



Scan the QR code to access the Arab Times WhatsApp Channel



Kuwait, US deepen ties
Page 4

Shocking video captures attack on Kuwait airport



The first terrifying moments of the Iranian drone strike on Terminal 1 of Kuwait International Airport are captured in images extracted from video footage released by Kuwait's civil aviation authority.



KUWAIT LEADERSHIP CHECKS ON VICTIMS OF T1 TERROR

Iran behind strike: CENTCOM

KUWAIT CITY, June 4, (Agencies): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah visited on Thursday victims receiving treatment at Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital following the Iranian attack targeting Kuwait International Airport, to check on their health conditions and review the medical care being provided.

Accompanied by Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi, His Highness underscored the government's commitment to closely monitoring the condition of the injured and ensuring all necessary support and care until their full recovery.

He directed the relevant authorities to mobilize all available medical and technical resources and provide the highest standards of healthcare and treatment to the victims.

His Highness also expressed his sincere condolences and deepest sympathy over the death of one person in the attack, praying that the deceased's family be granted patience and solace, and wishing a speedy recovery to all those injured.



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah checks on an injured victim receiving treatment at Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital following the Iranian attack on Kuwait International Airport.



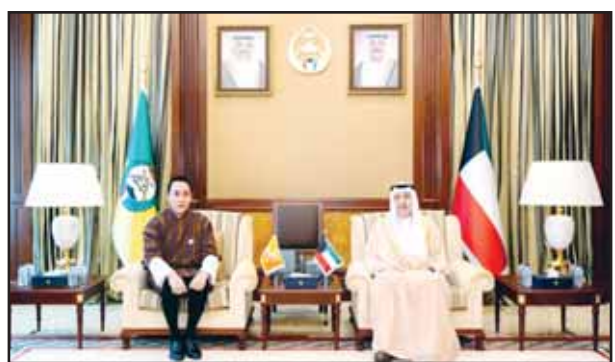
Ministry of Interior photo
First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah speaks with an injured victim of the Iranian attack during a hospital visit to assess the condition of those wounded.

Continued on Page 5

KNG Chief, Bhutan's envoy explore areas of cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, June 4, (KUNA): Chief of Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Sheikh Mubarak Humoud Al-Sabah explored issues of common interest along with Bhutanese Ambassador to Kuwait Bob Dorji on Thursday.

In a statement by KNG, Sheikh Mubarak received Ambassador Dorji and reviewed a number of topics of common interest between the two sides.



National Guard photo
Chief of Kuwait National Guard hosts Bhutanese Ambassador to Kuwait.

Gone in 225 km/h

Speeding spree ends in arrests

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: The General Traffic Department continues its efforts to curb serious traffic violations and guarantee road safety.

A security source disclosed that Jahra traffic officers recently arrested two citizens for violating the speed limit, while the highway patrol units apprehended two others for driving more than 50 kilometers per hour over the limit, specifically 220 and 225 kilometers per hour respectively.

All four were referred to the traffic detention center for legal action and their vehicles were impounded.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef's visit reinforces bond

Kuwait, Jordan forge closer security links

AMMAN, June 4, (KUNA): Visiting Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah and Jordanian Minister of Interior Mazen Al-Faraya discussed on Wednesday bilateral relations between the two sisterly countries.

In a press release, Kuwait's Ministry of Interior said that Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef reviewed with the Jordanian minister regional security developments and efforts regarding them.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef lauded the deep-rooted sisterly and historical relations between Kuwait and Jordan, and common cooperation between the two ministries for continued



KUNA photo
Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah with Jordanian Minister of Interior Mazen Al-Faraya.

Continued on Page 4

Other Voices

Human mobility is the silver lining in the climate crisis cloud for Middle East and North Africa

By Othman Belbeisi
MENA Regional Director,
International Organization for Migration

Ahead of the United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD) Conference of Parties (COP17) in August and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in November, IOM is advocating for recognition of migration not only as a consequence of desertification and climate change but also as a potential solution to adapt to these environmental challenges.



Othman Belbeisi, MENA Regional Director, International Organization for Migration

Across the Middle East and North Africa, climate change is no longer a distant threat. It is a daily reality shaping how people live, work, and move. Environmental pressures are transforming communities and accelerating human mobility in ways that test the resilience of societies already grappling with conflict, economic fragility, and rapid urbanization.

Gradually, a new realization is dawning: this new wave of human mobility may include more positives than negatives. Indeed, climate-driven human mobility is real and can seem disruptive if large scale and

spontaneous, but the perceived dark cloud may contain a silver lining.

On this World Environment Day, we affirm that climate action, environmental protection and human mobility are not opposing forces. When managed well, they reinforce each other. Migration can be a part of climate action, and climate action can help build peace and resilience. Investing in it - including the restoration of ecosystems - means investing in people's ability to stay, or to move safely and with dignity when needed.

Continued on Page 4

PAM acts after worker protest

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) took legal action against a fuel supply company in Abdally, after the partial work stoppage by some employees due to non-payment of overtime.

According to PAM, the concerned teams from the Labor Relations Department at the Labor Affairs Sector acted immediately when a video circulated on social media showing the work stoppage. These teams rushed to the company, where they conducted investigations and heard the statements of the employees.

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait oil nears 'higher capacity'

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: The Managing Director of Global Marketing at Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), Sheikh Khaled Ahmed Al-Sabah, confirmed that the Kuwaiti oil sector will resume production at up to 70 percent within six to eight weeks following the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz.

During his participation in the Middle East Oil and Gas Conference organized by Standard &



Sheikh Khaled Ahmed Al-Sabah, Managing Director of Global Marketing at Kuwait Petroleum Corporation

Continued on Page 4



Attacks on Kuwait will only strengthen unity among citizens: Sheikh Athbi

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah on Thursday conducted an inspection tour in Terminal One (T1) at Kuwait International Airport to assess the situation and the impact of the Iranian attack on the airport.

Director General for Airport Security Brigadier General Bader Al-Shaya and several security officials warmly welcomed the Governor.

Al-Shaya accompanied the Governor in touring the terminal, while briefing him on the security measures taken and the efforts exerted by the concerned authorities in dealing with the aftermath of the attack.

The Governor listened to the explanation on the extent of the damage in some airport facilities and the precautionary measures implemented to ensure the safety of passengers and staff. He commended the efforts of security and technical agencies and airport personnel in fac-

ing such exceptional circumstances.

He affirmed that the heinous attack on the State of Kuwait will only strengthen the unity of citizens as they rally behind their wise political leaders. He emphasized the importance of continuing efforts and coordination among all relevant authorities to maintain national security and ensure the safety of its vital facilities.

At the conclusion of the tour, Al-Shaya expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the Governor and the relevant authorities in dealing with the aftermath of the attack.

Al-Shaya thanked and appreciated the Governor for this field visit, stressing that his presence and first-hand knowledge of the situation proved his commitment to follow up issues affecting the security and safety of citizens and residents. He also lauded the unwavering support of the Governor for the security authorities and employees at the airport.



Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah takes stock of the damage caused by the drone attack on Kuwait International Airport.



Farwaniya Governorate photos showing the damage caused by the drone attack on Kuwait International Airport.

KPC on road to revive stalled projects

Local, foreign firms entry to rejuvenate oil sector: Al-Sumait

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: Forty-six years after its establishment, and in light of the Cabinet's approval to amend certain provisions of Law No. 6/1980 concerning the establishment of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), due to difficulties and obstacles hindering the corporation from achieving its desired objectives, former minister and former KPC Board Member Yahya Al-Sumait confirmed that KPC had indeed faced several challenges that impeded its progress.



Al-Sumait

He indicated that the Cabinet's approval of these amendments repre-

sents a significant step toward launching stalled oil projects.

Al-Sumait explained that the anticipated amendment will help remove many of the difficulties and challenges that have been hindering KPC's operations and projects. The law had previously been used by some members of the National Assembly as a justification for undeserved appointments of individuals who did not meet the required criteria, which in turn negatively affected the performance of some positions. The amendment to the law would enable KPC to privatize some of its facilities that are not directly related to oil resources.

He expressed hope that the amendment would facilitate the entry of the local private sector and foreign companies into the oil sector, thereby increasing KPC's revenues.

Al-Sumait said one of the benefits of amending the law would be greater flexibility in accelerating the merger of oil companies.

He noted that the process of transferring KPC's assets to the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) had taken a considerable amount of time before the final merger phase was announced.

Al-Sumait stated that current laws hinder KPC's progress in the required restructuring due to overlapping jurisdictions with other entities, in addition

to legislative obstacles related to certain restrictions on profits and tenders. KPC's financial situation may not improve after the halt of Kuwaiti oil exports due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

He emphasized the importance of KPC subsidiaries refraining from any speculative activities in Boursa Kuwait, in order to avoid exposing the country's wealth to speculation and the financial shocks experienced by global stock markets.

Al-Sumait stressed the importance of focusing on diversifying budget revenue sources through fully secure and sustainable methods.

He explained that the first Kuwaiti company to manage the country's oil sector was the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), established in 1934. Its activities included exploration, onshore and offshore surveys, drilling test wells, developing producing fields, and exploring crude oil and natural gas.

In 1975, KOC was nationalized and became fully owned by the Kuwaiti government. In 1980, KPC was established as a parent company encompassing all Kuwaiti oil companies under Law No. 6/1980, becoming a legal entity overseen by the Minister of Oil and operating with an independent budget.

Palestine, UAE, Jordan slam attacks on Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, June 4, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Wednesday a telephone call from Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

During the call, President Abbas extended greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, expressing strong condemnation of the Iranian aggressions that targeted Kuwait's civil facilities, and voicing Palestine's full solidarity with whatever action the State of Kuwait takes to preserve its sovereignty and safety.

Meanwhile, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled appreciated President Abbas's sincere sentiments and supportive stance, wishing the brotherly Palestinian people peace, safety and stability, read a Diwan statement.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received a phone call from UAE counterpart Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan in light of the recent Iranian missile attacks on Kuwait International Airport earlier today.

Both top diplomats reiterated Kuwait's full right to take all measures necessary to safeguard its sovereignty, security, stability and the safety of its citizens and residents.

Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad also received a phone call from Jordanian counterpart Ayman Al-Safadi in light of the recent Iranian missile attacks on Kuwait International Airport earlier today.

Both top diplomats reiterated Kuwait's full right to take all measures necessary to safeguard its sovereignty, security, stability and the safety of its citizens and residents.

Dialogue & trust key to development: Al-Fulaij

KUWAIT CITY, June 4, (KUNA): Minister of State for Development and Sustainability Affairs Reem Al-Fulaij underscored the importance of strengthening political dialogue and building trust among nations as key foundations for enhancing economic cooperation and achieving sustainable development.

The minister made the remarks during her participation, via videoconference, in the plenary session of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) as part of the second Termez Dialogue on connectivity between Central and South Asia.

Speaking to KUNA, Al-Fulaij stressed the need for greater regional integration and the development of partnerships in trade, transport, logistics and energy to support shared stability and prosperity.

She said Kuwait places particular emphasis on investing in smart infrastructure, strengthening food and water security, developing supply chains and supporting the transition toward a green economy.

Sustainability represents a comprehensive approach that balances economic development with the preservation of natural resources and the promotion of human well-being, she added.

She also highlighted the importance of continuing dialogue, exchanging expertise and strengthening strategic partnerships among countries in the region to address common challenges and advance sustainable development goals.



The preparatory meeting for the 5th Arab Innovation and Investment Forum (AIIF) kicked off Thursday in Cairo.

Forum eyes jump in inter-Arab science, trade, investment ties

CAIRO, June 4, (KUNA): The preparatory meeting for the 5th Arab Innovation and Investment Forum (AIIF) kicked off Thursday, aiming to enhance Arab cooperation in innovation, investment, and entrepreneurship with participation of officials, business leaders, and experts from various Arab countries.

In his opening remarks, Assistant Secretary General and Head of the Economic Affairs Sector at the Arab League, Ambassador Dr. Ali Al-Malki said the forum is part of ongoing cooperation between the League and "Youth Capable for Sustainable Development" foundation to support development efforts, create opportunities for Arab youth, and promote innovation, investment, and public-private partnerships.

The forum serves as a vital platform to discuss strategic initiatives, follow-up on previous recommendations, and enhance economic performance and comprehensive development in the Arab region, Al-Malki noted.

The meeting comes amid rapid regional and global economic changes, offering a chance to review the latest trends in entrepreneurship, technology, and finance, and to build partnerships between investors and startups, he added.

He confirmed the League's readiness to support a unified Arab economic vision to confront current challenges and seize future opportunities, promoting a shift toward a

knowledge-based, innovative, and entrepreneurial economy.

Al-Malki also revealed that work is underway on drafting a new Arab Investment Agreement, to be presented at the upcoming Arab Summit, aimed at encouraging intra-Arab investments and strengthening economic cooperation.

Meanwhile, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of AIIF Wael Al-Sharif described the event as a vital platform for connecting capital with innovation and investment opportunities to build a knowledge-based Arab economy.

He announced that the 5th edition will launch several initiatives, including the "Arab Investors Network," the "Artificial Intelligence (AI), Economy, and Business Forum," specialized events in various Arab countries, and an integrated digital platform to support entrepreneurs with investment opportunities and startup services.

The forum aims to attract 3,000 to 5,000 participants from over 20 Arab and international countries.

For her part, Head of the Egyptian Tax Authority (ETA) Rasha Abdel Aal described the forum as a vital platform for supporting entrepreneurship, innovation, and investment in promising sectors.

Rapid global economic and technological changes have made knowledge, innovation, and technology key drivers of modern economies, she noted.

Investing in innovation is now essential for sustainable development, job creation, and improving quality of life, she emphasized.

The forum seeks to enhance Arab cooperation in innovation, investment, and entrepreneurship, and to explore partnerships that support sustainable economic growth and integration across the Arab region.

Safety first, KFF advises sea-goers

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) advised seafarers to fully abide by the safety guidelines before setting sail, stressing the need to make sure that the boats and engines are in good condition and marine safety equipment and tools are available and functioning well before departure.

KFF also underscored the importance of checking if navigational instruments, lights and audible warning signals are available and functional, in addition to

notifying the Marine Fire Department or Coast Guard before sailing.

It affirmed the importance of wearing life jackets throughout the journey, especially the children, indicating that prevention is the first line of defense in saving lives and properties.

It also recommended that people check the weather forecast and sea conditions before heading out to the sea, and that they should avoid going out during unstable weather. It reiterated that "prevention is protection and the safety of everyone is a shared responsibility."

Other Voices

A back down will leave the region in quandary

By Ahmad alsarraf

IT IS difficult to recall when the United States suffered a defeat in a war. The heavy losses it suffered at Pearl Harbor and in the Philippines during World War II were eventually recovered from.

The defeats in Vietnam and Afghanistan were costly, but they did not permanently damage America's international standing, as they were far removed from the arena of global competition. The initial failure in Iraq was mitigated, but a defeat in the current confrontation with Iran, should it occur, would be of a completely different nature, one that could neither be recovered from nor ignored.

Robert Kagan, the prominent American historian, author, and political analyst, considered one of the leading theorists of the neoconservative movement, the architect of the "American Century" vision advocating American hegemony and military intervention to impose democracy, and a renowned columnist for The Washington Post, said, "There will be no return to the status quo, no final American victory that repairs or overcomes the damage done to the country, and the Strait of Hormuz will not be reopened in its previous state."

With Iran controlling the Strait of Hormuz, it has emerged as a major player in the region. The roles of China and Russia - Iran's allies - are strengthening, while the United States' role is significantly diminishing. America's inability to end the war will trigger a chain reaction globally, as friends and foes alike adapt to America's failure to change or topple the Iranian regime, or to extract any concessions from it. This regime, which suppressed the protests in January, will not hesitate to impose economic hardship on them now.

Therefore, some proponents of war are calling for a resumption of military strikes, but they cannot explain how another round of bombing will achieve what the first did not. Further military action will inevitably provoke an Iranian response against neighboring countries, and the proponents of war have no answer for that either.

Trump did not halt the initial attacks

notified the Marine Fire Department or Coast Guard before sailing. It affirmed the importance of wearing life jackets throughout the journey, especially the children, indicating that prevention is the first line of defense in saving lives and properties.

It also recommended that people check the weather forecast and sea conditions before heading out to the sea, and that they should avoid going out during unstable weather. It reiterated that "prevention is protection and the safety of everyone is a shared responsibility."

Iran is aware that Israel might launch a surprise attack. On the other hand, from an international and security perspective, it is impossible to allow Iran complete control of the Strait of Hormuz. Israel would find itself more isolated than ever as Iran grows wealthier, rearms more effectively, and retains the option of acquiring nuclear weapons. Israel would face international pressure not to provoke Tehran in Lebanon or Gaza.

As researchers Reuel Gerecht and Ray Takeyh have written, the economies of the Arabian Gulf states were built under the umbrella of American hegemony. If this hegemony were to disappear, along with freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf, these states would be forced to accommodate Tehran's demands, knowing that no power could accomplish what the United States has failed to do.

An American defeat in the Persian Gulf would have far-reaching global repercussions. The world has witnessed how a few weeks of war with a Third World country have depleted America's arms stockpiles to dangerously low levels, with no quick solution in sight. This situation raises questions about America's readiness to engage in another major war, should China launch an attack on Taiwan or should Putin escalate his aggression against Europe.

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

Court sends co-op embezzler to five-years in jail

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: The Criminal Court, presided over by Judge Dhuwaih Mubarak Al-Dhuwaih, sentenced the former marketing director of Sulabikhat and Doha Cooperative Society to five years in prison with hard labor and ordered him to pay KD105,069 for embezzling funds and goods from the cooperative.

The Public Prosecution charged the marketing director and other officials at the cooperative

with stealing goods valued at KD93,789 after they were found to be selling these goods outside the cooperative and failing to deposit the sales into its account. The marketing director is also accused of misappropriating the value of two invoices totaling KD11,280.

The court acquitted the contracted directors, former board chairman and employee of complicity in the crime.

In another aspect of the case, the court imposed a fine of KD 3,000 on one defendant for abusing his authority and causing financial dam-

age to the cooperative society due to the administrative and financial violations.

Another defendant was fined KD5,000 for abusing his authority, harming the interests of the cooperative, and failure to submit a document related to the administrative investigation to the investigation authorities.

The prosecution conducted investigations based on reports from the Ministry of Social Affairs and oversight reports stating the discovery of financial and administrative violations at the cooperative from January 2022 to August 2023.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

GCC to emerge stronger, united as war nears end

"FORTY-five years ago, on May 25, 1981, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was established at a meeting held in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates," Doctor of Law and Kuwaiti lawyer Dr. Nayef Al-Adwani wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"The idea for the GCC originated from a Kuwaiti initiative, at the behest of the late Amir, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad, following consultations with the leaders of the Gulf states, who accepted the idea.

"Kuwait has always been the initiator and advocate of unity, embodying the concept of solidarity and providing material and moral support to the Gulf, its people, and the rest of the Arab world.

"During the era of the late Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem, the Gulf and South Arabian Authority was established following Kuwait's independence to support and develop the Gulf states, particularly the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, and to strengthen their educational and developmental progress.

"Kuwait contributed to the establishment of schools, institutes, and universities, and also supported infrastructure development and the economies of these countries, reflecting its belief in solidarity and cohesion.

"Kuwait has continued this approach by supporting reconciliation and helping bridge divisions during various crises. It has earned recognition as a center for humanitarian work and has gained the appreciation and gratitude of many nations. This is why the international community condemned the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

"The success and prosperity of the GCC is a source of pride for Kuwait and its people, and a safeguard for all Gulf states. The GCC is expected to play a prominent role in strengthening unity and integration among the Gulf states after the end of the Iranian regime's war against them."

Also:

"On the 45th anniversary of the founding of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), we recall the visionary Gulf initiative led by the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad (May God have mercy on him), with the support of the leaders of the Gulf states (May God have mercy on them), to establish a unified Gulf entity based on coordination, integration, and the protection of common interests," columnist **Khaled Ahmad Al-Tarrah** wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"Over the past decades, the GCC has witnessed differences and disagreements among some of its member states. Nevertheless, the Gulf countries have consistently managed to contain such differences and address them with care, guided by their commitment to the unity of the Gulf family.

"Recently, new disputes have emerged between two sister member states. We hope such disagreements will be resolved away from media escalation and the tensions and emotions of social media platforms.

"The GCC has achieved notable successes in political, economic, and security fields, reinforcing the concept of a shared Gulf destiny. It has also demonstrated, on numerous regional and international occasions, its ability to coordinate and unify positions in the face of challenges and changing circumstances.

"On the security front, Gulf coordination has served as a vital strategic umbrella for safeguarding the region's security and stability, particularly amid wars, conflicts, crises, expansionist projects, and attempts at political and security infiltration that the region has experienced.

"The GCC, along with its leaders, governments, peoples, and member states, demonstrated unwavering solidarity with Kuwait during the Iraqi invasion at political, economic, social, and popular levels.

"The GCC played a prominent role in shaping international support for Kuwait, upholding its legitimacy, and contributing to its liberation from the Iraqi invasion. Forty-five years after the GCC's establishment, a review now appears to be a political necessity in order to further develop the organization and enhance its ability to confront regional and international challenges and changes.

"Among the most important political priorities is advancing the Gulf framework toward a more cohesive model based on political and economic integration, in line with Article 4 of the Charter, which states that the GCC represents a step towards a union that protects the interests of the region's countries and their peoples from unrest, disputes, and polarization that may affect member states' interests.

"Equally important is the establishment of a Gulf Center for Strategic Research and Studies, along with the development of crisis management units based on sound scientific and professional principles. It is also essential to open the field to specialists and experts from across the Gulf states in order to anticipate future developments, analyze challenges, and develop mechanisms that support progress toward a Gulf Union.

"The next phase requires Gulf states to redefine the tools of joint action, en-

hance media, political, and economic coordination, and strengthen Gulf societies and states against incitement, polarization, and unstructured alignments.

