded early breaks of serve amid blustery conditions with

the roof open on Court Philippe-Chatrier, Chwalinska clinched the first set at the third opportunity when Kalinskaya's two-handed backhand sailed long.

"I feel like I was fighting against the wind, against the weather conditions," Kalinskaya said. "It was cold today, so the ball was going slower. I couldn't use my speed, my power."

Saudi Arabia, Qatar rely heavily on home-based talent at WC

WASHINGTON, June 3, (Agencies): FIFA's latest statistical report on the 2026 World Cup has highlighted several notable trends among participating nations, including player distribution by clubs and leagues, as well as squad composition across the tournament.

England tops the list of countries whose clubs employ World Cup players, with 200 squad members competing across the English football pyramid. Germany follows with 109 players, ahead of France and Spain with 86 each, while Italy has 71 and Saudi Arabia 49.

Saudi Arabia and Qatar stand out as the teams most dependent on home-based talent, with 25 players in each squad currently playing in their respective domestic leagues. Saudi Arabia's only overseas-based player is right-back Saud Abdulhamid of French club Lens, while Qatar's sole foreign-based representative is left-back Homam Ahmed, who plays for Spanish side Cultural y Deportiva Leonesa.

In contrast, Cape Verde, DR Congo, Ivory Coast, Curaçao, Senegal, and Uruguay have selected squads made up entirely of players based outside their domestic leagues, with no locally based footballers included in their World Cup rosters.



Abdulhamid stands as Saudi Arabia's only foreign-based star.

The stadiums that will host World Cup matches are removing all traces of their usual corporate sponsors in anticipation of the tournament that starts next week.

At AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, home of the NFL's Dallas Cowboys, workers on Tuesday continued the process of covering the "AT&T" on the stadium's facade. The work began last week.

The reason? AT&T, and the other stadium sponsors at World Cup venues, are not FIFA sponsors, which are guaranteed exclusive rights during the

tournament that runs through July 19.

As a result, most of the 16 host stadiums are being rebranded with generic city names. AT&T Stadium will be called Dallas Stadium.

In Seattle, black banners were hung to cover the "Lumen" name at Lumen Field. The home of the NFL's Seahawks is now going by the name Seattle Stadium. Even Latin America's largest soccer stadium, the iconic Banorte Stadium in Mexico, has been temporarily renamed Mexico City Stadium.

An exception is BC Place in Vancouver, British Columbia, which is owned by the government, so it's called BC Place Vancouver.

Other stadiums and their World Cup monikers include: MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, which will be called New York New Jersey Stadium, and Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, California, renamed San Francisco Bay Area Stadium.

FIFA allowed the massive Mercedes Benz logo atop the Atlanta Falcons stadium in Georgia to remain because it was determined that removing it could cause structural damage to the retractable roof.

But the large, round logos on the sides of the building were covered in April, and the venue will be called Atlanta Stadium this summer.