"The GCC is one of the most important and enduring contemporary Arab experiences, carrying a political and strategic legacy that reflects the depth of historical and social ties between the peoples and states of the Gulf, and affirms that the security, stability, and unity of the Gulf are a shared responsibility."

□ □ □

"Dear Minister of Higher Education, not all administrative decisions are measured by numbers, and not all institutions are evaluated solely by the number of beneficiaries they serve. Some entities represent the presence of the state, safeguard the interests of its citizens regardless of their number, and strengthen confidence in national institutions abroad," Dr. **Fahad Al-Nasser** wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"From this perspective, we turn our attention to the Kuwaiti Cultural Office in Canada, which is currently facing the possibility of closure despite the fact that the need for its services is more pressing now than ever before.

"The Kuwaiti Cultural Office in Canada was established in 2012 in response to clear demands and a genuine need driven by the educational landscape at the time.

"Canada witnessed a significant increase in the number of Kuwaiti students, to the extent that student affairs became a major focus of the Kuwaiti Embassy's work.

"As a result, a dedicated Cultural Office was established to oversee the academic and administrative affairs of Kuwaiti students and to serve as a vital link between the Ministry of Higher Education, Canadian universities, and the students themselves.

"Have the reasons that led to the establishment of the Cultural Office in Canada disappeared? Has the state's responsibility toward its scholarship students in that country come to an end?"

"The idea of closing the office is difficult to justify for several reasons.

"The establishment of the Cultural Office was not a random decision. It was a response to a genuine need created by the nature of Canada's educational landscape. Years ago, the Kuwaiti Embassy itself recognized this need when it called for a specialized body to manage student affairs and closely monitor their academic and living conditions.

"The second reason is that transferring the entire student file to the embassy would return the situation to square one, placing an additional burden on the diplomatic mission by assigning it educational and academic responsibilities that are not within its core political and diplomatic duties.

"The third reason is that, over the years, the Cultural Office has built strong direct relationships and established cooperation agreements with a number of leading Canadian universities. It has played a major role in facilitating the admission of Kuwaiti students, particularly in vital and highly competitive fields such as medicine and dentistry.

"The fourth reason is that scholarship students need more than an entity that disburses financial allowances or approves academic registrations. They need an institution that represents them, protects their interests, and intervenes when academic or administrative issues arise with their universities.

"The fifth reason is that citing the academic challenges faced by some students as justification for closing the office is an unfair conclusion. Academic difficulties exist in every country that hosts scholarship students. At the same time, there are many outstanding examples of Kuwaiti doctors, engineers, pharmacists, and other professionals who have graduated from Canadian universities with distinction.

"The sixth reason is that the operating costs of the Cultural Office are modest when compared with those of cultural offices in other countries. The educational, institutional, and national benefits it provides far outweigh any financial savings that may result from its closure.

"The seventh reason is that Canadian institutions or the Cultural Office should not be held responsible for the decline in student numbers. This is largely tied to scholarship policies and the range of available specializations. The more scholarship opportunities and approved fields of study are offered, the higher the number of students will be. The issue today is not about a building, offices, or administrative positions, but rather about a strategic vision for the future of Kuwaiti scholarships.

"Countries that invest in human capital do not reduce the support systems available to it; rather, they strengthen and develop them, building on accumulated experience and expertise.

"If there are concerns about the office's performance, or a need for restructuring or development, the appropriate solution lies in evaluation and improvement, not closure."

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



Dr. Al-Adwani

PAY chief pledges support in shared goals & services



Farwaniya Governorate photo
Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah meets the acting Assistant Undersecretary for Youth Activities in the Public Authority for Youth (PAY) Ghazi Al-Jalawi in his office.

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah met with acting Assistant Undersecretary for Youth Activities in the Public Authority for Youth (PAY) Ghazi Al-Jalawi at his office in the Farwaniya Governorate headquarters on Wednesday.

Talal Al-Harbi, Head of Youth Center in the governorate, accompanied Al-Jalawi.

During the meeting, they discussed ways to strengthen coordination between the governorate and PAY, as well as the sports and youth programs and activities scheduled for summer to help young people make the most of their time and develop their abilities and skills

in a positive and safe environment.

The Governor emphasized the importance of supporting youth and sports initiatives and activities for various age groups. He commended the role of PAY and its youth centers in nurturing national talent, promoting community participation, and instilling positive values among young people.

On the other hand, Al-Jalawi expressed his gratitude to the Governor for his unwavering support for youth programs and activities.

He affirmed the commitment of PAY to strengthen cooperation with the governorate in order to achieve shared goals and better serve the residents of the governorate.



Al-Seyassah photo

The demolition works in progress in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.

42 structures targeted

Demolition of unsafe 'buildings' continues

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: The Safety Management Team at Farwaniya Municipality continues to oversee the demolition of dilapidated buildings in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, and monitor the work of the demolition contractor under the supervision of site manager Engineer Mubarak Al-Watari, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The plan targets the removal of 42 unsafe buildings. Kuwait Municipality had completed all necessary legal and technical procedures prior to commencing demolition, including evacuating the properties, disconnecting electricity, and fencing off the sites to ensure pedestrian safety.

It has already demolished 15 buildings, while the owners of five buildings carried out the demolition themselves.

The demolition of the remaining 22 buildings is proceeding according to the schedule approved by the specialized safety team.

The Municipality confirmed that the relevant departments in Farwaniya Governorate have completed all required procedures for these properties, including disconnecting electricity, issuing violation notices, posting evacuation orders, and proceeding with demolition work.

Police on 24/7 patrol to maintain stability

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: The Emergency Police General Department at the Interior Ministry carried out security and traffic campaigns in various governorates from May 24-30.

These campaigns aim to guarantee public safety, implement traffic laws, and provide 24-hour rapid response to emergencies and official reports.

A total of 1,815 operations were conducted during these campaigns, resulting in the arrest of 22 persons wanted by law, and several others found to have violated the Residency Law and failed to present valid identification documents.

The officers also confiscated vehicles wanted by the courts and implemented legal protocols against the parties involved.

They dealt with 147 traffic incidents, which included two pedestrian accidents. They provided aid in 968 emergency cases, issued 1,150 traffic tickets, and impounded several vehicles, while 22 individuals were referred to the Drug Control General Department.

The Emergency Police General Department reaffirmed its commitment to continue deploying patrols and respond to emergency calls promptly in order to maintain national security, protect the public, and strictly enforce the law.

Transparency sought in jobs for engineers

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: The Governance Team at the Ministry of Public Works on Wednesday held a coordination meeting with experts from Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) to explore the possibility of developing a professional code of conduct for engineers.

This initiative aims to qualify national engineering personnel according to professional and objective standards characterized by integrity and transparency.

In another development, the ministry revealed that the consumption of tertiary and quaternary treated water in May reached 8.4 million cubic meters -- 847,357 cubic meters of which were tertiary treated and 7.492 million cubic meters were quaternary treated.

Police nab Filipino expat in money exchange heist

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: The Criminal Security Sector, represented by the General Department of Criminal Investigation, has apprehended a Filipino expatriate accused of robbing a money exchange branch in Shaab, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Interior explained that investigations led to the identification and arrest of the suspect.

The incident began when the ministry's Operations Room received a report of a robbery at a money exchange branch in Shaab, carried out by an unidentified individual.

Security authorities immediately responded to the scene and took the necessary measures. Employees at the company reported that the suspect was masked and carrying a weapon, which was later found to be fake. A container filled with a substance suspected to be gasoline was also found in his possession.

The employees said the suspect threatened and assaulted the staff members before stealing approximately KD 21,000 in various currencies and fleeing the scene.

The Ministry of Interior reaffirmed its commitment to apprehending anyone who attempts to commit such crimes or threaten the security of the country and the safety of society.

149 citations issued for no parking, hindrance

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: The General Traffic Department issued 149 citations for various violations, including parking in 'no parking' zones and obstructing traffic, to the drivers of vehicles parked in front of several hospitals recently.

A security source affirmed this is part of the ongoing efforts of traffic officers to strictly enforce traffic regulations.

The source indicated that traffic campaigns are continuing to instill traffic discipline, while urging drivers to park only in designated areas to avoid fines.

MoCI seals shops selling fake items

Hidden doors lead to stores

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) carried out an intensive inspection campaign in Salmiya recently, resulting in the closure of two shops found to be selling and storing counterfeit goods bearing internationally registered trademarks.

The inspection drive was conducted by the Commercial Control and Consumer Protection Department, led by Faisal Al-Ansari, in cooperation with the Jabriya Evening Center.

Immediate closure procedures were implemented against the two establishments, and the violators were referred to the Commercial Prosecution for legal action.

Department Director Faisal Al-Ansari explained that the first case involved a clothing, footwear, and accessories store where inspectors discovered large quantities of counterfeit products being offered as genu-

ine items at high prices. The seized goods included bags, shoes, accessories, watches, and wallets bearing protected trademarks.


The campaign resulted in the seizure of 3,575 counterfeit items, including 504 bags, 1,420 pairs of shoes, 78 belts, 10 scarves, 94 watches, 48 wallets, and 1,385 accessories.

In a separate case, another shop was discovered with a hidden door, inside which additional quantities of counterfeit goods were found, including 624 pieces of clothing, 475 pairs of shoes, and 1,798 bags.

The total number of counterfeit items seized at this location reached 2,897, bringing the total number of seized counterfeit items in these campaigns to 6,472, all bearing internationally registered trademarks.

Al-Ansari emphasized that these practices not only harm the rights of trademark owners but also damage Kuwait's reputation and standing in international indices related to combating commercial fraud and protecting intellectual property.

Official reports documenting the incidents were filed, and both shops and the warehouse were immediately sealed. All cases were referred to the Commercial Prosecution for further legal action.




مغول محل

الخبز الأول المصنع

SINCE 1985

NOTHING BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER LIKE GOOD FOOD



1800 188 / 5501 1985

www.mughalmahal.com | @mughalmahalkuwait

Kuwait, US deepen ties



Secretary of State Marco Rubio, right, meets Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, in the Treaty Room at the State Department, Thursday, June 4, 2026, in Washington. (AP)

Strategic partnership reaffirmed

WASHINGTON, June 4, (KUNA): Visiting Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met Thursday with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, during an official visit to the US.

The meeting reviewed the firm strategic partnership between the two friendly states and the deep-rooted historical ties between the two peoples, Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a press release.

Both sides affirmed their commitment to enhancing bilateral cooperation and coordination across various fields, mainly politics, defense, investment, and culture, it added.

Building upon their deep-rooted relations, the two ministers agreed to broaden horizons and push for new opportunities to advance their shared interests, it noted.

The meeting witnessed the condemnation of the repetitive brutal Iranian attacks against Kuwait and the assertion of Kuwait's full right to all required measures it takes to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The two ministers underscored the importance of continuing Kuwait-US coordination at various levels in light of the evolving regional circumstances.

In addition, they stressed the need to address current challenges, respond to rapidly developing events and strengthen efforts to promote regional security and stability in the interests of the two friendly countries as well as safeguard the region's security and prosperity, the release concluded.

Winners earn spots in Switzerland finals

Kuwait hosts first hydrogen race qualifiers

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: The College of Science at Kuwait University, in cooperation with the Public Authority for Youth (PAY) and the Ministry of Education, concluded the national qualifiers for the 2026 Hydrogen Endurance Vehicle Race for the first time in Kuwait.

The event was held under the patronage of Kuwait University President Dr. Dina Musa'ed Al-Mailem, and in the presence of Vice Director for Academic Support Services Dr. Abdullah Al-Mutawa who represented the president.

Kuwait is the first country in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to host this international program for educational hydrogen vehicle races.

Present at the closing ceremony were acting Dean of the college Professor Sayed Haider Jawad Behbehani, acting Director General of PAY Nasser Al-Sheikh, Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs at the Ministry of Education Eng. Hamad Al-Hamad, representatives of Al-Sayer Group - strategic partner of the competition, and General Marketing Manager at Lexus Group Salah Al-Din Ahmed Mohammed.

Al-Mutawa pointed out that Kuwait University's hosting of this competition embodies its academic and national role in supporting innovation and empowering youths to acquire the scientific and technical skills required for the future.

He said the competition is one of the most prominent global educational initiatives in the field of clean energy and hydrogen technologies, providing practical experience that develops students' innovation, engineering thinking, teamwork and problem-solving skills.

He explained that the participation of student teams from Ministry of Education schools, along with Kuwait University and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), reflects the integrated national efforts aimed at supporting young talents and refining their scientific capabilities.

He affirmed that the achievements of the participants throughout the competition affirm the promising potential of Kuwaiti youths and their ability to excel and compete in modern scientific and technological fields.

Meanwhile, Al-Sheikh stated that the competition is a scientific and applied platform that develops youth skills and promotes innovation and sustainability.

He commended the cooperation between academic, governmental and private institutions in supporting youth initiatives and investing in their capabilities.

Al-Hamad explained that the competition is a successful model of cooperation between national institutions concerned with nurturing gifted students. He stressed that such initiatives is in line with the Kuwait 2035 vision, which aims to invest in human capital and promote innovation and a knowledge-based



Officials and participants gather during the closing ceremony of Kuwait's first national qualifiers for the 2026 Hydrogen Endurance Vehicle Race.



Student innovators from the winning teams celebrate their victory.



Top & above: Participants during the qualifiers.



Participants during the 2026 Hydrogen Endurance Vehicle Race qualifiers.



Top & above: Participants during the qualifiers.

economy.

Mohammed expressed his pride in Al-Sayer Group's participation as a strategic partner in this initiative. He stressed the importance of supporting educational programs that provide young people with opportunities to acquire technical and engineering

skills related to clean energy technologies and sustainable innovation.

The national qualifying rounds resulted in several teams qualifying to represent Kuwait in the H2 Grand Prix Pro World Finals, which will be held in Switzerland.

Continued from Page 1

Human mobility

From North Africa to Yemen, IOM works with local authorities to restore degraded land, strengthen water systems, and support communities whose livelihoods depend on fragile ecosystems. In Iraq, we help rehabilitate damaged infrastructure to be climate resilient while supporting displaced families to rebuild their lives. And in the Gulf, regional initiatives are exploring how skills mobility partnerships can channel talent into the green sectors that will power the region's future.

In December, IOM and the Bahrain Supreme Council for Environment convened officials from Gulf Cooperation Council countries, regional bodies such as the GCC Statistical Center, UN agencies, and GCC-based academic institutions in Manama to foster regional dialogue, promote data harmonization, and build capacity to address climate mobility while strengthening resilience through improved data systems.

These efforts reflect a simple truth: migration is not only something to manage; it is an enabler of climate resilience and sustainable development. Regular migration pathways, particularly those linked to renewable energy, climatesmart agriculture, and environmental restoration, can help countries meet their climate goals while offering workers safe, dignified migration opportunities.

We are pioneering initiatives that give people skills which enable them to adapt to climate change where they are or where to move, through these regular, dignified pathways. And we work with authorities to ensure that new arrivals can be incorporated. Our Urban Diagnostic Toolkit, designed for this very purpose, was first used in Agadir, Morocco last year.

Diaspora communities, too, play a vital role; mobilizing finance, knowledge, and innovation to support climate resilience in their countries of origin.

Cities are where climate impacts, displacement, and inequality converge, but they are also where solutions emerge. When they are inclusive and resilient, they become not only places of refuge but spaces of opportunity, co-existence, and peace.

Resources may be getting scarcer in crowded urban centres, but supporting local governments to manage rapid urban expansion can prevent competition from escalating into conflict. Climate resilient housing, early warning systems, and green infrastructure help communities withstand recurring shocks. Most importantly, planning must be holistic: intentionally including displaced persons, migrants, refugees, and host communities.

Climate change, conflict, and forced migration are reshaping urban environments across the world. In fragile settings, urban planning is not merely technical: it is political. It determines who has access to safety, services, and dignity.

The lesson is clear: climate action must confront inequality and build trust. It must strengthen the social fabric that allows communities to withstand shocks without fracturing. And it must recog-

nize human mobility as part of the solution, not a symptom of failure.

On this World Environment Day, we have a choice. We can continue treating climate change and human mobility as separate challenges, or we can embrace a more integrated, humane, and forward-looking approach. The path to resilience runs through people. And when people are empowered - whether they stay, move, or return - our region becomes stronger.

Kuwait, Jordan

coordination to enhance security and stability, it added.

In parallel, Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lt Gen. Khaled Al-Shuraian discussed on Wednesday with his Jordanian counterpart Maj. Gen. Yousef Al-Hunaiti means of enhancing military and defensive cooperation between the Armed Forces of both sides.

The two senior military officials also dealt with the mechanism of developing strategic partnership to serve the shared interest of the two countries, Jordan news agency (Petra) reported.

Al-Shuraian expressed the Kuwaiti army's keenness on expanding the horizons of military collaboration and sharing expertise with Jordan's armed forces.

Meanwhile, Al-Hunaiti affirmed the deep-rooted ties between the two countries and their role in maintaining common security and stability.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef concluded his official visit to Amman later on Wednesday and returned to Kuwait after holding a series of security-focused meetings. He reiterated the importance of sustained coordination between the two countries to reinforce stability.

Kuwait oil

Poor's Global Energy on June 2 and 3 in London, Sheikh Khaled Ahmed Al-Sabah explained that the remaining 30 percent may take approximately an additional month to return to normal levels.

Sheikh Khaled affirmed that Kuwait's refineries are expected to return to full operational capacity within two to three weeks.

According to informed sources, Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) has opted for a full resumption of operations in the Kuwaiti oil sector within the next three months, due to ongoing maintenance work and efforts to address disruptions in production from some wells. Some wells had been experiencing production declines, prompting the company to mobilize all its resources to achieve a full return to capacity between September and October.

The sources indicated that KPC has granted KOC broad authority to carry out its operations without pressure.

They noted that the Burgan field is expected to return to full production capacity once all disruptions affecting oil flow in recent years have been resolved.



Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)

Price

One night stay in a **Queen Bed Cabana for 2 persons** with inclusive of Breakfast

BHD 46.000 / Net

One night stay in a **Two Bedroom Chalet for 4 persons** inclusive of Breakfast

BHD 102.148 / Net

Weekends (Thursday & Friday)

Price

One night stay in a **Queen Bed Cabana for 2 persons** with inclusive of Breakfast

BHD 53.361 / Net

One night stay in a **Two Bedroom Chalet for 4 persons** inclusive of Breakfast

BHD 119.173 / Net

Terms & conditions apply

Continued from Page 1

Shocking video

In a parallel gesture of support, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah visited victims injured in the Iranian attack on Kuwait International Airport who are receiving treatment at Farwaniya Hospital and Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital.

According to a Ministry of Interior statement issued on Thursday, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef was briefed by medical teams on the condition of the injured and the treatment being provided to them. He stressed the importance of ensuring that all necessary care and support continue to be provided and directed officials to closely monitor the patients' health until their full recovery.

During the visits, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef praised the efficiency and swift response of medical personnel and emergency teams in handling the aftermath of the attack. He also commended the readiness and professionalism demonstrated by security personnel in responding to the incident and helping safeguard public safety.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef expressed his sincere condolences over the death of one victim in the attack, praying that the deceased's family be granted patience and strength during this difficult time. He also wished the injured a speedy and complete recovery.

As Kuwait continued to assess the human and material impact of the attack, international scrutiny of the incident intensified. The US Central Command (CENTCOM) said on Wednesday that Iran had launched an unjustified, calculated and deliberate drone strike targeting Kuwait's civilian international airport.

In a statement posted on X, CENTCOM categorically rejected Iran's claim that damage to the passenger terminal had been caused by a US missile interceptor. "Iran claimed today that it did not attack the passenger terminal at Kuwait International Airport and damage was instead caused by a U.S. missile interceptor. Totally FALSE," CENTCOM said. It added that "Iran struck the civilian airport with drones in a deliberate, calculated, and unjustified attack."

Further evidence of the scale of the assault emerged when Kuwait's civil aviation authority released video footage capturing the first moments of the Iranian drone strike on Terminal 1 (T1) at Kuwait International Airport on June 3, 2026.

The authority said the attack resulted in fatalities, serious injuries and extensive damage to airport infrastructure. The footage showed the immediate aftermath of the strike, underscoring what officials described as a "brutal act of aggression." Emergency response teams were swiftly deployed to assist the injured, secure the site and begin damage assessments, while investigations remain underway alongside efforts to restore affected facilities and ensure the continued safety of airport operations.

The release of the footage marked the first visual documentation of the attack, which has sparked widespread international condemnation and heightened concerns over regional security.

The human toll of the attack also prompted reactions from countries whose nationals were affected. The Indian Embassy in Kuwait expressed its deepest condolences over the death of an Indian national, according to Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement, the embassy said it is closely monitoring developments and remains in contact with the victim's family while coordinating with Kuwaiti authorities to provide all necessary assistance and support. India also strongly condemned the targeting of Kuwait International Airport, reiterating its long-standing position that civilian populations and civilian infrastructure must never be targeted during conflicts.

In a separate statement, India's Ministry of External Affairs condemned the attack that killed one Indian national and injured several others. It extended condolences to the bereaved family, called on all parties to refrain from such attacks, and confirmed that the Indian Embassy in Kuwait is providing full assistance to the injured. The ministry added that Indian missions throughout the region remain on alert and continue to support members of the Indian community.

Regional condemnation soon followed. Bahrain on Wednesday strongly denounced the continuing Iranian attacks on Kuwait and its civilian facilities, including Kuwait International Airport and diplomatic missions.

In a statement, Bahrain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the drone and missile attacks resulted in one death and multiple injuries. The ministry described the attacks as a dangerous escalation threatening regional peace and stability and a flagrant violation of Kuwait's sovereignty.

It added that the attacks constitute a clear breach of international law,

the UN Charter and the principles of good neighbourliness, as well as a serious violation of UN Security Council Resolution 2817.

Bahrain reaffirmed its full solidarity with Kuwait and support for all legitimate measures taken to safeguard its sovereignty, security and the safety of both citizens and expatriates. It also praised the readiness and effectiveness of Kuwait's air defense systems in confronting repeated Iranian attacks and extended condolences to Kuwait's leadership, people and the family of the victim, while wishing the injured a speedy recovery.

The condemnation was echoed by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), whose Secretariat denounced the ongoing Iranian attacks against Kuwait and Bahrain.

In a statement, the OIC said the attacks violated the sovereignty of both countries and targeted civilian and vital facilities, including Kuwait International Airport. It noted that the strikes resulted in one death and several injuries.

The Secretariat extended condolences to Kuwait's leadership and people and wished the injured a swift recovery. It stressed that the attacks represent a clear violation of international law and the UN Charter and undermine international efforts aimed at restoring regional security and stability. The OIC also renewed its full solidarity with Kuwait and Bahrain in all measures taken to protect their security and territorial integrity.

European leaders also joined the growing international criticism. The European Union on Wednesday strongly condemned the latest Iranian attacks targeting civilian infrastructure in Kuwait and Bahrain.

In a statement, EU spokesperson Anouar El Anouni said, "The European Union strongly condemns the latest Iranian attacks targeting civilian infrastructure in Kuwait and Bahrain."

He stressed that the deliberate attacks on civilian sites constitute serious violations of international humanitarian law and pose a threat to regional security and stability. El Anouni reiterated the EU's call for de-escalation and full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2817, while expressing solidarity with the victims and wishing the injured a speedy recovery.

Japan also joined the growing international condemnation of the attack on Kuwait International Airport.

In a statement, Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi expressed his sincere condolences and

sympathy to all those affected by the attack.

"Japan condemns the attacks on June 3 against civilian facilities in Kuwait, including the international airport, which resulted in a large number of casualties. We extend our sincere condolences and sympathy to all those who are affected," the statement said.

Addressing the broader regional situation, Motegi stressed the importance of preserving the ceasefire and achieving a prompt agreement between the United States and Iran, including measures to ensure the free and safe navigation of vessels through the Strait of Hormuz.

He affirmed that Japan will continue its diplomatic efforts in close coordination with the international community to support regional stability and de-escalation.

The minister also emphasized that Japan will continue to take all necessary measures to ensure the safety and protection of Japanese nationals residing in the Middle East.

Meanwhile, the United Nations voiced growing concern over the widening regional implications of the conflict. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he was deeply troubled by reports that Iran had targeted Kuwait and Bahrain, as well as by the renewed exchange of fire between the United States and Iran.

In a statement, Guterres urged all parties to exercise maximum restraint and avoid actions that could further escalate tensions or undermine ongoing diplomatic efforts. He condemned attacks on civilian infrastructure and emphasized that international humanitarian law strictly prohibits the targeting of civilian objects.

The Secretary-General also stressed the importance of respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states and called on all parties to fulfill their obligations under international and humanitarian law while taking every precaution to protect civilians.

Reaffirming his support for diplomatic efforts to contain the crisis, Guterres voiced backing for ongoing mediation initiatives, including those led by Pakistan, and urged all sides to engage constructively and in good faith to prevent further escalation and restore stability to the region.

Kuwait, meanwhile, condemned the repeated Iranian assaults on its territories, affirming that they constitute a flagrant violation and a clear breach of international legitimacy resolutions. This came in a speech delivered by Kuwait's Permanent

Representative to the UN and Other International Organizations in Geneva Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayen during the 114th Session of the International Labor Conference. Leading the Kuwaiti delegation to the conference, Al-Hayen renewed Kuwait's strong condemnation of the attacks and stressed the country's right to self-defense, in line with Article 51 of the UN Charter.

Structural and interconnected challenges facing "our international community" today, namely the widening digital gap, the development of platform economy, the appearance of new biological risks and the consequences of AI for job sustainability, "require us to formulate a balanced collective response" grounded in flexible legislative frameworks able to ensure social protection and establish the foundations of labor justice, he elaborated.

Addressing these challenges facing labor markets can not be separated from geopolitical circumstances in the region, he noted.

Since early 2026, Kuwait has been subjected to repeated, systematic, and unjustified attacks by Iran, the most recent incidents occurred early Wednesday morning, he noted.

These brutal attacks, condemned in the strongest terms by Kuwait, constitute a blatant violation of the country's sovereignty and a flagrant breach of international legitimacy and relevant international resolutions, particularly United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 2817 (2026), Human Rights Council Resolution L.38 adopted at its 61st session, International Telecommunication Union Resolution No. 1436, and the resolution adopted by the 79th World Health Assembly.

All these resolutions adopted by the international organizations confirm the scale of the catastrophe and its repercussions at all levels, whether on civilian and vital facilities, infrastructure, or biological and environmental risks, he stated.

He underlined that Kuwait maintains its unwavering right to self-defense, in accordance with the Article 51 of the UN Charter.

This deliberate criminal targeting committed by Iran, alongside the escalating catastrophic crisis in the Strait of Hormuz and its far-reaching implications, poses a threat to the lives and of millions of workers and civilians, not only within the region but throughout the international community, he noted.

These irresponsible actions not only undermine economic develop-

ment efforts but also endanger the lives and well-being of civilians and workers by exposing them to threats and fear. They further contribute to environmental pollution caused by projectiles targeting innocent people, Al-Hayen noted.

Thus, the region and the whole international community, mainly the UN Security Council, should bear a shared humanitarian, moral and legal responsibility to stop these criminal attacks and enhance security and peace to ensure the protection of workers' rights and dignity in a safe and stable environment, he elaborated.

PAM acts

It added that the field visit was conducted in the presence of acting Deputy Director General for Labor Affairs Fahad Al-Ajmi and acting Director of the Labor Relations Department Ali Al-Dalmani, indicating that the partial work stoppage lasted for half an hour on the first day and one hour on the second day.

Initial investigations revealed that the strike was due to the non-payment of overtime for more than five months, as well as the violation of regulations on overtime hours.

PAM confirmed that the concerned department immediately initiated legal measures against the violating company, in line with its commitment to enforce Private Sector Labor Law No. 6/2010 and its implementing regulations and bylaws.

It added that its inspection and monitoring teams are scrutinizing the labor market to follow up work stoppages or labor disputes, asserting that it is keen on strictly enforcing the law and protecting the rights of all parties.

In another development, PAM asked the printing establishments and their employees to refrain from using its logo or including it in books and correspondences regarding complaints or grievances, or in forms issued by entities and individuals in a manner that suggests they are official documents issued by the authority.

It indicated that the use of its logo is restricted to its official correspondence and documents to maintain its official status and prevent unauthorized use. It warned that perpetrators will be subjected to legal accountability, while urging everyone to comply with the regulations and fully cooperate with the authority.



Hala Industrial Co.
— Custom Wooden Solutions —



Crafted Storage. Engineered Precision

- ✓ Premium Natural Wood
- ✓ Custom-Made Dimensions
- ✓ Factory Direct Quality

☎ 60660817 - 66448545
 📷 Hala_Industrial
 ✉ hala@halakw.com

Subhan Industrial - Block 10 - Street 5 - Plot 151

Enough is enough: Rep Meeks

US House approves war powers resolution to halt military action against Iran

WASHINGTON, June 4, (AP): The House for the first time Wednesday approved a war powers resolution that would halt the US military action against Iran, defying US President Donald Trump as a handful of Republicans joined with Democrats to end the three-month-long conflict that has reordered politics at home and abroad.

House Speaker Mike Johnson had tried to prevent an outcome that would show the mounting opposition to the war, abruptly shutting down floor action two weeks ago when the resolution was on the verge of approval. But displeasure has only grown as the conflict drags on and as Trump struggles to negotiate a plan for peace.

"Enough is enough," said Rep. Gregory Meeks of New York, the top Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, who led the effort.

"It is time for the president to do the right thing," he said. "The people are tired of suffering because of his war of choice - suffering at the gas pump, suffering at the supermarkets."

The roll call Wednesday was 215-208, but next steps are uncertain. Trump would likely reject any measure from Congress to limit his commander-in-chief authority. Still, the tally, with four Republicans joining Democrats, was a rebuke of the president's war strategy, and cheers erupted in the House chamber.

It's the fourth time the House has tried to curb the US war against Iran. The Senate advanced its own war powers resolution last month when a handful of GOP senators broke ranks with the Republican president in a rare show of political pushback from his party.

Each time Democrats have pushed forward the war powers resolution, the vote tallies have inched higher as political unease with the U.S. war swells. Trump had campaigned for the White House on a promise to end US entanglements abroad and focus more on domestic issues, but the war has shifted attention back to the Middle East.

Johnson insisted Trump is "laser focused" on the domestic front, particularly ahead of the midterm elec-



US Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, R-La., joined by GOP leaders, prepares to talk to reporters at the Capitol in Washington on June 3. (AP)

tions that will determine control of Congress.

The speaker said he spent three hours at the White House with the president this week and Trump is calling on allies to help reopen the Strait of Hormuz and resume the

flow of commerce.

Since the US joined Israel in launching the Feb 28 strikes on Iran, Americans have seen gas prices spike at the pumps, adding to inflationary pressure on consumer spending.

Iran has been able to interrupt shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, a vital channel for a large segment of the world's oil, natural gas and related products such as fertilizer.

"We're working on that final piece," said Johnson, R-La. "The entire world has an interest in the Strait of Hormuz being reopened for commerce. That's what he's working on."

While a ceasefire in the conflict was declared in April, it remains uneasy and uncertain. Talks for a more durable end to the fighting have dragged, increasingly complicated by Israel's broadening war with Iran-backed Hezbollah militants in Lebanon. Meanwhile, military strikes between the US and Iran continue to flare.

The war powers resolution from the House would not immediately stop the war, but it would provide a symbolic - if not legal - step against further military action.

The resolution next goes to the Senate, where four Republican senators last month joined Democrats in advancing a similar measure to curtail the U.S. campaign against Iran.

The Senate has yet to take a final vote to approve or reject its own war powers resolution.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio warned Wednesday at a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing that the administration's "hands are going to be tied" if Congress approved a war powers resolution. He said they would think "we won't be able to do anything to them, so why make a deal?"

It's not the only action Congress is taking in the national security arena as Democrats, in the minority, work to peel off Republican support for measures beyond the war against Iran.

The House also voted Wednesday on another Democratic-led effort, a procedural step toward a measure that would authorize U.S. support for Ukraine's military operations as it battles Russia and would help reconstruct the war-torn country. That vote is expected later this week. The House also expected to consider a war powers resolution to block U.S. action in Lebanon.



Workers respond after a train derailed on June 3, near Victor, Iowa. (AP)

Iowa vehicle collision kills 1

A train struck a semi-truck in eastern Iowa on Wednesday, killing one person and injuring another, authorities said.

The crash occurred at the crossing of a state highway and the Iowa Interstate Railroad in a rural area about 70 miles (113 kilometers) east of Des Moines, according to Poweshiek County Sheriff Matt Maschmann.

One person in the semi-truck died and another was transported with "serious injuries," Maschmann said in a statement.

Seventeen train cars and two power engines derailed after the crash and caused "significant damage" to the railroad, he said. Images of the scene showed a massive heap of railcars with billowing smoke. (AP)

Trump to nominate Blanche to serve as attorney general

WASHINGTON, June 4, (AP): US President Donald Trump said Wednesday that he will nominate **Todd Blanche** to serve as attorney general, tapping his former personal lawyer who has aggressively pursued the Republican president's agenda while leading the Justice Department in an acting role.



Blanche

Trump said at a dinner at the White House that he plans to nominate Blanche formally on Thursday, according to a video of the event posted on social media by a White House aide.

"We are going to make him permanent attorney general," Trump said at the Rose Garden event.

Blanche sought quickly to position himself as the favorite

for the permanent job after Pam Bondi's firing in April, accelerating investigations into Trump foes and announcing a nearly \$1.8 billion fund meant to compensate the president's allies for alleged political persecution. The proposed fund created a bipartisan firestorm that forced the Justice Department to scrap the idea earlier this week in an extraordinary about-face.

Blanche was brought into the Justice Department as deputy attorney general and was elevated after Bondi's ousting over her failed efforts to prosecute Trump's perceived political opponents. Blanche insisted he wasn't auditioning for the permanent post but made clear through splashy moves since taking the reins his intent on proving his loyalty to Trump.

Blanche's actions have outraged Democrats and other critics who accuse him of still acting like Trump's personal lawyer to carry out the president's campaign of retribution.



Law enforcement respond after a man barricaded himself inside a building with hostages on June 2, in Bakersfield, Calif. (AP)

10 hostages rescued in Calif

A man was shot and killed by the FBI early Wednesday after taking 10 school employees hostage inside a Southern California office building and warning that he had strapped explosives to himself and some of the hostages, police said.

Authorities stormed the building in downtown Bakersfield overnight, ending a nearly 16-hour standoff during which the suspect tied up half the hostages, police said.

The hostages - employees of the Kern County Superintendent of Schools - were found unharmed inside the building that also houses a bank, Bakersfield Assistant Police Chief Jeremy Blakemore said. (AP)

Poland and Lithuania confirm exploring bigger role in nuclear deterrence

WARSAW, Poland, June 4, (AP): Poland and Lithuania confirm they are participating in discussions about their potential role in NATO's nuclear deterrence efforts, which are built around US nuclear weapons in Europe.

While talks are in early stages, expanding US nuclear deterrence in Europe could reassure continental allies of continued US military support at a time when President Donald Trump has led an effort to reduce his country's conventional defense involvement in Europe.

"We are talking, in order to create better conditions for nuclear deterrence and for Poland to play an important role in that," Polish Deputy Defense Minister Pawel Zaleski told Polish Radio on Wednesday.

Poland, however, has denied any plans to host nuclear weapons. That would be "an extremely serious matter, which is serious in terms of political consequences," he said.

"Discussions are indeed taking place. I do not want to go into details at this point as they are classified, but discussions are ongoing, and Lithuania is certainly not standing on the sidelines," Lithuanian Defense Minister Robertas Kaunas said Tuesday, according to press agency BNS.

Both ministers were replying after anonymous sources cited Tuesday by the Financial Times said the United States had signaled openness to deploying elements of its nuclear arsenal in new European countries, in addition to the six currently thought to host nuclear weapons.

The FT reported that Poland and the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the NATO members located closest to Ukraine, were interested in potentially hosting bases for US dual-capable aircraft, which can carry either conventional or nu-



Poland's Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz speaks during a news conference in Warsaw, Poland, Sept 26, 2025. (AP)

clear warheads.

The Pentagon declined to comment, but a Defense Department official said the US and NATO "continuously assess the security environment" and work to keep effective deterrents. The official was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The United States has stationed nuclear weapons in several European countries for decades as part of its security guarantees to NATO allies.

In recent years, Russia's war against Ukraine and the broader threat Moscow poses to NATO have prompted discussions about the possibility of expanding the US nuclear cooperation with Europe.

"Work to assess and potentially adapt NATO's nuclear deterrence posture has been ongoing for several years and is not linked to any deci-

sion taken by the US to adjust its conventional posture in Europe," an official tasked with communicating for NATO but not authorized to be publicly named told the AP.

The NATO nuclear sharing program includes US nuclear weapons deployed in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Turkey and Britain, as well as dual-capable aircraft owned by both the U.S. and its allies. The US maintains full control over the nuclear weapons.

Poland has expressed its willingness to participate in the US nuclear deterrence program since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, with former president Andrzej Duda even welcoming the hosting of nuclear weapons. The current government led by Donald Tusk has been more cautious, speaking only about a bigger role in nuclear deterrence.

Portugal, Austria defeat Germany for seats on UN Security Council

UNITED NATIONS, June 4, (AP): Portugal and Austria defeated Germany for seats on the powerful but deeply divided U.N. Security Council on Wednesday in a hotly contested race after intense campaigning.

The 10 rotating seats on the 15-member Security Council are earmarked for different regions of the world. The assembly elects five countries by secret ballot every year to serve two-year terms alongside the council's five permanent veto-wielding members - the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France.

In the other contested race, after four rounds of voting in the 193-member General Assembly, Kyrgyzstan defeated the Philippines by a vote of 143-49 and will join the council for the first time.

Zimbabwe, the African candidate, and Caribbean candidate Trinidad and Tobago had no opponents and both were elected with more than 180 votes.

The Security Council is mandated under the UN Charter with ensuring international peace and security, but it has failed in the three major current conflicts because of the veto power of Russia on Ukraine and of the United States, Israel's closest ally, often on Gaza and on Iran.

There have been decades of efforts to reform the Security Council to re-



The symbol of the United Nations is displayed outside the Secretariat Building on Feb 28, 2022, at United Nations Headquarters. (AP)

flect the geopolitical realities of the current world, not of the post-World War II era 80 years ago, when the United Nations was established. But they have all failed, though a new attempt is underway.

In the race for the two seats for the group of mainly Western nations, Portugal received 134 votes and Austria 131 votes, while Germany, Europe's economic powerhouse which had served six previous terms on the council, received 104 votes.

"Obviously, the result is a real

disappointment," German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl told reporters. He said Russia campaigned against Germany because of its strong support for Ukraine. "It also may have cost us votes that Germany must always assume a special responsibility for Israel with regard to the Middle East conflict," he said.

Austria's foreign ministry said its election capped a 15-year campaign and is a "strong international sign of confidence" in the country.

Montenegro blocks entry to 87 Serbs over security concerns ahead of EU summit

PODGORICA, Montenegro, June 4, (AP): Montenegro banned 87 Serbs from entering the country on Wednesday, saying they posed a security threat ahead of a European Union summit with Western Balkan leaders.

The men arrived in the coastal town of Tivat on a charter flight from Serbia earlier in the day. Police said they singled out the Air Serbia plane as part of increased security checks ahead of the summit on Friday that will gather top EU and Balkan leaders.

"As part of the activities aimed at preserving a stable security environment, the security services identified persons of security interest," Montenegro's police and its National Security Agency said in a statement.

The security agencies had "gathered operational data and intelligence that indicate without a doubt that the presence in Montenegro of the individuals in question would

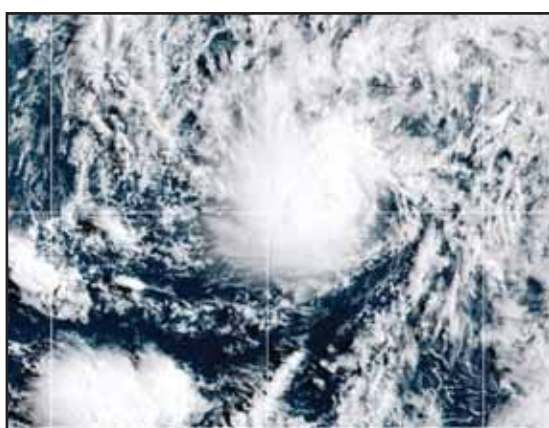


A man walks on a street in Montenegro's capital Podgorica on May 18. (AP)

pose a risk for internal and national security," according to the statement.

The men had communication equipment and banners reading "Serbia wins," which is campaign slogan used by the populist Serbian Presi-

dent Aleksandar Vucic and his ruling Serbian Progressive Party, according to the photos provided by the police. Vucic is expected to attend the summit in Tivat, a resort town on Montenegro's Adriatic Sea coast.



This satellite image provided by CIRA/NOAA, shows Tropical Storm Amanda forming in the Pacific Ocean, on June 3. (AP)

Tropical Storm Amanda first of Pacific hurricane season

MIAMI, June 4, (AP): Tropical Storm Amanda formed Wednesday in the Pacific Ocean, marking the first tropical cyclone of the season, the National Hurricane Center said.

Amanda was located about 1,505 miles (2,420 kilometers) west-southwest of the southern tip of the Baja California peninsula of Mexico, according to the Miami-based weather center. With the center of the storm at sea, the cyclone posed no immediate threat to land.

Amanda had maximum sustained winds of 40 mph (65 kph), meteorologists said. The storm was forecast to strengthen over the next couple of days and then weaken over the weekend.

The Pacific hurricane season started May 15. The Atlantic hurricane season began Monday, and no cyclones have formed in that basin yet this year.

North Korea unveils new plant to produce fuel for nuclear weapons

SEOUL, South Korea, June 4, (AP): North Korea on Thursday unveiled a new facility to produce nuclear bomb fuels, with leader Kim Jong Un announcing plans to bolster the country's nuclear forces "at an exponential rate."

Some experts still question whether North Korea has functioning nuclear missiles that can reach the US mainland. But the nuclear plant's disclosure implies that Kim is eager to cement his country's status as a nuclear power and has no intentions of placing his bomb program on a negotiating table.

After visiting the site on Wednesday, Kim said he and other top officials "confirmed the order of priority for implementing the ambitious future plan designed to beef up our state's nuclear forces at an exponential rate," according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

KCNA said the facility used "more sophisticated technology" but didn't provide further details like its location. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff assessed



In this photo provided by the North Korean government, its leader Kim Jong Un, (front right), visits a new facility to produce nuclear bomb fuels at an undisclosed place in North Korea on June 3. (AP)

the site as a uranium enrichment plant and said it was closely coordinating with the United States to monitor North Korean nuclear activities.

KCNA photos showed Kim walking through narrow aisles lined with dense rows of silver tubes and pipes, in what ap-

peared to be a centrifuge hall. Another image showed him speaking with senior officials in a meeting room, where a blurred graphic depicting a cone-shaped object was spread across a table. It wasn't immediately clear whether the graphic showed a warhead design.

S.Korea ruling party wins most races in local elections but loses Seoul contest

SEOUL, South Korea, June 4, (AP): South Korea's ruling liberal party won a majority of races in Wednesday's local elections but lost the crucial Seoul mayoral contest in a setback to efforts to give President Lee Jae Myung a firmer political mandate.

Lee's Democratic Party had been widely expected to claim more contests than its main rival, the conservative People Power Party which remains in disarray after President Yoon Suk Yeol was removed from office and sentenced to life in prison over his martial law debacle in late 2024.

But experts said, given the favorable political landscape, the Democratic Party should have won the most crucial race, the one for Seoul mayor, to claim an outright victory in the elections.

With almost all votes counted by Thursday morning, the Democratic Party won 12 of the 16 mayoral and provincial gubernatorial posts up for grabs. The PPP won four, including the Seoul mayoral race.

Democratic Party leader Jung Chung-rae told reporters his party's defeat in the Seoul race was "painful" though he thanked voters for the



Seoul mayoral candidate of the main opposition People Power Party and also incumbent Seoul mayor Oh Se-hoon arrives at the Seoul City Hall in Seoul, South Korea, on June 4. (AP)

wins in other races.

Thursday marked one year in office for Lee, who won a snap election triggered after Yoon's ouster. Lee's approval ratings still exceed 60%. He's been credited with what he calls "pragmatic diplomacy" that eased concerns his presidency

would hurt ties with the US and Japan. His popularity has also been attributed to a booming stock market and efforts to be more transparent about government decision-making procedures.

Lee's foreign policy agenda will likely remain unchanged.

'Political divisions had become too extreme for chamber to function'

Philippine Senate reopens after two days but impasse among senators remain

MANILA, Philippines, June 4, (AP): An impasse in the Philippines between two factions of senators that shut the Senate for two consecutive days ended on Wednesday when one side gained a quorum and allowed the upper chamber to reopen.

Senate President Alan Peter Cayetano and 10 allied senators have failed to show up since Monday after two other senators allied with Cayetano were sidelined due to legal issues, leaving the 24-member chamber with just 22 active members.

Cayetano said he and his majority bloc of senators did not show up at the Senate partly as a "protest" and to prevent rival senators from wresting control of the upper chamber. The 11 senators who oppose Cayetano criticized the decision and called on him to resign.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. appealed for the absent senators to immediately return to work, saying the Senate impasse would stymie legislation needed by the poverty-stricken country to overcome an energy emergency sparked by the war in the Middle East.

The deadlock ended when Sen. Francis Escudero, who was previously aligned with Cayetano, showed up in the Senate, providing a quorum which allowed a session to be held before Congress goes into a weeklong recess.

"The current impasse in the Senate is untenable and unacceptable," Escudero said, adding that "political divisions" had "become too extreme" for the chamber to function.

In a post on Facebook, Cayetano said he remained the Senate president and added that he and his remaining allies in the chamber would not honor



Senate security run after gunfire was heard along a hallway at the Philippine Senate in Pasay, Philippines on May 13. (AP)

changes in committee leaderships his rival senators made on Wednesday.

The Marcos administration said in a statement that it recognizes Sen Win

Gatchalian, who was designated by acting Senate president by senators opposed to Cayetano. "What happened in the Senate...was based on the law and the rule of law," it said.

Senators opposed to Cayetano said he was desperately backing two absent allies in the Senate - Ronald dela Rosa and Jinggoy Estrada - to maintain his slim majority control.

Dela Rosa, a former national police chief, is in hiding after the International Criminal Court issued a warrant for his arrest as a co-conspirator of former President Rodrigo Duterte, who is facing a trial at the court in The Hague for alleged crimes against humanity. Both have denied authorizing extra-judicial killings.

Estrada was arrested by authorities at the Senate on Monday on corruption-related charges linked to a flood control project. He denies the charge and is in jail awaiting trial.

Cayetano is an ally of the former president, whose daughter, Vice President Sara Duterte, has accused Marcos and his administration for the "kidnapping" of her father by the police and his handover to the global court.

Control of the Senate's leadership is crucial because it's scheduled to start the trial in July of Sara Duterte, who was impeached as vice president last month by the House of Representatives, which is dominated by allies of Marcos.

The vice president, who has declared her intention to seek the presidency in 2028, was impeached over criminal charges that include unexplained wealth and publicly threatening to have the president assassinated, allegations that she denies but has refused to answer in detail.



An injured student is detained by police during a protest against the government's proposal to lower the education budget, in Santiago, Chile on June 3. (AP)

Protesters clash with police in Chile over Kast's education cuts

Thousands of students, teachers and social activists clashed with police in the Chilean capital Wednesday during a massive march against President José Antonio Kast's education cuts and austerity measures.

Since taking office on March 11, ultraconservative Kast has pledged to cut roughly \$6 billion in public spending over 18 months in an effort to improve the country's fiscal accounts.

As part of this ambitious austerity plan, his government is forcing a nearly 3% budget cut across all ministries.

The measures have drawn criticism not only from opposition parties but also from some sectors within the governing coalition.

The march was organized by the Confederation of Chilean Students and supported by other organizations, including the

Teachers' Union, secondary school student associations, and feminist groups.

Although the march began peacefully, tensions escalated as clashes broke out between protesters and police. Officers used water cannons and tear gas to disperse crowds, while some demonstrators threw rocks and other objects. Several streets were blocked and multiple subway stations were closed. (AP)

Sri Lanka nursing home fire kills 12

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, June 4, (AP): A fire at an unregistered nursing home in western Sri Lanka killed 12 residents and injured eight others, police said Thursday.

The fire started late Wednesday at the home in Anguruwatota town. Fifty-one residents were rescued, police spokesman Fredrick Wootler said. He said people with mental illnesses were also housed there.

The director of the home was arrested on suspicion of causing deaths through negligence. An investigation is underway.

Associated Press footage showed the building gutted with its charred furniture and equipment. Bodies lay nearby.

Local television channel Hiru showed image of firefighters, police and residents trying to contain the raging fire. Those rescued were assisted by police and soldiers in boarding buses to a safe location.

Chathura Mihudum, director of the National Secretariat for Elders, said the facility was not registered as a nursing home and had been warned to follow laws and guidelines.

He said it was overcrowded with beds for just about 15 people in a space where 71 people were living.



Sri Lankan police and judiciary officials inspect a charred elderly care home following an overnight fire in Anguruwatota, Sri Lanka on June 4. (AP)

Armed clashes erupt in Somalia's capital ahead of planned anti-government rally

MOGADISHU, Somalia, June 4, (AP): Supporters of opposition political figures and state security forces continued to clash in Somalia's capital Mogadishu on Thursday after fighting broke out Wednesday evening ahead of a planned anti-government demonstration.

No official casualty figures were immediately available from the violence that prompted calls for restraint from the United Nations and the United States as the government and opposition traded blame for the violence.

Residents reported heavy gunfire and explosions as fighting broke out in several neighborhoods Wednesday.

"We heard heavy weapons fire, and people were fleeing their homes," said Abdullahi Mohamed, who lives in the city's Howlwadaag district. "Many families left the area looking for safer places."

Opposition figures say the rally planned for Thursday was intended to protest what they call constitutional violations and efforts by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud to extend his tenure. The government has rejected those allegations.

On Thursday morning, there were signs of mobilization on the streets,



Somali soldiers patrol a street after supporters of opposition political figures and state security forces clashed in Mogadishu, Somalia, on June 4. (AP)

but a heavy security presence remained in place with police patrolling major roads.

Mogadishu police said the violence stemmed from "organized attacks" carried out by armed militias linked to groups pursuing political interests.

"The incidents were not the organization of peaceful public dem-

onstrations, but rather coordinated armed acts that directly threatened the security, order and stability of the capital," the police said in a statement.

State security forces repelled attacks on their positions and launched investigations to identify those responsible for organizing, financing and carrying out the violence, police said.

Colombia's presidential candidate thanks Trump

BOGOTA, Colombia, June 4, (AP): Colombian lawyer and presidential candidate **Abelardo de la Esperiella**, who secured the most votes in the first round of Colombia's elections, on Wednesday thanked U.S. President Donald Trump for endorsing his campaign, in an election that serves as a litmus test as the region shifts towards the right.

Writing on the Truth Social platform the previous day, Trump offered his "complete and total endorsement" for de la Esperiella, calling him an "intelligent, strong and tough leader" who will take on a "radical leftist Marxist," referring to progressive Iván Cepeda, in the June 21 runoff election.

He emphasized the importance of the elections for the two countries' relationship.

"With my head held high and a heart full of patriotic gratitude, I receive your words and your steadfast support," de la Esperiella, known as "El Tigre" or "The Tiger," wrote on X. "Thank you, Mr. President!"

This is not the first time Trump has backed candidates in foreign elections, a practice that has drawn criticism from opponents who say the U.S. should not meddle in other countries' domestic politics. Last year, Trump endorsed Honduras' National Party presidential candidate Nasry "Tito" Asfura, who went on to win.



Medics take Dawa Sherpa, a mountain guide who had been missing for several days in the Everest region, for treatment after he arrived at HAMS Hospital in Kathmandu, Nepal on June 4. (AP)

Sherpa guide rescued

A Sherpa guide was found crawling to base camp on Mount Everest a week after he went missing, and was reunited with his family who had given up hope he would return.

Dawa Sherpa was last seen around May 29 descending the mountain, but he did not make it to base camp even though his client did. The pair were among the last climbers on the mountain as the climbing season came to an end and the route was dismantled.

Dawa was located by a cleaning crew Thursday morning as he was crawling down the snowy slopes around the Khumbu Icefall, just above base camp, said Pemba Sherpa of 8K Expeditions, which was coordinating the search. (AP)

Kuwaiti oil jumps to \$109.92 pb

KUWAIT CITY, June 4, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by USD 4.89 to reach USD 109.92 per barrel on Wednesday, compared to USD 105.03 pb on Tuesday, said the Kuwait Petroleum

Corporation (KPC) on Thursday. In global markets, Brent crude rose by USD 1.81 to USD 97.81 pb, and West Texas Intermediate rose by USD 2.26 to USD 96.02 pb.

KPC advances 2040 strategy

Kuwait eyes new oil merger after KIPIC-KNPC integration

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: Following the merger of Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) with Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) and the transfer of the Shuaiba and Umm Al-Aish gas plants to KNPC, another merger is expected to be announced in the coming months – that of Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (KGOC) with Kuwait Oil Company (KOC).

Sources informed the newspaper that the new merger is under study. They pointed out that the KIPIC-KNPC merger paved the way for a faster transfer of KIPIC's shares to KOC, especially since the merging of oil companies is part of the 2040 strategy of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC).

Sources stated that one benefit of merging the oil companies affiliated with KPC is maximizing profits by streamlining middle management and executive positions. They added that the merger raises the efficiency of operational processes, eliminates bureaucracy, and leads to more technological advancement.

Sources explained that a single company, represented by KOC, conducting oil and gas exploration and production activities in the country or in the divided zone between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia is essential,

considering the global reputation of KOC in oil exploration.

Sources said the merger will increase the oil and gas production capacity of the country, as the company is currently implementing several projects to increase crude oil production, in line with the ambitious goal of KPC to produce four million barrels of oil per day by 2035 and maintaining this level until 2040.

As part of the steps toward the KGOC-KOC merger and with co-operation steps suggesting the first phase of the merger is approaching, sources confirmed that the executive officials of these companies held a reception two days ago to receive well-wishers on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

Governor of Ahmadi Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, CEO of KPC Sheikh Nawaf Al-Saud, and the CEOs of subsidiary companies attended the event.

CEO of KOC Ahmad Al-Eidan, CEO of KGOC Bader Al-Munafi and the executive management warmly welcomed the well-wishers.

Sources indicated that the KPC subsidiaries will be merged later, such as those responsible for oil and gas exploration outside Kuwait, including Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC) and Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI).

Business

A flexible savings solution designed for SMEs

NBK launches the 'Daily Call' Account

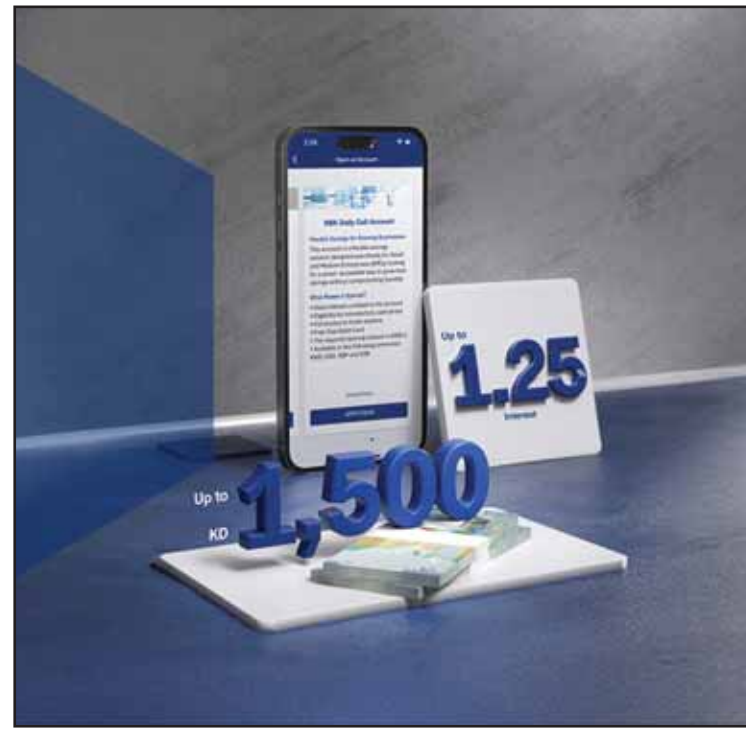
KUWAIT CITY, June 4: As part of its ongoing efforts to support entrepreneurs and business founders, and in reaffirmation of its commitment to delivering innovative banking solutions that enhance the financial flexibility of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) announced the launch of its new "Daily Call" Account. This advanced savings solution has been specifically designed to empower SMEs to manage their funds with greater ease and flexibility, while generating attractive returns.

This innovative product gives business owners the opportunity to grow their savings without compromising liquidity, offering a smarter approach to managing cash flows.

SMEs can now open the "Daily Call" Account with no minimum balance requirement, earn daily interest credited directly to the account, and enjoy full, unrestricted access to their funds at any time.

The account also enables savings in multiple currencies, including the Kuwaiti Dinar, US Dollar, British Pound Sterling, and Euro, in addition to a complimentary debit card that offers business owners greater ease in managing their daily transactions without complexity.

To mark the launch, NBK is of-



■ The new account offers business owners the flexibility they need, while rewarding disciplined and efficient financial management

fering a cash reward of up to KD 1,500 to holders of the "Daily Call" Account, provided they maintain the required average balance each

month during the first 90 days from the date of the initial deposit. The reward value will be determined based on the lowest balance main-

tained during this period and will be credited to the winner's account upon completion of the three-month period.

The launch of the "Daily Call" Account comes as the National Bank of Kuwait understands the challenges faced by SMEs in balancing growth with liquidity. The new account provides business owners with the flexibility they need through daily interest, full access to their funds, and no minimum balance requirement, while rewarding smart and disciplined financial management.

This innovative product reflects NBK's commitment to empowering SMEs through advanced banking solutions that simplify their operations and support their growth plans. The bank continues to invest in developing products and services that align with evolving business needs and help companies achieve financial sustainability in a competitive economic environment.

The launch of the "Daily Call" Account represents a new step within NBK's strategy to strengthen the role of the SME sector in the national economy by offering innovative solutions that enhance liquidity management and provide flexible savings options to support business expansion and future aspirations.

All share index gains 0.31%

Boursa Kuwait ends higher

KUWAIT CITY, June 4, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Thursday's session on a positive note, with the All Share Index rising 26.98 points, or 0.31 percent, to settle at 8,755.37 points.

Market activity saw a total of 448.8 million shares traded through 25,985 cash transactions, with a combined value of KD 113.3 million (approximately USD 346.6 million).

The Main Market Index advanced 32.55 points, or 0.38 percent, to reach 8,688.29 points, supported by trading of 285.6 million shares across 14,608 transactions valued at

KD 45.7 million (around USD 139.8 million).

The Premier Market Index also recorded gains, climbing 27.20 points, or 0.30 percent, to close at 9,224 points. Trading activity in this segment totaled 163.2 million shares through 11,377 transactions, with a value of KD 67.5 million (approximately USD 243 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index outperformed, jumping 85.53 points, or 0.88 percent, to 9,771.16 points. The index saw 230.9 million shares change hands in 10,816 transactions, valued at KD 36.7 million (about USD 112.3 million).

Dar Al Sabaek names ex-EY Partner as financial advisor

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: Dar Al Sabaek has announced the joining of Mr. Nadeem Shafi as Strategy and Financial Advisor, as part of its efforts to strengthen leadership capabilities and support its growth and expansion plans.

Mr. Shafi is a former EY MENA Senior Partner with over 34 years of extensive leadership experience across assurance (audit and accounting), advisory, transformation, strategy, new business development, and managed services. His expertise spans MENA, EMEA, and global markets, covering a wide range of sectors including banking (conventional and Islamic), asset and wealth management, insurance, energy (oil & gas and petrochemicals), hospitality,



Nadeem Shafi

manufacturing, retail, real estate, and professional services.

His support, as an advisor, is expected to help Dar Al Sabaek in advancing its strategic initiatives, particularly in growth and expansion, while also enhancing governance and overall operational efficiency.

Oil pulls back, equities split across regions

European shares climb and Asian shares retreat after US stocks pause their record-breaking rally

HONG KONG, June 4, (AP): World shares were mixed Thursday after declines on Wall Street that snapped a nine-day winning streak for the S&P 500.

Oil prices fell back after Israel and Lebanon said they had agreed to renew their fragile ceasefire and create a number of "pilot" security zones inside Lebanon from which Hezbollah militants would be banned.

Crude had surged Wednesday when both the United States and Iran said they launched retaliations for earlier attacks or attempted ones.

Early Thursday in Asia, Brent crude was trading 65 cents lower at \$97.16 per barrel, while benchmark U.S. crude oil shed 58 cents to \$95.44 per barrel.

In early European trading, Germany's DAX gained 0.6% to 24,933.09 and the CAC 40 in Paris also climbed 0.6%, to 8,201.85. Britain's FTSE 100 edged 0.1% higher to 10,344.32.

The future for the S&P 500 shed 0.2% while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average added 0.2%.

Japan's Nikkei 225 shed 1.4% to 67,470.69 on selling of technology stocks. Energy and technology giant SoftBank Group slumped 11.2%, while Shin-Etsu Chemical dropped 3.8%.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng lost 1.4% to 25,274.98, and the Shanghai Composite index fell 0.8% to 4,057.78.



A dealer walks past near the screens showing the Korea Composite Stock Price Index (KOSPI) and the foreign exchange rate between U.S. dollar and South Korean won at a dealing room of Hana Bank in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday, June 4, 2026. (AP)

In South Korea, the Kospi sank 1.8% to 8,639.41, while Australia's S&P/ASX 200 declined 1.1% to 8,686.10.

On Wednesday, the S&P 500 fell 0.7% from its all-time high for its first drop in 10 days. The Dow industrials dropped 1.2% and the Nasdaq composite sank 0.9%.

Stocks felt pressure from higher yields in the bond market, which climbed with the price of oil. The yield on the 10-year Treasury was steady at 4.49%, up from 4.46% late Tuesday and from just 3.97% before the war began.

High yields worldwide are

threatening to slow economies and undercut prices for stocks and all kinds of other investments. They have already forced the average long-term U.S. mortgage rate to its most expensive level in nine months, and they could curtail companies' borrowing to build the artificial-intelligence data centers that have supported the U.S. economy's growth recently.

More expensive loans can hurt smaller companies in particular because many need to borrow to grow. The Russell 2000 index of the smallest U.S. stocks fell 1.3%, more than the rest of the market.

Still, stocks remain near their

records, even with all the pressure on the global economy created by higher inflation.

Oil prices remain below their peaks from earlier in the war with Iran, and hope seems to be remaining on Wall Street that the United States and Iran will ultimately agree to reopen the Strait of Hormuz to oil tankers. That would improve the global flow of crude and hopefully lower its price.

Lawmakers in the U.S. House for the first time Wednesday approved a war powers resolution that would halt the U.S. military action against Iran, defying President Donald Trump as a handful of Republicans joined with Democrats to try to end the three-month-long conflict that has reordered politics at home and abroad and roiled world markets.

Reports on the U.S. economy were mixed. One from the Institute for Supply Management said growth accelerated more last month for U.S. construction, agricultural and other services businesses than economists expected.

The survey also showed businesses are feeling the pinch of higher prices caused by tariffs and more expensive oil.

Thursday will bring U.S. employment data.

In other dealings early Thursday, the U.S. dollar fell to 159.89 Japanese yen from 160.08 yen late Wednesday. The euro rose to \$1.1603 from \$1.1600.

SpaceX, OpenAI, Anthropic drive record IPO push

AI companies are barreling toward huge Wall Street debuts

WASHINGTON, June 4, (AP): Some of the leading artificial intelligence companies are moving toward initial public offerings this year at eye-popping valuations. From Anthropic to SpaceX to OpenAI, tech giants are looking to take their shares public to access more capital in the race to shape the technology's future.

The amount of money involved in building and maintaining artificial intelligence models, the pursuit of artificial general intelligence that can surpass humans at many tasks, and widespread AI adoption all have led to an air of excitement around the technology that has helped lift the stock market to record highs.

"These companies are now burning through cash to win the AI race, and public equity is the cheapest source available, particularly in a rising interest rate environment," said Michael Field, chief equity analyst at Morningstar.

But amid the billions - even trillions - at stake, worries about an AI bubble are looming in the background. Some experts fear tech companies and venture capitalists are pouring too much money into a still-nascent and unproven technology.

For now, though, the market shows no signs of a slowdown. Here's a look at some of the biggest AI-focused companies.

Elon Musk's SpaceX was valued at \$800 billion last year, but its value grew to \$1.25 trillion after the space exploration company merged in February with Musk's artificial intelligence company, xAI. Now, SpaceX plans an IPO that could become one of the biggest stock sales ever - even though the company is currently losing billions of dollars a year. SpaceX lost \$2.6 billion from operations last year on \$18.7 billion in revenue, according to a May regulatory filing, and the losses kept piling up at the start of this year. xAI, which features the Grok chatbot, lost \$6.4 billion in operations last year, according to a company document.

Musk got SpaceX to buy xAI earlier this year despite protests from some SpaceX investors that it was a bailout and unethical given that he was a controlling shareholder in both.

SpaceX said on Wednesday it plans to raise up to \$75 billion when it goes public this month, setting the stage for the largest-ever stock market debut and putting Musk on course to becoming the world's first trillionaire. An offering of that size would easily break the record for the largest IPO, which was set by Saudi Aramco in 2019 when the oil giant went public and raised \$26 billion.

Anthropic, the maker of the Claude chatbot, was formed in 2021 by ex-OpenAI leaders. It was recently valued at \$965 billion, making it one of the world's most valuable startups. It has been a meteoric rise for what was once a little-known research laboratory. The San Francisco-based company is moving toward going public on Wall Street, announcing June 1 that it has submitted a confidential filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission for a proposed IPO.

Anthropic has said it is making annualized revenue of \$47 billion from selling its technology to people and organizations using Claude to write code and do other work and personal tasks on their behalf.

The maker of ChatGPT began in 2015 as a nonprofit dedicated to developing AI for the common good. It is now a company valued at \$852 billion planning an IPO as soon as this fall.

While OpenAI may have helped set off the current AI boom, Anthropic's meteoric rise and Claude's growing popularity have left the ChatGPT maker playing catch-up.

In an unsuccessful lawsuit against OpenAI and its top executives, Elon Musk, an OpenAI co-founder, claimed the company diverted from its founding mission to make more money. OpenAI had coun-

tered that Musk was simply seeking a bigger slice of the company. OpenAI has not yet reported filing initial IPO paperwork with the SEC.

Google designed the Gemini AI assistant in response to a competitive threat posed by OpenAI's ChatGPT, which came out in late 2022. Gemini AI models are integrated into Google search and other products such as Maps. The market value of Alphabet, Google's Mountain View, California-based parent company, was \$4.54 trillion at the beginning of June, up from \$2.3 trillion a year earlier. That growth is a sign that Alphabet's spending spree on AI is producing dividends so far, despite investor worries about some of its peers' massive AI investments.

Meta's AI push has meant integrating its assistant, Llama, into all aspects of its business, including advertising and consumer-facing tools such as a digital assistant that can help with daily tasks, as well as image and video creation. Unlike many rival models, Llama is open source, meaning it is largely available to the public and to developers. Meta AI is available as a standalone app and it is integrated into the Menlo Park, California-based company's smart glasses. Meta's market value as of early June was \$1.55 trillion, down from \$1.76 trillion a year earlier amid investor concerns about the company's massive AI spending.

Microsoft, which went public 40 years ago, likely would have been running behind in the AI race were it not for a timely multibillion-dollar investment in OpenAI. Microsoft provided the computing power and financial backing that helped OpenAI build ChatGPT. In turn, Microsoft was able to use the same technical foundation to power its own AI assistant, now called Copilot. The once-exclusive partnership has since evolved as both companies look to other partners to advance their AI ambitions.

Bank advances environmental sustainability through key initiatives

Gulf Bank hosts World Environment Day workshop on recycling coffee grounds into fertile soil for agriculture



Group photo of the workshop participants.



Part of the events

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: In celebration of World Environment Day, Gulf Bank organized a workshop for its customers on recycling coffee grounds and converting them into fertile soil suitable for agriculture. The workshop was led by environmental activist Dana Marafie, as part of the Bank's ongoing efforts to promote environmental sustainability concepts and raise community awareness on the importance of recycling and preserving natural resources.

This workshop falls under Gulf Bank's strategy to spread a culture of sustainability and encourage environmentally friendly daily practices by introducing practical and innovative solutions that help reduce waste and reuse it in beneficial and sustainable ways.

The workshop aimed to introduce participants to methods of benefiting from coffee grounds by converting them into natural organic com-

post that can be used for home gardening, encouraging individuals to adopt more responsible habits toward the environment.

Gulf Bank continues to play a leading role in supporting environmental sustainability through the launch and implementation of several impactful initiatives that reflect its long term commitment to environmentally responsible practices. In this context, Gulf Bank has successfully implemented innovative recycling initiatives, including transforming outdoor advertising materials into reusable bags, as part of a project that reflects the Bank's commitment to reducing waste and promoting a culture of reuse. The Bank has also recycled large quantities of electronic waste in collaboration with specialized entities, in line with best environmental practices and efforts to reduce the environmental impact of its operations.

Gulf Bank's commitment to sustainability also extends to strengthening its institutional infrastructure and environmental governance. The Bank has completed its sustainability governance infrastructure by developing a sustainable finance framework, as well as an environmental, social, and governance ESG sustainability risk management framework. This enhances the Bank's role in supporting sustainable development goals and Kuwait's vision for a more sustainable future.

Through this workshop and its ongoing initiatives, Gulf Bank reaffirms that environmental sustainability is an essential part of its institutional vision and a practical commitment reflected across its various activities and community initiatives. This stems from the Bank's belief in the importance of community partnership in protecting the environment and building a better future for generations to come.

Firm aims to shatter Aramco IPO record

SpaceX's IPO is set to be biggest ever & could make Elon Musk a trillionaire

NEW YORK, June 4. (AP): SpaceX says it plans to raise up to \$75 billion when it goes public this month, setting the stage for the largest-ever stock market debut and putting Elon Musk on course to becoming the world's first trillionaire.

The company, formally known as Space Exploration Technologies Corp., said Wednesday it will sell 555.6 million shares at \$135 a piece in an initial public offering. The estimated proceeds would easily top the \$26 billion raised by oil giant Saudi Aramco in 2019. The offering would also give SpaceX a market value of \$1.77 trillion. Only six companies in the S&P 500 are currently worth more, with Nvidia tops at \$5.2 trillion.

Besides the size of the offering and the expected proceeds, SpaceX's amended prospectus updates details about how much control of the company Musk will have. As SpaceX's CEO, chief technical officer and chairman, Musk's voting power will come primarily through his ownership of 5.22 billion Class B shares, which give the holder 10 votes for every share held. According to the filing, Musk would have 82.4% of the voting power in the company.

Forbes currently values Musk's net worth at \$826 billion and his stake in SpaceX at \$542 billion. The estimated value of his SpaceX holdings was based on an overall value for the company of \$1.25 trillion. Based on those numbers, a \$1.77 trillion valuation for SpaceX would boost Musk's net worth by \$223 billion, making him a trillionaire. However, much of Musk's worth is in stock that he has yet to cash in.

Even as it makes a bid for a blockbuster market debut, SpaceX is currently losing billions of dollars a year. The filing shows that the company lost \$2.6 billion from operations last year on \$18.7 billion in revenue, and the losses kept piling up at the start of this year, too.

Time will tell how SpaceX fares on the market. Musk's plans for the company are as fantastical as the money he hopes raise in the sale.

Colorful, even frightening in parts, the IPO document strikes a contrast with the typically dry, technical prose in IPO documents, detailing plans to use proceeds from the sale to help put men on the moon again and perhaps even Mars. In one section, it talks of a need to build "a permanent human colony" on the red planet with "at least one million inhabitants" as existential threats loom that could consign man to "the same fate as the dinosaurs."

Musk has almost equally ambitious plans for his

other publicly traded company, Tesla. His goal is to transform the maker of electric vehicles into a producer of robotaxis and humanoid robots. Dan Ives of Wedbush Securities wrote in a research note that he expects Tesla and SpaceX to merge next year.

Key to the success of both companies - and any merged entity - is artificial intelligence. In its IPO filing, SpaceX says it sees potential revenue from AI of up to \$26.5 trillion. But that depends on another lofty Musk ambition - putting data centers in space, which is not technologically possible at the moment.

Transforming his space company into a primarily AI-focused company will be a challenge for Musk, who started xAI in 2023 with 11 other co-founders who have all since left. Some were recruited away by rivals.

Its main AI product, the chatbot Grok, is "less impressive than anything that we see from any other major player in the space, whether that's OpenAI, or Anthropic, or (Google's) Gemini," said IDC analyst Arnal Dayaratna.

Dayaratna said that doesn't mean SpaceX doesn't have potential as a major AI player, thanks in part to its computing partnership with Anthropic and Musk's recent deal that gave SpaceX the rights to buy AI coding tool Cursor for \$60 billion later this year. Folding in Cursor's capabilities would give SpaceX access to the coveted business customers now using Anthropic's Claude or OpenAI's ChatGPT.

SpaceX plans to use the net proceeds from the IPO to fund the expansion of infrastructure for its AI and rocket businesses, and to beef up the constellation of satellites that power Starlink Mobile, among other investments.

The company plans to list on the Nasdaq under the symbol "SPCX" and could begin trading as soon as the end of next week.

And SpaceX isn't the only colossal market debut investors are now bracing for. Earlier this week, Anthropic submitted a confidential filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission to officially start its own IPO clock.

OpenAI has not yet reported filing the initial SEC paperwork, but an IPO from the ChatGPT maker is widely expected.

"This listing represents the first major test for public markets after years of muted IPO activity with SpaceX paving the way for AI giants Anthropic and OpenAI to follow soon after," Ives wrote.

Global Islamic Economy spending reaches \$2.6tn

Islamic finance assets near \$6tn in 2024

ISTANBUL, June 4: The world's two billion Muslims spent US\$ 2.6 trillion in 2024 across six core Islamic economy sectors: halal food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, modest fashion, Muslim-friendly travel, and media and recreation, according to the State of the Global Islamic Economy Report 2025/26, produced by DinarStandard.

The Report was released at an event hosted by the Investment and Finance Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye (CBYFO), at the Ibn Haldun University (IHU), in Istanbul, Turkey.

The report forecasts the Global Islamic Economy spending to reach US\$ 3.56 trillion by 2029, reflecting a 6.5% CAGR, while Islamic finance assets reached US\$ 5.99 trillion in 2024 and are projected to grow to US\$ 9.72 trillion by 2029.

The next phase of growth is framed as sovereignty-building: the strengthening of halal value chains, certification standards, local and regional production, Islamic finance infrastructure, digital platforms, and consumer trust to reduce dependency and build long-term market advantage.

The Report's national benchmarking Global Islamic Economy Indicator (GIEI) ranked Malaysia #1, followed by the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and Bahrain. The rankings underscore the importance of national ecosystems that combine regulation, finance, trade, innovation, and sector development. The UAE's position reflects the growing role of logistics, trade, and digital infrastructure, while Saudi Arabia and Indonesia continue to advance through Islamic finance, halal production, Muslim-friendly travel, and national halal ecosystem development.

Investment activity in Islamic economy-relevant companies reached US\$ 13.1 billion across 346 deals in 2024/25. Islamic finance represented the largest share of capital, followed by halal food, media and recreation, Muslim-friendly travel, and halal pharmaceuticals. The leading countries by total deal value were Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Indonesia, Azerbaijan, and Türkiye, reflecting deeper capital flows into both consumer-facing businesses and the infrastructure underpinning the Islamic economy.

Halal food remains the largest Islamic economy sector, with Muslim consumer spending reaching US\$ 1.53 trillion in 2024 and projected to grow to US\$ 2.06 trillion

by 2029. Muslim-friendly travel is the fastest-growing consumer sector, rising from US\$ 249 billion in 2024 to a projected US\$ 424 billion by 2029, supported by post-pandemic travel recovery, faith-conscious infrastructure, and stronger destination competition for Muslim travelers.

OIC imports across halal-related sectors reached US\$ 421.5 billion in 2024, highlighting both the scale of demand and the need for stronger intra-OIC production capacity. Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Türkiye, Indonesia, and Malaysia were the top five OIC importers. Brazil, China, India, the US, and Türkiye were the top five exporters to OIC markets, together accounting for 32% of exports.

The report also captures a sustained shift in Muslim consumer sentiment. DinarStandard's social media listening analysis tracked over 86 million engagements, across pre-movement, peak-movement, and current phases. The findings show that values-driven purchasing behavior has outlasted the initial boycott surge, with continued consumer engagement around ethical, local, and alternative brands across food and beverage, cosmetics, fashion, technology, and media.

Rafiquddin Shikoh, CEO and Managing Partner of DinarStandard, said: "The Islamic economy is no longer an emerging idea. It is an emerging system. What we are documenting this year is a global consumer and investor base increasingly acting on the conviction that economic life must align with moral life. The next wave of Islamic economy growth will be led by those who can convert market demand into systems, standards, trust infrastructure, and institutions that reduce dependence while widening opportunity."

The SGIE report 2025/26 highlights opportunity signals across all major sectors, including AI-enabled halal certification, blockchain-enabled traceability, digital Islamic finance, sovereign travel platforms, pilgrimage digitization, halal pharmaceuticals, clean-label cosmetics, digital-native modest fashion, and culturally aligned media and recreation. Together, these signals point to an Islamic economy that is no longer growing only because Muslim demand is rising, but because the systems needed to serve that demand are being built more intentionally.

The State of the Global Islamic Economy Report 2025/26 has been produced by DinarStandard, in partnership with SalaamGateway.com, the largest Islamic economy news and media platform. The thought leadership partner of the report is ISDBL. The global strategic partner of the report is halal certifier IFANCA.

AI firms face pressure to drop safeguards for government deals

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

By Michael Gregory
Clemson University

When researchers founded Anthropic in 2021, they said the race to build powerful AI was moving too recklessly. They inserted detailed safety measures into their products and marketed their commitment to safety as the corporate quality that distinguished them from competitors - notably OpenAI, the rival company they had left. In March 2026 that reputation was tested when the Trump administration declared that Anthropic was a supply chain risk.

The company had refused to remove built-in safeguards that prohibited domestic surveillance and autonomous weapons from products it had supplied to the Pentagon. President Donald Trump ordered the federal government to stop using Anthropic and its large language model, Claude, labeling the company a national security risk. Within hours, OpenAI made a deal to be the Pentagon's supplier instead.

Despite Anthropic's apparent stand, during its clash with Trump the company quietly scrapped the binding principles in its main safety policy. Several weeks earlier, Anthropic's head of safeguards research had resigned, warning that "the world is in peril." And a week after the Pentagon officially banned Claude, the U.S. military was still using the technology to select and target sites to bomb in Iran.

As a philosopher studying the rule of law and democracy, I've found that authoritarian governance of technology often does not involve direct censorship. Instead it delegitimizes the intended protections, poisoning any external regulation and even voluntary self-regulation that deviates from the regime's goals or values.

The Trump administration, which follows the authoritarian playbook,

has argued that AI safety standards and user restrictions are ideological impositions rather than sound engineering decisions. The "Preventing Woke AI" executive order of July 23, 2025, didn't change what companies are allowed to do with their products. By attaching the "woke" label to basic ethics protections, the administration made those protections politically costly to maintain.

The Brennan Center, a legal policy and advocacy organization, has documented how AI ethics is being redefined through contract negotiations. In these cases, the government weaponizes terms such as "biased" to disqualify companies that maintain civil rights protections from competing for federal contracts.

A single U.S. Defense Department AI contract can be worth billions of dollars. It can also provide access to data no private company could otherwise have and unlock further government work. Companies that maintain the ethics guardrails risk ceding ground to competitors that don't.

When OpenAI moved in to take the Pentagon work, CEO Sam Altman told his board of directors the move looked "opportunistic and sloppy." But he said the company took it anyway, because admitting that an action looks bad is different from being willing to fall behind.

This situation reflects the classic prisoner's dilemma. If Anthropic maintains safety provisions and OpenAI strips them away, OpenAI gets the contracts and the future advantage. If both companies maintain the provisions, digital protections might survive. But because neither company can be certain the other will hold the line - and because being left behind is not a good option - the rational choice is to discard safety measures.

These circumstances differ from a standard market race to the bottom in one key respect: The trap of having to strip away guardrails isn't an accident of competition; it's being maintained by the government through incentives.

Palantir didn't wait to be caught in this trap. The data analytics company was founded by Peter Thiel and run by Alex Karp, who spent years denouncing "woke" Silicon Valley. Palantir built its business model around govern-

ment surveillance and military data infrastructure. While Palantir has said it is committed to privacy and civil liberties, critics contend that the company is dismantling those protections. The company's stock has surged under the Trump administration, its contracts have expanded, and it now has a front-row seat where AI policy is being written. Palantir solved the prisoner's dilemma by defecting first.

It's important to note that the dissolution of safety teams across the industry, such as OpenAI's Superalignment team and Microsoft's ethics unit, isn't the result of anyone deciding to abandon safety. What I see in analyzing the different companies' actions is a pattern: an accumulation of collective, incremental compromises that quietly reorient the definition of safety away from the public and toward the state. The resulting harm and risks fall on everyone whose lives are shaped by AI systems.

Across government contracts and policy documents, I have also observed that the original definition of AI-related safety has shifted from protecting the public toward making systems controllable for the state. The "anti-woke" framing accelerates this shift: Once ethics requirements are characterized as ideological rather than technical, removing them can be framed not as a safety reduction but as a correction.

This shift does not require bad faith from the companies. Safety teams are still doing rigorous work. The companies are not lying when they describe their safety commitments. Those commitments are now simply oriented toward the government rather than the public.

The case for stronger AI regulation assumes that a government constrains commercial entities on behalf of the public. But blacklisting a company for maintaining civil rights protections, and then banning the military deployment of its AI hours later, shows that the federal government in this instance enables the harm that regulation is meant to prevent.

Expanding regulatory authority over AI companies does not necessarily protect citizens. Safety regulations - intended to constrain corporate power - in authoritarian regimes become tools to coerce compliance. (AP)

Hiring slowdown continues

US jobless claims hit four-month high amid uncertainty

WASHINGTON, June 4, (AP) — The number of Americans filing for jobless aid hit their highest level in four months last week, but layoffs remain historically low despite ongoing economic uncertainty brought on by the war in Iran.

U.S. applications for unemployment benefits for the week ending May 30 increased by 13,000 to 225,000, the Labor Department reported Thursday. That's the most since early February, before the U.S. and Israel launched attacks on Iran, but still a historically low level. Analysts surveyed by FactSet expected 211,000 new applications.

Weekly filings for unemployment benefits are considered a proxy for U.S. layoffs and are close to a real-time indicator of the health of the job market.

Despite historically low layoffs, the labor market seems to be mired in what economists call a "low-hire, low-fire" state. That's kept the unemployment rate low at 4.3%, but left many of those out of work struggling to find new employment.

Though U.S. employers delivered a surprising 115,000 new jobs in April, the Iran war has injected a large degree of uncertainty about the broader U.S. economy and labor market.

The Strait of Hormuz, through which travels one-fifth of the world's oil, remains closed. Since the beginning of the war in late February, oil prices have spiked about 50% and the average price for a gallon of gas in the U.S. is now \$4.24, up from less than \$3 in late February. Besides hitting consumers' pocketbooks, those higher costs can make businesses reluctant to hire.

Data from the U.S. government showed that inflation at the consumer level rose 3.8% from April 2025, the biggest jump in three years. Food prices are also up, but may not yet fully reflect rising energy costs due to the Iran war,



A hiring sign is displayed at a restaurant in Niles, Ill., Thursday, May 14, 2026. (AP)

analysts say.

Another recent report showed that wholesale prices shot up 6% from a year ago, the highest point in more than three years.

This comes at a time when U.S. inflation is already above the Federal Reserve's 2% target. The Fed opted to leave its benchmark rate alone at its last meeting, citing economic uncertainty caused by instability in the Middle East and still-elevated inflation. Most analysts don't expect the Fed to cut rates any time soon.

Lower interest rates can boost the economy and hiring, but also tend to stoke inflation, leading a number of Fed policymakers to say they are actually willing to consider an interest rate hike this year.

On top of that, the recent artificial intelligence boom and the investment required to develop it could alter or even replace some jobs.

Among the companies that have cut jobs recently are Verizon, UPS, Amazon, Disney, Starbucks and Walmart.

Weekly jobless aid applications have stabilized in a range mostly between 200,000 and 250,000 since the U.S. economy emerged from the pandemic recession. However, hiring began slowing about two years ago and tapered further in 2025 due to President Donald Trump's erratic tariff rollouts, his purge of the federal workforce and the lingering effects of high interest rates meant to control inflation.

Employers added fewer than 200,000 jobs last year, compared with about 1.5 million in 2024, according to the data firm FactSet.

The government issues its May jobs report on Friday.

The Labor Department's report Thursday showed that the four-week moving average of jobless claims, which softens some of the weekly volatility, rose by 6,500 to 214,750.

The total number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits for the previous week ending May 23 fell by 8,000 to 1.78 million, in line with analyst forecasts.

Santos denies wrongdoing as regulators examine bets

Polymarket cuts ties with George Santos as federal regulators probe trades on rival prediction market

NEW YORK, June 4, (AP) — The online prediction platform Polymarket is ending its paid relationship with George Santos as federal regulators investigate whether the former congressman illegally bet against his own attendance at President Donald Trump's State of the Union.

Santos placed the bets on another prediction marketplace, Kalshi, after publicly announcing his intention to be at the Feb. 24 speech, according to a person familiar with the investigation. He later blamed a delayed flight for missing the event.

The suspicious trades were detected by Kalshi and referred to the Commodities Futures Trading Commission, a federal regulator that has opened a probe into Santos for possible insider trading, according to a second person familiar with the investigation.

Both spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

Santos was released from federal prison last October after Trump granted him clemency in a fraud case.

By the time of the State of the Union address, four months later, he was already working in an influencer capacity for Polymarket, using his substantial online platform to promote the controversial brand.

In response to an inquiry from the AP, a Polymarket spokesperson said the company was in the process of terminating the contract as a result of this week's revelations.

Santos did not respond to phone calls and text messages from the AP. He wrote on social media Wednesday that the allegation was "preposterous," adding that his legal team was in touch with the Justice Department.

On his podcast, "Doing Time with George Santos," the former congressman has suggested



The Google logo is seen on a building in New York, Oct. 27, 2025. (AP)

that prediction markets are "easily manipulable," and rife with abuse.

"There's definitely some space for speculation. There will be investigations. There will be scrutiny," he said in March. "I just want to make sure that people understand: It is not straightforward. It is not a crime to do prediction market. I don't think people should be taking this seriously."

The financial regulator overseeing prediction markets, meanwhile, has pledged to take the issue of insider trading "extremely seriously."

"There is a myth in the mainstream media and social media that insider trading law doesn't apply in the prediction markets. That is wrong," David Miller, the director of enforcement at CFTC, said during a recent talk at New York Law School. "Insider trading in the prediction markets - where there is misappropriated information - is precisely the kind of serious violation that we are going after vigorously."

That pledge comes as the Trump administration has thrown its support behind the prediction market operators and is actively suing states that have tried to regulate them. The president's son, Don-

ald Trump Jr., has invested in Polymarket through his venture capital firm and is a strategic advisor for Kalshi. And the CFTC has faced allegations of maintaining a friendly posture toward the industry it is meant to regulate.

Still, some bets have not escaped federal scrutiny.

Last week, prosecutors charged a Google engineer who allegedly used the company's 2025 "Year in Search" data, before it was published, to enter Polymarket wagers about the most searched people of last year.

A spokesperson for Polymarket said the company had worked closely with the CFTC, along with federal prosecutors, ahead of the insider trading charges.

Experts said Santos's own alleged actions didn't appear to meet the same threshold for insider trading, since they would not have been based on stolen information. But the bets - coupled with his public statements - may run afoul of other financial laws.

"What he's accused of sounds a lot more like market manipulation than insider trading," said Todd Phillips, the director at Klaros Group and a former Georgia State University professor who has written extensively about prediction market regulation.

The federal regulator could also bring a civil action against Santos, potentially resulting in a steep fine and a ban from trading, he noted. But the rapid rise of online betting platforms has meant there are few similar cases to draw from.

"We didn't have examples of people trading on contracts involving themselves. That is new, and it allows people to change their behavior in order to profit," Phillips said. "Until pretty recently, the question of George Santos being at the State of the Union was not something that had ever been traded before."

Cuba tourism hit as Meliá closes 15 hotels

HAVANA, June 4, (AP) — Spanish hotel chain Meliá has joined a growing list of companies with a long-standing presence in Cuba that are withdrawing or limiting their operations on the island after the U.S. announced new sanctions while upholding an oil embargo.

Meliá will cease operations at 15 of the 34 hotels it manages on the island, according to state website Cubadebate, dealing a blow to Cuba's vital tourism sector, which has plummeted since its 2018 peak.

The report on Wednesday stated that Meliá's decision was based on "a sense of corporate responsibility and external factors that have significantly affected the operation, legality and security of these establishments."

The decision was announced May 26, just weeks after U.S. President Donald Trump signed an executive order expanding sanctions against the island. Most of the sanctions targeted Grupo de Administración Empresarial S.A., a business conglomerate operated by the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces, with the U.S. asserting it was a threat to its national security.

Meliá did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The executive order freezes the assets of foreign companies, seizes their accounts in the United States and prohibits travel by their shareholders, investors and employees - virtually eliminating their activity in the U.S. financial system.

GAESA, a Cuban conglomerate created in the 1990s, owns a wide range of businesses, from car rentals and retail stores to transportation companies. It is Meliá's partner in hotel management through one of its subsidiaries, Gaviota.

Meliá is one of Cuba's most important partners in its vital tourism sector. Until its partial withdrawal, it operated some 14,000 rooms.

Spanish and Canadian firms are the biggest investors in Cuba's hotel sector, noted Lee Schlenker, a research associate at the Quincy Institute's Global South program, a Washington think tank.

"With the lack of international tourism, the fuel shortages, and just the broader decline since COVID...I'm sure that these companies will be rethinking their operations in Cuba with major implications for the people of Cuba, not just GAESA," he said. "There are thousands of Cubans who work in these hotels."

Several of the hotels that Meliá abandoned in idyllic destinations like the resorts of Varadero, Cayo Santa María and Jardines del Rey "were already closed and inactive due to energy problems and the drop in demand in Cuba," according to Cubadebate.

Cuba's government has blamed the U.S. energy blockade for prolonged blackouts, water shortages, supply problems, deficiencies in the healthcare system and disrup-

tions in all aspects of daily life. Those who work in Cuba's crumbling tourism sector lamented Meliá's announcement.

"It's going to affect us, our families, and everyone involved in tourism. Our pay and income depend on this," said Erich López, a driver of a green 1950s Dodge who has been driving for two decades to support his family.

For Carlos Luis Carbonel, a 62-year-old parking attendant who works in front of the giant Meliá Cohiba hotel in Havana, the situation "is going to be a blow."

"This is terrible for everyone: for tour guides, for parking attendants, for hotel workers, for everyone," he said.

Other major hotel chains including Canadian-owned Royalton and Spain's Iberostar have limited or suspended operations in Cuba in the past week.

Tourism in Cuba, which reached a peak of 4.3 million visitors in 2019, saw a significant drop in the number of tourists arriving in the first quarter of this year, 48% lower than in the same period in 2025.

Only 298,000 tourists arrived in Cuba in January, February and March, compared to 573,300 international visitors during the same period last year, according to government data.

On Wednesday, the enormous and iconic sign of the Royalton Paseo del Prado hotel at the entrance of Old Havana was removed, as confirmed by The Associated Press during a visit. Meanwhile, the 500-room Iberostar Selection - also known as Tower K - the most modern and luxurious of the hotels slated to open in 2025, standing over 150 meters (490 feet) tall, has remained closed for days.

Airlines including World2Fly, Air France and Iberia have canceled flights to and from Cuba.

Also on Wednesday, Cuba's Central Bank announced that Visa and MasterCard operations on the island would be suspended following the termination of relationships between foreign entities and FINCIMEX S.A., a Cuba-based agency affiliated with GAESA.

Last month, Canadian miner Sherritt International Corp. signed a non-binding agreement with Gillon Capital LLC, a family office linked to a former Trump adviser, to sell its stake in a mining business in Cuba.

In late January, Trump threatened tariffs on any country that sells or supplies oil to Cuba, as his administration pressures for a change in its political system and government. The move has deepened a crisis caused by seven decades of U.S. sanctions.

While U.S. and Cuban officials held talks earlier this year, tensions have risen. In late May, former President Raúl Castro was charged in a U.S. indictment for his alleged role in the downing of two civilian aircraft operated by Miami-based exiles in 1996 in Cuban waters.

Using visuals to simplify household finances

Reader question: My spouse has little interest in our financial position. As we age, this concerns me. I try to share some basic information (income, spending, account balances, debt, and so on) each month but rarely get a response. I think graphs or charts might be of more interest to her than a bunch of numbers. What recommendations would you have for illustrating our financial position so that I am not the only person aware of how we are situated? Thanks!

Answer: Your situation is pretty common. Most couples I know develop a division of labor over time, where one person is in charge of financial matters and the other person is less involved. That's definitely the case for my husband and me. He's in charge of paying all the monthly bills and preparing our tax returns, but the financial planning and investment decisions are up to me. This type of arrangement might work well for a long time, but can become less sustainable with age, particularly if the "finance person" in the relationship dies or develops a major health issue.

Illustrating your financial situation with charts and graphs is a great idea that might help your spouse become a little more involved. Morningstar's Portfolio X-Ray tool includes a variety of images that help illustrate your financial situation. Websites for most ma-

ior brokerage firms also include some visual tools. Schwab, for example, offers a Portfolio Checkup and a bar graph illustrating your account's monthly income from dividends and interest income. Vanguard has a Portfolio Watch tool and a variety of performance illustrations, tools, and calculators.

A mind map, which we used with clients when I worked for a financial advisory firm, can be another way to picture your entire financial situation on one page. There are various software templates for drawing a mind map, or you can simply sketch it out with a large sheet of paper and a pencil. Start with your names at the center of the page. Then draw spokes connecting to various categories, such as names of other family members; investment accounts; real estate and other assets; insurance policies; estate plans, key goals and values, and contact information for accountants, estate planners, and other professionals. It can be helpful to go through the mind map together and make any updates needed at least once a year.

A few other ideas-though not related to charts and graphs-might also be useful.

I like the idea of putting together a net worth statement that itemizes cash, taxable accounts, real estate, retirement accounts, and debt for each member of the couple as well as items owned

jointly. It's a good idea to update this document at least once a year and discuss it as a couple. If you set up the document as a spreadsheet, you can include columns with additional information such as account numbers, what each account is used for, which accounts are subject to required minimum distributions, or tax issues like potential capital gains.

Many couples also put together a binder (sometimes humorously called a "Doomsday Book") that contains information about where to find important paperwork, insurance policies, how bills are paid, what each account is for, steps the surviving spouse will need to take, final wishes, and any other critical information.

Finally, you could consider working with a good financial adviser, who can help involve your spouse in financial matters while you're still living and step in to fully manage investments and personal finance decisions if you pass away before your spouse. Make sure the adviser holds the Certified Financial Planner designation and charges fees that are reasonable. Although a 1% fee is still the industry standard for accounts of \$1 million or less, it's possible to find advisers who charge significantly less, including a few who price their services based on hours worked instead of a percentage of assets under management. (AP)

Hormuz disruptions push India toward Venezuelan oil

Modi hosts Venezuelan leader amid oil supply concerns

NEW DELHI, June 4, (AP) — Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held talks with Venezuela's acting President Delcy Rodríguez on Thursday as New Delhi seeks to deepen ties with the oil-rich South American nation following disruptions in global energy supplies.

Rudrendra Tandon, a senior official in India's foreign ministry, said the talks held in New Delhi focused on strengthening energy cooperation. He said Venezuela had become India's third-largest crude oil supplier in recent weeks.

Tandon said India is "aggressively seeking new sources of crude oil and energy to strengthen its energy security," adding that Venezuela represents an "opportunity and is very much part of our plans."

Modi and Rodríguez also explored opportunities for Indian companies to invest

in Venezuela's sectors including mining, critical minerals, pharmaceuticals and automobiles, he said.

The meeting comes as India has increased imports of Venezuelan crude in recent months, making the South American country a more important supplier for the world's third-largest oil importer.

India imports about 90% of its oil. Around half of those supplies pass through the Strait of Hormuz, a key shipping route effectively closed by the Iran war.

Rodríguez also met India's foreign minister, Subrahmanya Jaishankar, on Thursday and is scheduled to hold talks with Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri. She is also expected to visit facilities in India's energy, pharmaceutical and automobile sectors.



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrives to receive Venezuela's acting President Delcy Rodríguez for their meeting in New Delhi, India, Thursday, June 4, 2026. (AP)

'Disclosure Day' revives veteran filmmaker's extraterrestrial obsession

Steven Spielberg on his faith in alien life, future of movies and power of empathy

NEW YORK, June 4, (AP) — A moment early on in "Disclosure Day" will instinctively feel familiar to anyone who grew up with Steven Spielberg films. A TV weather report predicts hail. The camera pans downward, from television set to kitchen table. Plinking sounds begin. Cereal falls into a bowl.

"Those were Froot Loops," Spielberg says, smiling. "My favorite."

Spielberg's latest, like some of his earliest and most beloved films, again concerns what might fall from above. "Disclosure Day," which Universal Pictures releases June 11, returns Hollywood's preeminent big-screen craftsman to one of his most abiding questions: Are we alone?

Coming nearly half a century after "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," "Disclosure Day" is a grand bookend for one of the most cosmically-minded moviemakers of our time, whose dreams of extraterrestrial life have shaped all of ours. It's a distant answer to the final notes of "Close Encounters." But while Spielberg grants his 1977 film was "speculative," "Disclosure Day," he insists, is the real deal.

"It's my first film that will be considered science fiction that I do not consider to be science fiction," Spielberg said in a recent interview. "It's much more reflective of the world as it is evolving and discoveries that are being made as we speak."

Spielberg, at 79, is trying to revive and reconsider the alien wonder that's long lingered in his mind, from "E.T." to "War of the Worlds." "Disclosure Day," Spielberg's first summer movie in a decade, is already being hailed as one of his best in years. But this time, Spielberg is testing whether he can conjure some of his trademark movie magic less with imagination than with conviction.

"I've been a believer since I made 'Close Encounters' 50 years ago," Spielberg says. "But I would always say: Until I've seen a UAP or a UFO with my own eyes, I'm not going to categorically state that life from out there has come here."

"But I've changed that," he adds. "I'm now willing to change my mind because of the circumstantial evidence which is overwhelming."

"Disclosure Day" stars Josh O'Connor as a cybersecurity whistleblower with government evidence, long suppressed, chronicling a history of alien encounters. Guiding him in his escape from a corporate executive (Colin Firth) trying to keep it all under wraps is the disclosure movement's leader (Colman Domingo). Meanwhile, a meteorologist named Margaret Fairchild (Emily Blunt) begins having a mysterious epiphany.

When he first began thinking about the movie, Spielberg called up the screenwriter David Koepp, a longtime collaborator who wrote "Jurassic Park" and "War of the Worlds."

"I said, 'Sure, what's it about?'" recalls Koepp. "And he said, 'Oh, you know, aliens again. But different this time.'"

Spielberg was coming off an unusually long break by his breakneck standards. His 2022 film "The Fabelmans," pulled from his own childhood, dramatizing his parents' painful divorce and his own origins



This image released by Universal Pictures shows director Steven Spielberg, center, on the set of 'Disclosure Day.' (AP)

as a filmmaker. Spielberg's first gut-wrenchingly autobiographical movie left him unsure of what was next.

"It was the hardest question I ever had to ask myself because there was such completion in resolving so many personal issues that I had never aired in public before 'The Fabelmans,'" Spielberg says.

"I didn't care whether people thought 'The Fabelmans' was just a tale, a yarn, or if they cared that it was all true. I didn't care about that. It was something I did for myself. I always used to say it was \$40 million of therapy that I didn't have to pay for. Universal did," he says, laughing.

But Spielberg, having long followed reports of alleged alien encounters, was inspired by the 2023 House Subcommittee on National Security hearing on UAPs: Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena. Among the witnesses was whistleblower and former Air Force intelligence officer David Grusch, who testified that the government concealed a program investigating UAPs.

The Pentagon then denied it. Yet in April, President Donald Trump said the Pentagon is preparing to release some "very interesting" UFO files.

Those 2023 testimonies and others so fueled Spielberg that he produced a 50-page treatment on what would become "Disclosure Day." During the writing process with Koepp, he texted



From left to right, British actor Josh O'Connor, U.S. actor Colman Domingo, Steven Spielberg, British actress Emily Blunt, U.S. actor Wyatt Russell pose upon arrival for the premiere of the film 'Disclosure Day' at the Grand Rex in Paris, on June 2, 2026. (AP)

him more notes, he says, "than I've ever sent to anyone in my life."

"There was a period in there where I believe he re-read the script every single day for a year," Koepp says. "We'd be in different time zones and I would wake up to 30 or 35 texts from his most current reading of the script. When the leader of the project has that level of commitment, it tends to bring along everyone. You up your game."

Spielberg has long considered his

filmography split in two, between the filmmaker who made "Jaws" and "E.T." and "Raiders of the Lost Ark," and the one who, after 1985's "The Color Purple," was increasingly drawn to darker and more serious material with films like "Schindler's List," "Saving Private Ryan" and "Munich."

"Disclosure Day" is a kind of bridge between both modes of Spielberg - a thrilling chase movie filled with wonderment that's nevertheless

grounded in reality and recent history. And its most ardent message is quite earthbound. Blunt's character's clarity comes from looking people in the eye. As much as it's about aliens, "Disclosure Day" is about empathy.

"I think every movie should have a great emphasis on empathy because empathy sometimes feels like it's in short supply," Spielberg says. "We have it, sometimes we can't use it. Sometimes it's not allowed to be used if you want to stay aligned with your friends and your belief systems. But I think empathy is there for all of us."

"Disclosure Day" opens in a much different movie world than Spielberg's earlier alien adventures. It's one of few big, original studio movies this summer - a moviegoing season that the "Jaws" filmmaker pioneered. But neither franchise domination, AI nor streaming make Spielberg fret for the future of movies.

"The audience gives me faith in the movies," says Spielberg. "Even though the numbers are still not pre-COVID level numbers for any films being released now, it's more robust than it has been for many years. The audience gives me belief that people still want to congregate in a dark space in the company of strangers to share an experience of a film made by storytellers. And that gives me faith to continue making films."

Spielberg will turn 80 this December. Around the same age, Martin

Scorsese began to frankly ponder how many movies he had left. Spielberg doesn't think the same way.

"I never think about how many more I have," he says. "I'm just hopeful that I will be inspired when something comes along, as I was with 'Disclosure Day,' as I was with 'Fabelmans,' as I was with 'West Side Story.'"

More inspiration is already on the way. Spielberg hopes that his next movie will be a Western. Despite his deep fondness for the genre and an indelible encounter with John Ford, it's one genre that's eluded him.

"I always feel like parts of the 'Raiders' adventure movies are like Westerns," he says. "Whenever Harrison (Ford) was on a horse, it made me wishful for wanting to direct a full Western, a real Western."

Margaret Fairchild in "Disclosure Day" has some echoes with another Spielberg protagonist: Richard Dreyfuss' Roy Neary in "Close Encounters." Both are compelled by a strange force beyond their control. It's a character type that Spielberg, a compulsive movie maker, grants he connects with. "Disclosure Day" is his 35th feature film.

"I identify with characters who aren't afraid of mysterious things happening to them," Spielberg says, "and who are fighting for their survival by trying to discover what they don't know."

Film examines creativity, fame and the fight for recognition

Paul Rudd and Nick Jonas hit right notes in 'Power Ballad'

LOS ANGELES, June 4, (AP) — Let's just say that the wedding band has never occupied the most exalted rung of the ladder in music.

Playing "September" and "Celebration" is often what's most required. As one member of the Bride and the Groove, the band at the center of John Carney's new film, puts it: They're not rock stars. They're human jukeboxes.

But in "Power Ballad," a wedding band singer and pop star cross paths. For one night, all of the stratification of the music world falls away. "Power Ballad" starts like a fairy tale.

Since 2007's "Once," the Irish writer-director has focused his films on the redemptive capacity of music. Carney, who was once a bassist for the Frames, knows from experience. From "Sing Street" to "Flora and Son," he has made unabashedly earnest tales where a song, or just picking up an instrument, changes lives.

This can, undoubtedly, lead Carney into sentimental territory. Lucky for him, his chosen subject - music - is more worthy of sentiment than almost anything else. Yet the song doesn't quite remain the same in "Power Ballad," a movie that begins with the gentle sweetness Carney is known for, but detours into something more discordant.

Rick (Paul Rudd) is an American musician who gave up on his once-promising rock band's future to instead live with his wife (Marcella Plunkett) and teenage daughter (a spunky, underused Beth Fallon) in Dublin. His former group was called Octagon, a perfect former band name if there ever were one.

But for years, Rick has fronted the Bride and the Groove. It's an unromantic day job (or rather a night one) that hasn't entirely sapped his belief in his own songwriting. During an encore at one wedding, he plays an original tune and is mentally transported to an arena full of swaying fans. When he snaps out of it, he's staring at an empty dance floor and faces that say: That wasn't Kool & the Gang.

At another wedding at a castle, the band is asked to let a friend of the newlyweds sit in. They reluctantly agree, and are surprised to see the very popular boy band veteran, Danny (Nick Jonas), step on stage. He sings Stevie Wonder's "I Wish," and it's great. Though Rick had just dismissed Danny's music as "manufactured content for young, excitable teens," he discovers Danny is a genuine musician.

But, later that night, something even more remarkable transpires. Rick bumps into Danny, and the two quickly hit it off. They begin jamming to-



This image released by Lionsgate shows Paul Rudd, left, and Nick Jonas in a scene from 'Power Ballad.' (AP)

gether and sharing songs that need work. They are both so jazzed by their unlikely collaboration that they play into the next morning.

The actual moment of artistic creation, and the craft it requires, is something the movies almost always skip over. But capturing collaborative juices flowing is exactly what Carney excels at. You can feel his joy in it. So it's fitting that one of the unfinished songs Rick plays for Danny, "How to Write a Song (Without You)," is about creative invention.

It's here when you wonder where "Power Ballad" is headed. Is this, for Rick, the beginning of a beautiful friendship? Will they turn into the next great songwriting duo, lifting Rick out of weddings and proving to the world that Danny is more than a boy-band pretty face?

That is very possibly the movie Carney might have made a decade ago. But "Power Ballad," which he co-wrote with Peter McDonald (who also co-stars

as a band member), shifts six months ahead in time. Rick is standing in a shopping mall when the familiar lyrics of "How to Write a Song" softly float through the stores. He stands dumbfounded in the gleaming halls of commerce, a befuddlement that slowly turns into outrage the bigger and bigger Danny's smash hit grows.

"Power Ballad" loses some of its steam in its second half, which follows Rick's struggle for justice. Making things considerably harder is that he can find no recorded demo of the song. His family and his band don't even really believe him.

But even as the movie struggles to sustain its opening refrain, Carney's film is always riffing on ideas of authenticity and aspiration in music. That Jonas is, himself, a former boy band star who has at times gone it alone, lends the movie a direct connection to contemporary music, where tussles over authorship are increasingly common.

Jonas has been good in other films (notably the "Jumanji" movies), but this is his most ambitious and convincing performance to date. It's a testament to the movie that Danny's theft isn't a purely villainous act. He gives the song a bridge and the vocal power to take it to another level. He's under mounting pressure from his label to deliver a hit. An executive (Jack Reynor) wants "Danny 2.0" but has little faith he can supply it.

But it's an even more well-tailored role for Rudd. He memorably and very goofily played a bassist in the 2009 comedy "I Love You, Man." But while he sings well, it's not his musical chops that lift the performance. It's more that Rick, a contented family man with unrealized rock-star dreams, gives the exceptionally genial Rudd more notes to play as an actor. Rudd makes for a very likeable everyman out to convince the world he is capable of a beautiful song.

And that's the abiding belief of Carney's. No matter all the struggles, the artistic injustices, the corporate hegemony, he still believes that if you make something truly soulful, it will break through. It will claw its way to the surface, and move people. It's undoubtedly gotten harder since "Once," this movie seems to admit. The world is against you. But what one person can offer, a ballad or otherwise, still has power. Fairy tale or not, that's worth believing in.

"Power Ballad," a Lionsgate release in theaters Friday, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for "language throughout and some drug use." Running time: 108 minutes. Three stars out of four.

Television

The show that reports the news is now making headlines itself

Whither '60 Minutes'? CBS turmoil sparks debate over future

NEW YORK, June 4, (AP): "This is '60 Minutes,'" Harry Reasoner announced on Sept. 24, 1968, introducing his new CBS News show alongside fellow correspondent Mike Wallace. "It's kind of a magazine for television."

He added: "We do think this is sort of a new approach."

More than a half-century and 58 seasons later, that same term - "new approach" - is being deployed by CBS News leader Bari Weiss to explain her sweeping changes at the most renowned news program in TV history: firing the top producer and two correspondents, among others, and installing a new chief with no TV broadcast experience. Now, one of the show's most famous faces, Scott Pelley, is gone too - fired after a tense confrontation with bosses.

"We realize, of course, that new approaches are not always instantly accepted," Reasoner said on that night in 1968. And Weiss' "new approach" has been greeted with biting criticism from some corners. Moreover, the turmoil has become a top news story in itself, with competing narratives flying - none of them flattering to CBS News.

The essential question percolating on Wednesday: Where does "60 Minutes" go from here? Can it stop being the story, get back to work and retain its reputation for probing journalism and its legendary success atop the news food chain? Or is its famous ticking timer, as some fear, literally running out?

To one prominent analyst of TV news, it seemed Wednesday that something had already evaporated - if only, perhaps, a long-held perception that "60 Minutes," which manages to be both old-school and pugnacious, was something essentially untouchable.

"My first response is, it started in 1968 - not a bad run," said Robert Thompson, director of Syracuse University's Bleier Center for Television and Popular Culture. "Because it really does look like this is systematically deconstructing what (the show) was."

But, he quickly added: "I don't think we're writing the obituary of '60 Minutes.' I think there's just too much value and voltage built into that brand."

He felt, though, that there were concerning signs. The show is suddenly down four correspondents. Three have been dismissed, including Pelley, and Anderson Cooper is leaving of his own accord. There have also been unsettling accusations launched by



In this file photo, The '60 Minutes' team, from left, Andy Rooney, Morley Safer, Steve Kroft, Mike Wallace, executive producer Don Hewitt, Lesley Stahl, and Ed Bradley pose at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York celebrating their 25th anniversary, on Nov. 10, 1993. (AP)

Pelley. "New management has instructed me to inject falsehoods and bias into a politically sensitive story," the correspondent and former evening news anchor contended in a statement Tuesday. "I've been told to include assertions that are unverified."

To Jeff Fager, former executive producer of "60 Minutes" and author of a book on the show, a major deficit will be the loss of Pelley himself.

"I can't imagine running '60 Minutes' without Scott," said Fager, author of "Fifty Years of 60 Minutes: The Inside Story of Television's Most Influential News Broadcast."

"His is the most remarkable body of work in the history of the broadcast," Fager said. "It's hobbled without him."

A dizzying week of public airing of dirty laundry continued Wednesday with remarks from Weiss to staff about Pelley's firing - and Pelley's response to those remarks. In a transcript seen by The Associated Press, Weiss began a morning editorial call by saying she was "only interested in working in a newsroom that is built on trust and mutual respect."



In this file photo, against a backdrop of the famous '60 Minutes' stop watch, Don Hewitt, the program's creator and executive producer, reads prepared remarks to reporters during a session on "60 Minutes" during CBS' Winter Press Tour in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles, Jan. 17, 2004. (AP)

"That foundation was broken on Monday, and despite our attempts to engage with Scott Pelley and to find a way back, unfortunately we weren't able to do so, and so we had to part ways," Weiss said on the call. "We did not want that to happen, but that's the path that he chose."

In short order, Pelley countered with his own lengthy description

of their meeting. "Bari Weiss knows what she said is not true," he said in a statement posted by New York Times media reporter Ben Mullin. "In the meeting on Tuesday, in which I was effectively fired, there was no effort to 'find a way back.'"

Turmoil had been evident at "60 Minutes" for more than a year, after President Donald Trump

sued the show over its editing of a 2024 interview with then-Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris. It became part of a broader upheaval at CBS News after Weiss was named to the new role of editor-in-chief by parent company Paramount late last year following David Ellison's arrival as the network's corporate leader.

Ellison's company, Skydance, merged with CBS parent company Paramount, which later settled the Trump lawsuit for \$16 million, angering some at "60 Minutes" - and indirectly leading to the departure last month of popular CBS late-night host Stephen Colbert, who had called the settlement "a big fat bribe."

Discord at the show burst into public view last Thursday, when Weiss and CBS News President Tom Cibrowski announced their changes aimed at "building a show that thrives in the 21st century."

They installed Nick Bilton, a former technology columnist and documentarian, as executive producer, replacing Tanya Simon, a 30-year veteran of the show who'd been in the top job about a year. Also let go were corre-

spondents Sharyn Alfonsi, whose segment about Trump administration deportees in a Salvadoran prison had been abruptly pulled by Weiss before running a month later, and Cecilia Vega.

Four days later, a Monday morning staff meeting exploded into acrimony when Pelley confronted Bilton, saying he had little relevant experience for the job. When Bilton told the meeting that "Bari loves this institution," Pelley countered, according to accounts of recordings: "She's murdering '60 Minutes.' She does not love this place. She was brought in to kill it and she's doing exactly that."

That led to Weiss, Bilton and others calling Pelley in for the Tuesday meeting, after which he was fired. Weiss and Bilton did not answer interview requests Wednesday.

Reaction, though, pinballed across the media industry. "This is David Ellison's '60 Minutes' now," CNN media critic Brian Stelter wrote in his newsletter Wednesday.

So what does the future look like for the show? In her staff call Wednesday, Weiss praised some of Pelley's work on recent "unforgettable stories" and promised Bilton would be delivering that kind of work "in season 59 with the amazing team that's still there and hopefully from some new people that are going to be joining us."

There was no word on those additions. A much larger question was whether the disarray at "60 Minutes" would prove, over time, to be more political in nature - Pelley and others have accused the new leaders of trying to gain favor with the Trump administration - or more of a generational debate. Weiss and Bilton have presented the changes as necessary to evolve with the times.

Fager, among others, worries about that narrative. The show, he said, has done a good job adapting.

"It hasn't been running in place - that's such a misunderstanding of the broadcast," he said. "We adapted on a regular basis. Every time there's been a new leader, there has been significant evolution."

He acknowledged that some change and evolution is always necessary. But watching the past week's "new approach" unfold, he remains concerned about the show's overall future.

"I worry about it," he said. "I've always thought it's fragile, and I don't take it for granted."

Technology

Airlines limit lithium batteries after fire incidents

New safety rules crack down on battery storage and usage onboard

NEW YORK, June 4, (AP): Jetting off soon for summer travels? If you're planning on bringing an extra battery charger for your phone or other devices, be aware of the latest rules when taking one on a flight.

Rechargeable lithium-ion portable battery chargers, also known as power banks, come in protective enclosures of various shapes and sizes. They're a handy and popular way for getting more juice when you're on the move.

But after a spate of smoke or fire incidents, U.S. and international aviation authorities have issued new guidelines and airlines have tightened up rules for passengers.

Here's a guide on flying with power banks.

The most important thing to know is that you can't pack lithium battery chargers in your checked luggage. They need to go in your carry-on luggage.

Travelers can generally bring two lithium ion power banks with a capacity of 100 watt hours without needing airline approval. That's more than enough to charge a cellphone several times over.

For non-rechargeable lithium metal batteries, the limit is two grams of lithium per battery. AA and AAA batteries typically contain less than a gram of lithium.

Those limits cover nearly all types of lithium batteries in an average person's electronic devices, according to the Federal Aviation Authority.

The FAA says newer lithium ion batteries should have a label with the watt hour, or Wh, rating. But if your power bank's energy capacity is listed in milliampere hours, or mAh, you'll need to do some math, or use the FAA's online calculator.

To figure out your battery's watt-hour rating, take the mAh number, divide it by 1,000 to get ampere hours, and then multiply by the device's voltage, which is usually 3.7 volts. For example, a battery with 10,000 milliampere hour rating is equal to 10 ampere hours. Multiply that by 3.7 volts and you get 37 watt hours.

Passengers will need airline approval for bigger lithium-ion batteries, with a capacity of 100 to 160 watt hours, such as those used in professional video gear or medical equipment.

Airlines are taking the risk of lithium battery fires



A United Airlines passenger jet approaches Los Angeles International Airport in Los Angeles, Wednesday, May 20, 2026. (AP)

seriously after a rash of incidents.

One of the worst happened in January 2025 when a fire broke out on an Air Busan plane waiting to take off from an airport in South Korea, forcing the evacuation of all 176 people aboard.

The FAA lists nine lithium battery air incidents so far this year, including six that involved power banks.

Concerns about the batteries have been enough to disrupt flights even when there were no signs of a problem. Last month, an Easyjet flight from Egypt to Britain diverted to Rome as a precaution after a pas-

senger told the crew that they had a power bank in checked luggage charging a device.

Lithium batteries in a jet's cargo hold pose a danger because if there's smoke or fire, the crew can't take immediate action to identify and extinguish it, according to the International Air Transport Association, or IATA.

Keeping them in the cabin makes it easier for the crew to stop a potential blaze by using fire-resistant bags and insulated gloves to contain an overheating device.

There's a very low risk that a lithium ion battery will short-circuit and cause a fire, but if it does the hazard it creates is "very horrible," said Paul Christensen, a professor of pure and applied electrochemistry at the University of Newcastle in the United Kingdom.

Lithium batteries can store "a huge amount of energy in a very small space," Christensen said. The risk comes when a battery is crushed, overcharged or overheated. That can trigger what's called "thermal runaway," a chemical reaction that produces heat and toxic gases, he said.

Christensen recommends checking your power bank for any signs of damage. If it's bulging or getting very hot when charging, those could be signs it has a problem.

He also advises avoiding cheap power banks from unknown manufacturers, which might not have proper quality controls to prevent defects or contamination. Shoddy lithium batteries can "produce thermal runaway a long time after they've been purchased," he said.

Once you're on board, airlines have strict rules on handling power banks in the passenger cabin.

You can't put it in the overhead bin. Instead you'll have to keep it somewhere you can get it to quickly, such as in the seatback pocket or under the seat in front of you.

Don't use it to charge other devices during flight, and don't recharge it using the aircraft's on-board power sockets.

If a battery - or battery-powered device - slips down the side of your seat, don't move the seat to try to get it.

"Seats can crush or damage the battery, which could cause it to overheat or catch fire," IATA says. Instead, call a cabin crew member because they're trained to retrieve devices safely.

The FAA says individual airlines and international rules could be more restrictive than U.S. regulations, so if in doubt, it's best to check with your airline. Southwest Airlines, for example, said in April that it would limit passengers to one charger each.

Many carriers have a detailed list of rules for various battery types, including lithium-powered devices like laptops, tablets and e-cigarettes.

Viruses relatively rare

Tools to fight hantavirus show promise despite limited funding, researchers hope to continue

SANTIAGO, Chile, June 4, (AP): When a rare but deadly rodent-borne virus struck passengers on a cruise ship and seemed to be spreading, there were no treatments for those who fell ill and no vaccines to protect others.

That was the case even though it wasn't a novel germ that the world had never seen before, like the virus that caused the coronavirus pandemic. It was a hantavirus, one of a family of viruses that have been known for decades and are thought to exist around the world.

Teams of researchers, including in Chile, Argentina and the United States, have long been trying to find and develop drugs and vaccines. But because the viruses are relatively rare and don't spread easily between people, there hasn't been enough sustained investment by governments, global health groups, or drug companies to pay for the extensive safety and efficacy testing needed to make them available.

Still, there have been some promising developments. Researchers on Wednesday published a hint that a drug used for an autoimmune disease may help hantavirus patients fight off the most deadly symptoms.

They and others hope the attention that the cruise ship outbreak brought to the virus - and concern that hantavirus infections could become more

common as a changing climate is expected to increase contact between people and rodents - may bring new momentum to the hunt.

"I hope this situation will help us continue our research and strengthen the collaboration between healthcare workers, the community, and the necessary resources," said Dr. Fernando Tortosa of the National University of Río Negro in Patagonia, Argentina, the study's lead author.

Hantaviruses usually spread when people inhale contaminated residue of rodent droppings. But there are unique species of hantavirus found in different parts of the world that have their own characteristics and can cause different symptoms.

The Andes virus, the germ behind the cruise ship outbreak, is a particular focus of researchers because it is the only hantavirus thought to be able to spread between people in some cases. And while hantavirus infections are rare, they can be extremely deadly.

"That is why it is a public health problem," said María Inés Barriá, a virologist at the Universidad San Sebastián in Chile who studies hantaviruses.

Three of the 13 likely cases among cruise ship passengers ended in death. Separately, in Chile, the Ministry of Health has confirmed 15 deaths and 42 cases of hantavirus so



María Inés Barriá, a virologist at the Universidad San Sebastián, works at the university, in Santiago, Chile on May 20. (AP)

far this year. Authorities in Argentina have reported 32 deaths and 102 cases since June 2025. In the US, 35% of the hantavirus cases since tracking began in 1993 have resulted in death, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In Argentina, researchers are testing whether a treatment for rheumatoid arthritis might help fight hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, a severe infection caused by both the Andes virus and the Sin Nombre virus, a type of hantavirus found in North

America.

The drug tocilizumab tamps down a molecule called IL-6 that triggers damaging inflammation in some autoimmune and other diseases. IL-6 also is a suspect in the inflammatory reaction to the infection, which can rapidly cause lungs to fill with fluid and fail.

Four of five patients in an Argentinian hospital survived after receiving tocilizumab in addition to traditional supportive care for hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, the research

team reported in The Lancet Infectious Diseases.

The report is unusual, tracking the first people to receive tocilizumab in an ongoing "compassionate use" study - meaning doctors can use it in patients they deem eligible. Another five who were deemed eligible for tocilizumab but didn't get it and instead received only standard care died. Two worsened too quickly and the hospital lacked supply for the others, the researchers reported.

The research team cautioned that the five patients who didn't receive the drug were sicker and older than those who did. Still, they said tocilizumab warrants further investigation.

Barriá's team, which includes Chilean scientists, researchers from the US National Institutes of Health's Rocky Mountain Laboratories and the Robert Koch Institute in Germany, is working on another approach - using cloned antibodies from hantavirus survivors to fend off infections. The team published research in 2018 showing the approach worked in animals, but they were not able to get funding to continue with human trials, in part because resources were diverted to fight the coronavirus pandemic.

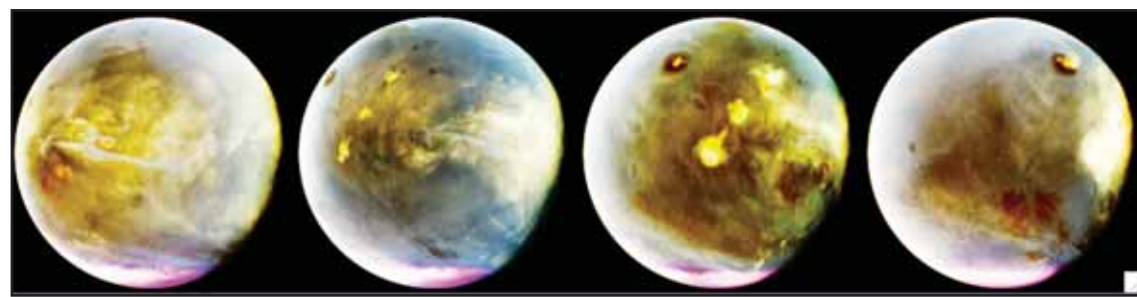
"We are truly at the forefront, at a very important stage of moving to the next phase," Barriá said.

Several other groups, including at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and the Vanderbilt Center for Antibody Therapeutics, are also working on antibody treatments.

Vaccines against so-called Old World hantaviruses have been developed and used, though the World Health Organization says there are no current licensed hantavirus vaccines. But there are new vaccines in the works, including ones aimed to fight the Andes virus. A team led by Jay Hooper of the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, is working on a vaccine that has successfully generated antibodies against the virus in early-stage human trials, according to a study the team published in 2020.

Dr. Paul Bollyky, an infectious disease doctor and researcher at Stanford Medical Center in California, said attracting and sustaining the support needed to produce vaccines and treatments is extremely difficult for rare diseases like hantavirus.

For one, labs typically don't have what Bollyky calls the necessary machinery they need to test and validate vaccines and treatments for rare infections. Also, because hantavirus outbreaks are so sporadic and unpredictable, that virus is much harder to study compared with a common germ that regularly circulates, such as the flu.



This image provided by NASA shows four-in-one photos of Mars taken by NASA's MAVEN spacecraft that's been orbiting the red planet since 2014? MAVEN is no more, NASA just declared it dead. (AP)

NASA declares Mars MAVEN spacecraft dead after six months of silence

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., June 4, (AP): After six months of radio silence, NASA's MAVEN spacecraft around Mars has been declared dead.

The space agency confirmed Wednesday that the mission had ended after more than a decade of observations. "The team really did experience the loss of a loved one with the end of the mission here," said NASA project manager Mike Moreau.

Launched in 2013 to study the red planet's atmosphere from orbit, MAVEN mysteriously fell silent in early December after passing behind Mars. Data indicated the spacecraft went into a fast spin, which disrupted its orbit and drained the onboard batteries.

A review board convened by NASA earlier this year concluded that the spacecraft is useless and unable to be recovered. It's expected to remain in orbit for another 50

to 100 years before crashing into the planet, posing no issue to other spacecraft until then. An investigation continues into what caused the problem.

Besides studying Martian weather and observing a stray interstellar comet last year, MAVEN helped relay information from NASA's Curiosity and Perseverance rovers on the surface. NASA officials said four other spacecraft around Mars - two US and two European satellites - will pick up the slack, with no rover science lost.

"The team is certainly broken up about this, but at the same time we are incredibly proud of the science we've accomplished over the last decade," said MAVEN's lead scientist, Shannon Curry of the University of Colorado Boulder.

The spacecraft advanced scientists' understanding of the Martian atmosphere and evolution, Curry said.

Radio scans find no alien tech from latest interstellar comet, says SETI

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., June 4, (AP): The group leading the charge in the search for extraterrestrial life has given the all clear: An interstellar comet looks to be completely natural and free of any alien tech.

The SETI Institute said Wednesday that extensive radio scans by its telescope in Northern California found no signs of otherworldly technology from our solar system's latest interstellar visitor.

The object labeled 3I/Atlas was discovered last summer sweeping through our neck of the cosmic woods. Scientists quickly identified it as a comet that migrated from another star, although a few insisted without evidence it might be associated with intelligent life.

It's only the third known object from a faraway star - all deemed of natural origin - to venture into the sun's turf.

Several NASA spacecraft observed the celestial iceball as it swung past Mars last October, venturing within 19 million miles (30 million kilometers) of the red planet. The closest it ever got to Earth was



This image provided by NASA shows the interstellar comet 3I/Atlas captured by the Hubble Space Telescope on Nov 30, 2025. (AP)

in December at a whopping 167 million miles (269 million kilometers) away.

SETI said it conducted more than seven hours of observations in July soon after the comet was discovered, searching through a wide range of radio signals. The team identified nearly 74 million narrow-band radio

signals.

After accounting for human interference or signals matching the object's movement, only slightly more than 200 signals remained, all of which "traced back to technology on the surface of the Earth or our own Earth-orbiting satellites," according to SETI.



A health worker disinfects the airport near the World Food Programme's (WFP) aircraft following the government's announcement of Bunia National Airport's reopening in Bunia, Congo on June 2. (AP)

'We're still behind' in Congo's Ebola outbreak even as testing improves, says WHO chief

LAGOS, Nigeria, June 4, (AP): Congo's Ebola outbreak "had a big head start, and we're still behind," the head of the World Health Organization said Wednesday, adding that the medical community was "catching up" even as militant attacks plague the stricken region.

Congo's military said an attack late on Tuesday by an Islamic State affiliate - a group known as the Allied Democratic Forces - killed 16 people in the Beni territory in North Kivu province.

The militants struck in response for a joint operation of Congolese and Ugandan armies, which have been battling the group that operates in the border regions of the two countries. Last month, the group attacked Congolese villages near the Ugandan border, killing at least 40 people and burning and looting homes.

The violence has hampered efforts to combat the outbreak of the rare Bundibugyo type of Ebola, which was announced in mid-May in eastern Congo's provinces of Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu.

Since then, Congolese authorities have confirmed 60 deaths in the outbreak out of 344 cases. The number of suspected cases has gone down from 906 to 116. Neighboring Uganda has 15 confirmed cases, including one death, its health ministry said Tuesday.

The agency's Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Wednesday that testing is improving in the struggle against Ebola, with scaled-up laboratory and diagnostic capacity though contact tracing in Congo "is not yet where it needs to be."

"The outbreak had a big head start, and we're still behind," he said. But "we are catching up."

Tedros spoke a day after returning to Geneva from Congo, where he visited the epicenter of the outbreak. "What I saw gave me hope, although challenges remain."

Floods, extreme weather can whip up anxiety, safety plan can help

ATLANTA, June 4, (AP): Hurricanes, wildfires, floods and other extreme weather can also kick up storms of anxiety.

Thankfully, there are several ways to reduce that stress, according to mental health experts who have helped people who have experienced disasters. One of the most important things to do is have a plan, they say.

"Preparation is always one of the most powerful tools that I can imagine - not just for safety, but also for mental health," said Ruben Juarez, a health economist at University of Hawaii professor who directed the Maui Wildfires Exposure Study, which looked at health and social impacts of the deadly 2023 fires.

And when the disaster is over, they say, try to restore a sense of normalcy by seeking out support, returning to routines and helping others.

Kevin Westmoreland, who co-owns The Corner Kitchen in Asheville, North Carolina, learned meditation techniques and breathing exercises to deal with the stresses that the restaurant industry can present. When the remnants of Hurricane Helene unleashed torrents of rain on the state two years ago, water and mud poured into the restaurant and "everything was tossed around inside the building as if it was in a blender," he recalled.

"All you could do to get through it is try to take a breath and move forward, step by step," he said.

One way to ease anxiety is to prepare as best you can ahead of time, including hashing out a plan for what to do during a disaster.

Making an evacuation plan and putting together an emergency kit can provide a sense of control, said Melissa Brymer, a psychologist and

director of terrorism and disaster programs at the UCLA-Duke National Center for Child Traumatic Stress.

She recommends a step-by-step guide for families at ready.gov/plan. The American Red Cross also has extensive guides for hurricane preparedness. Make sure to consider special preparations for anyone with disabilities, special needs, new mothers and expectant mothers, Brymer advises. Also make sure that pets are included in disaster plans.

Weather is unpredictable, so it helps to accept that there are things you won't be able to control.

Being informed can also give people a sense of control in extreme weather. Focus on facts by gathering information from trusted sources and stay up-to-date on weather watches and warnings.



Water is dropped by helicopter on the advancing Palisades Fire in the Pacific Palisades neighborhood of Los Angeles, Jan. 7, 2025. (AP)

SPORTS

Trio of star-studded World Cup opening ceremonies in US, Canada and Mexico aim to showcase unity

Each host showcases its own pre-match identity

MILAN, June 4, (AP): The World Cup will feature an unprecedented trio of star-studded opening ceremonies in the host nations, the United States, Canada and Mexico, created by the Italian producer behind the opening ceremony for this year's Milan Cortina Winter Olympics.

Marco Balich, fresh off the Olympics opening ceremony, which included a parade of athletes spread across four venues, said he was up to the challenge of producing three shows in three cities, with teams numbering 260 to 300 people in each city.

The ceremonies' unifying theme will be "the celebration of sports, the passion for soccer, symbolized by the cup itself," Balich said. "The idea is to narrate with three points of view and languages," using design aesthetics representative of each culture.

In Canada, a mosaic will represent its multicultural identity. Mexico's motif will be the traditional paper cutouts called papel picado, while the United States will have "a super shiny, glowing cup," said Balich, who also produced the opening ceremony for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

Balich called it a "very good sign" that Canada, Mexico and the U.S. were working together to host "a peaceful World Cup."

"I think it's very important that we stress the fact that the three nations are working together to host a very important and relevant championship, especially in this moment where there is so much controversy on the political side," said Balich, founder of Balich Wonder Studios. "But the people are people, and they will get together and enjoy."

Each ceremony will feature top artistic performances that tap into the



In this file photo, Creative Director and Executive Producer Marco Balich speaks with director of ceremonies Maria Laura lascone as volunteer dancers perform during rehearsals for the opening ceremony of the Milan Cortina 2026 Winter Olympic Games, at a compound in a big tent next to San Siro Stadium, in Milan, Italy. (AP)

national identity, but Balich said spectators shouldn't expect a Super Bowl-style halftime extravaganza. Instead, the ceremonies will combine welcoming speeches, a parade of flags, the presentation of the match ball and about

30 minutes of musical entertainment.

"It's a celebration of football, FIFA and the fact that, thanks to soccer, people get together in peace and harmony," Balich said.

Each ceremony will be held about 90 minutes before game time, following a 25-minute player warm-up that organizers hope will prompt spectators to arrive early.

While the Super Bowl celebrates "a game that is only famous in the U.S., the rest of the world plays soccer, and has a passion that is shared," Balich said.

The festivities launch on June 11 in Mexico City, ahead of the Mexico City-South Africa match, with a show featuring Latin rock band Maná, Colombian singer J Balvin and South African pop star Tyla.

They continue June 12 in Toronto ahead of the Canada-Bosnia and Herzegovina game, with Alanis Morissette and Michael Bublé headlining, before heading to Los Angeles Stadium later that day for the U.S.-Paraguay opener.

International stars will take the stage at Los Angeles Stadium, including Katy Perry, global pop star LISA, Nigerian Afrobeats star Rema, Brazilian pop artist Anitta, and hip-hop artist Future.

The Italian producer is enjoying the distinction of producing the two biggest sports ceremonies in the world this year - the 2026 Winter Games opening ceremony and 2026 World Cup - even as Italy sits out its third straight World Cup.

"It is very encouraging, actually, to compensate the sad news that Italy is not there this time," Balich said, adding that Italy's absence "which is a disaster for us, has also enabled us to be very impartial" in celebrating each country "in a similar way."

Liberty surge past the Tempo

Mercury ends seven-game losing streak



Toronto Tempo guard Brittney Sykes (20) shoots the ball during the second half of a WNBA basketball game against the New York Liberty, Wednesday in New York. (AP)

SEATTLE, June 4, (AP): Natasha Mack scored a career-high 16 points to go with 10 rebounds, Kahleah Copper also had 16 points, and the Phoenix Mercury beat the Seattle Storm 72-68 to snap a seven-game losing streak.

Awa Fam scored 18 points and Natisha Hiedeman added 15 for Seattle (3-8), which has lost four straight games.

Copper put the Mercury ahead 61-59 with 5:37 remaining and they did not trail again.

DeWanna Bonner made a jumper, fast-break layup and free throw to extend Phoenix's lead to 68-61 with 2:39 left.

Seattle got within one possession twice in the final 20 seconds, but Copper went 4 for 4 at the free-throw line to seal it.

Monique Akoa Makani added 12 points, and Bonner scored five of her 10 points in the final four minutes for Phoenix (3-8), which secured its first victory since beating Chicago on May 15.

Phoenix led 36-33 at halftime despite shooting just 35% from the field, including 2 of 13 from 3-point range. The Mercury went 10 of 13 from the stripe, while Seattle did not attempt a free throw.

Hiedeman scored 10 of the Storm's 22 points in the third to help them take a 55-52 lead entering the

fourth.

The teams combined to go 12 of 55 from 3-point range.

Phoenix: Plays at Portland on Friday.

Seattle: Travels to play Minnesota on Saturday.

Liberty 97, Tempo 82

In New York, Jonquel Jones had 22 points and 17 rebounds to help the New York Liberty beat the Toronto Tempo.

Breanna Stewart added 19 points, including 17 in the second half, for the Liberty (6-4), who have won three straight games. New York was still missing guard Sabrina Ionescu, who is sidelined with a back issue. Coach Chris DeMarco said at morning shootaround that his All-Star guard was getting better. She's only played in one game this season.

The game marked the return of former Liberty coach Sandy Brondello, who led the franchise to its first WNBA championship in 2024. The Liberty let her go after last season. The franchise's winningest coach received a warm ovation from the crowd when she was introduced before the game.

She's now in charge of the expansion Tempo and has guided them to a strong start. The loss dropped the Tempo (5-5) to .500 and ended a two-game win-

ning streak.

New York trailed 22-17 early in the second quarter before going on a 15-2 run capped by two 3-pointers by Satou Sabally. The first came in transition over her sister Nyara, who was taken by the Tempo from the Liberty in the expansion draft this offseason.

The Liberty led 40-34 at the half as Jones finished the opening 20 minutes with 17 points and 12 rebounds.

They put the game away in the third quarter as Stewart scored nine points after only having two in the first half. New York extended its lead to 70-58 and never looked back.

Toronto had a scary moment with 1:33 left in the game. Rookie Kiki Rice had her shot blocked and her right leg bent backwards as she was landing. The No. 6 pick in the draft was down for a little bit before getting up and limping back to the locker room.

Brondello said after the game she had no update on Rice's condition, hoping that the young guard would be OK.

Marina Mabrey and Brittney Sykes each scored 17 points to lead the Tempo.

Tempo: host Chicago Sky on Sunday.

Liberty: host Caitlin Clark and the Indiana Fever on Saturday night.

Building talent boosts the team's profile

Canada's hopes rest on experienced players

OTTAWA, June 4, (AP): Canada's extraordinary improvement in international soccer over the last decade is unmistakable. Whether that will translate into World Cup success is another matter.

With coach Jesse Marsch leading the team this summer, the Canadians are set to embark on their third-ever World Cup - this time as co-hosts with the United States and Mexico. Ranked No. 30 in the world, Canada has scored only one World Cup goal in its history and has never won a match at the tournament.

But Canada's outlook has steadily improved with a more experienced player pool that includes Alphonso Davies, Tajon Buchanan, Cyle Larin and Jonathan David, who have all broken into prominent European teams in recent years. The development of talent and the effort to raise the team's profile became a priority in 2018, when Canada finished the year ranked No. 78 and faced the prospect of being a World Cup host.

"This is a team that is very fast and powerful and talented," Marsch said. "And I think it's a team that has an incredible work ethic and commitment to each other, and they exemplify that every time they're on the pitch - not like sometimes when they're on the pitch - not like some games when they're on the pitch - every moment that this team plays on the pitch they give everything they have, and they give everything

they have to each other and to the badge and to the country."

Canada was blanked in all three of its matches at the 1986 World Cup in Mexico. The team made it back 36 years later, reaching the tournament in Qatar after proving its mettle by finishing ahead of Mexico and the United States in the CONCACAF qualifying standings.



Canada's head coach Jesse Marsh, left, yells next to forward Jonathan David during the selection camp for Canada's national soccer team in Charlotte, N.C., ahead of the FIFA World Cup soccer tournament. (AP)

The Canadians, playing under John Herdman four years ago in Qatar, again failed to emerge from the group stage but Davies scored the nation's first World Cup goal in a 4-1 loss to Croatia.

Marsch took over in 2024 and Canada Soccer CEO and general secretary Kevin Blue described it as the "most important time in the domestic history of our sport."

Canada went 6-1-5 last year and so far this year has played to a 2-2 draw with Iceland and a 0-0 tie with Tunisia. The team has two more friendlies before the World Cup, against Uzbekistan and Ireland, on home soil in early June.

Canada is in Group B at the World Cup with Bosnia-Herzegovina, Qatar and Switzerland. The World Cup opens on June 11 and the Canadians will play their first match the next day in Toronto against Bosnia-Herzegovina, which qualified after beating four-time champion Italy in a shootout.

"We can't just turn the switch on June 11, right?" Marsch said. "This whole process, this whole last year, has been a process of maximizing exactly what we want to be, and as we get closer, we need to continue to tighten the screws a little bit without feeling stress or panic, just focus and concentration to make sure that we are at our absolute best."

Kuwait Education and Sports Ministries strengthen partnership

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei met with Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma to discuss strengthening strategic cooperation in areas of mutual interest, with the aim of supporting the sports sector and developing programs and initiatives for youth and students.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Education said the meeting was held as part of efforts to enhance cooperation and coordination between the two ministries and to explore ways of advancing sports activities and programs within educational institutions.

The statement added that both sides reviewed ways to strengthen the role of sports in developing students' abilities and refining their skills, in line with national efforts to build an aware and creative generation that enjoys physical and mental

well-being and can contribute effectively to the country's development.

The two ministers also discussed mechanisms for investing in youth potential, identifying and nurturing sporting talent, and integrating efforts between the education and sports sectors. The goal is to provide a supportive educational and sporting environment that encourages creativity and excellence while promoting the values of discipline, teamwork, and positive competition.

The meeting was attended by Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs Hamad Al-Hamad, Director-General of Educational Districts Mohammad Al-Wazzan, Director-General of Educational Support Services Mariam Al-Anzi, Director-General of Technical Guidance, Research and Curricula Mohammad Al-Otaibi, and from the Ministry of Youth and Sports, adviser Dr. Souad Al-Faqaan.



Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei meets with Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma.

Mendis scores 72

Nissanka leads Sri Lanka to 41-run win over West Indies

KINGSTON, Jamaica, June 4, (AP): Pathum Nissanka made a careful 79 and captain Kusal Mendis a fast-paced 72 to lay the foundation for Sri Lanka's 41-run win over the West Indies in the first one-day cricket international.

Nissanka and Mendis put on 136 for the second wicket and with contributions of 45 by Charith Asalanka and an unbeaten 44 by Janith Liyanage, Sri Lanka reached 303-7 after being asked to bat.

Captain Shai Hope carried the fight to Sri Lanka with an innings of 56 from 66 balls and opener Justin Greaves made 45 from 38 balls, but the West Indies' were all out for 262 in the final over.

After partnerships of 50 for the first wicket and 52 for the third, wickets fell regularly and the required run-rate climbed. There was still hope when Roston Chase was at the crease but his innings of 33 ended when he was bowled by Dushmantha Chameera who took 4-67.

The West Indies won the toss and chose to bowl first on a pitch

that looked likely to favor slower bowlers. They made an early breakthrough when Kamindu Mendis was out for 12 in the seventh over.

Nissanka and Mendis came together at that point and carried Sri Lanka to 158-2 before Mendis was out for 72 for 62 balls. Opener Nissanka carried on briefly before falling for 79 from 102 balls.

The West Indies needed to pick up wickets in the middle overs but Asalanka and Liyanage provided stiff resistance, putting on 64 for the fifth wicket.

Hope was out with the West Indies total 167-5 in the 31st over but from them the resistance faded.

There was an unusual pause near the end of the match when a floodlight failed and the players left the field for bad light. The West Indies' cause was already lost by that stage: they needed 43 runs from eight balls with one wicket remaining.

The second match of the three-match series will be played at Kingston on Saturday, with the third next Monday, also at Sabina Park.

Best of the Rest

Chelsea's all-time goalscorer dies: Bobby Tambling, the Chelsea great who held the English club's all-time scoring record for decades, has died. He was 84.

Tambling's death was confirmed Thursday by Chelsea, which didn't disclose more details, as well as Irish soccer club Crosshaven, where he had a spell as manager.

Chelsea described Tambling as "one of our most legendary players" and said "his name is written very large in our history."

His 202 goals in 370 appearances for Chelsea from 1959-1970 made him the team's record scorer until 2013, when Frank Lampard surpassed the tally. (AP)

'Uninterrupted excitement and creating moments with the people who matter most'

talabat and TOD by beIN team up to bring fans an elevated World Cup 2026™ experience across MENA

DUBAI, UAE, June 4: As the MENA region gears up for the highly anticipated FIFA World Cup 2026™, talabat, the region's leading everyday delivery app, has announced a strategic partnership with TOD by beIN, the exclusive streaming platform for the tournament, to bring fans a more seamless and rewarding match-day experience from home.

Starting today, talabat users who subscribe to or renew a talabat pro annual plan will unlock a complimentary one-year entertainment subscription to the platform, giving them access to live streaming of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ alongside year-round benefits across talabat's ecosystem.

As talabat's premium subscription programme, talabatpro offers customers greater convenience and value across food, groceries, and everyday essentials, with benefits including free delivery, exclusive savings, and additional perks through Solo and Family plans.

"We know that for our customers, game night is about uninterrupted excitement and creating moments with the people who matter most," said Moiza Saeed, Senior Director of Partnerships at talabat. "Through our partnership with TOD, we're bringing together premium sports entertainment and the everyday convenience of talabat pro to help customers create the ultimate home stadium experience - from match streaming to meals, snacks, and everything in between."

Across MENA, football is more than sport - it is a shared cultural moment that brings families and friends together around the screen and the table. Through this partnership, talabat and TOD are combining world-class entertainment with everyday convenience, making it



A flyer of the strategic partnership.

easier for fans to enjoy the tournament with their favourite meals, groceries, and essentials delivered directly to their door.

John-Paul Mckerlie, Vice President of Marketing & Sales at TOD by beIN added, "As excitement builds towards the FIFA World Cup 2026™, our partnership with talabat brings together two brands committed to delivering exceptional digital experiences. Through TOD by beIN, customers will enjoy seamless access to every match alongside premium entertainment for the entire family, while benefiting from the convenience and value that talabat is known for. Together, we're creating a more connected, rewarding and engaging entertainment experience for audiences across the region."

Fans will enjoy the tournament at its very best through TOD by beIN's advanced viewing features, including MultiView, 4K/HDR streaming, interactive timelines, real-time engagement, and automatic match highlights. Beyond the World Cup, TOD by beIN will extend a rich library of premium Arabic, Turkish, and Western content, ensuring there is something for every member of the family. The talabat pro and TOD by beIN annual bundles are now available to users across all talabat markets through the talabat app, with Solo and Family yearly plans available. Customers can visit the talabat pro section in-app to subscribe and unlock access ahead of the tournament.

The partnership reinforces talabat and TOD by beIN's commitment to creating more everyday value for customers, bringing together live entertainment, convenience, and everyday benefits to enhance the FIFA World Cup 2026™ experience across MENA.

Kansas City in awe of Argentina



Argentina players participate in a drill during practice for the FIFA World Cup soccer in Kansas City, Kan. (AP)

Messi nurses a hamstring strain

KANSAS CITY, Kan., June 4, (AP): Turns out that reigning World Cup champion Argentina draws quite a crowd no matter where it goes.

Whether it be fans surrounding the team's upscale hotel near downtown Kansas City, or their first training session opened to media Wednesday that drew hundreds of reporters to the facilities of Major League Soccer club Sporting Kansas City, there are few places that Lionel Messi and the rest of La Albiceleste are not the center of attention as the tournament draws near.

They begin their title defense against Algeria at Arrowhead Stadium on June 16.

Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni revealed his 26-man World Cup roster last week. It is headlined by Messi, who turns 39 in less than a month, and features 17 players that were on the team that triumphed four years ago against France in the final in Qatar.

Messi has been dealing with muscle fatigue and a mild strain in his left hamstring. The team has said his recovery time will depend on "his clinical and functional progress," though it seems unlikely that he will participate in its upcoming friendlies.

He came to the practice field after the rest of the team on Wednesday and did some conditioning

work off to the side.

Argentina did not make any players or coaches available to speak to reporters. The team will continue training in Kansas City until it departs for the first of two World Cup tune-up matches against Honduras on Saturday in College Station, Texas.

The team plays Iceland in Auburn, Alabama, three days later before resuming its training in Kansas City.

Most of the players arrived at the team's home base Sunday aboard a charter from Buenos Aires designed to pay homage to the



Argentina forward Lionel Messi works out during practice for the FIFA World Cup soccer Wednesday, June 3, 2026, in Kansas City, Kan. (AP)

nation's rich World Cup history. The flight number 1978 was a nod to the year it beat the Netherlands to win the title, and the A330 was trimmed with special livery that included the national team colors and Messi's No. 10 on the tail.

Messi joined the team on a separate charter from Florida a few hours later.

The entire roster got a dose of Midwestern hospitality from hundreds of fans who waited outside the Origin Hotel to greet them, then they got a big taste of summer life in tornado alley when sirens sounded after midnight and a heavy storm rolled through.

High winds and lashing rain knocked over several tents and fences that had been put up for security.

"When they pick you as their training site for defending the World Cup, and this is where they are for the next - you know, hopefully through the end of the tournament - it's surreal," said Jake Reid, the president and CEO of Sporting Kansas City, who watched the open training session with a series of dignitaries that included Kansas City, Missouri, Mayor Quinton Lucas.

"When they landed on Sunday," Reid said, "it started to get real for sure."

Weather notwithstanding, the central location of Kansas City has made it a favorable destination for World Cup base camps.

England had hoped to use the home of Sporting KC for training,

but Argentina was given preference as defending champion and scooped it up. The Three Lions stuck with their plans to make Kansas City their base, but when they arrive next week, they will be practicing at Sporting KC's old primary facility at the Swope Soccer Village.

The Netherlands, which also will arrive next week, will be training at the home of the Kansas City Current, one of the top teams in the National Women's Soccer League. Algeria is making its base at the University of Kansas, about 30 minutes west of the Kansas City metro area, where one of Africa's top teams will have the use of its new soccer facilities.

As for Argentina, the team has been practicing in the evening to avoid the heat and humidity of Midwestern summers. The weather has been mild so far, with temperatures in the low 80s, but the heat index typically pushes triple digits this time of year.

The six matches at Arrowhead Stadium - four in the group stage, two in the knockout - will be played at night for the same reason.

"I mean, we've had a helicopter flying ever since (Argentina) got here. That should tell you this is a big deal, right?" Reid said. "I think for Kansas City to have Argentina here - and we're not even talking about the other teams that are going to be here in the next couple of weeks - it's a massive deal."

Visa uncertainty leaves Morocco star stranded

RABAT, June 4: Moroccan international Zakaria El Ouahdi was unable to travel with the Atlas Lions delegation to the United States after being removed from the plane just minutes before its departure.

Videos circulated on social media showing the 24-year-old Moroccan star being escorted off the aircraft that was carrying the Morocco national team to the US.

According to the English edition of Moroccan news outlet Hesperess, the player did not leave with the team delegation, raising questions amid the lack of an official explanation for his absence.

The report added that conflicting accounts have emerged regarding the exact reason behind his sudden withdrawal. While some sources denied that the issue was related to a visa, El Ouahdi had already boarded the aircraft before disembarking shortly before takeoff.

Hesperess further reported that other sources claimed the player was unable to



Moroccan international Zakaria El Ouahdi

travel due to a problem obtaining a US entry visa, and that high-level efforts are currently underway to resolve the issue.

Other Moroccan media reports also noted that El Ouahdi had previously been denied a US visa on two separate occasions.

Spain coach de la Fuente confident that Yamal will be fit for World Cup opener

MADRID, June 4, (AP): Spain coach Luis de la Fuente expects Lamine Yamal to be fit to play in the team's World Cup opener.

Yamal did not play in Thursday's warmup match against Iraq in A Coruña, but all signs point to him being available to face Cape Verde in the team's opener in Atlanta on June 15.

"If nothing changes, he could be ready to play on June 15," De la Fuente said. "It doesn't mean that for sure he will play, we'll see. Maybe a few minutes, maybe just practice so he can improve his condition for the second match. We will have to evaluate."

Yamal injured his left hamstring while converting a penalty kick for Barcelona in a Spanish league match on April 22. He said this week he was scared of missing the World Cup and prayed that he could recover in time for the tournament that begins on June 11 in North America.

The 18-year-old Yamal is expected to lead the Spain squad that will try to win its second world title. De la Fuente said the two other injured players in the squad - Nico Williams and Victor Muñoz - also won't play on Wednesday, nor will the ones who took part in the Champions League final.

Spain's final warmup match will be against Peru in Mexico on Monday. De la Fuente did not say who is expected to play in that match.

After opening against Cape Verde in Group H, Spain will face Saudi Arabia on June 21 in Atlanta and Uruguay on June 26 in Guadalajara.

Spain has never gone past the round of 16 at the World Cup since it won its lone title in 2010.

Congo scrambles for replacement after friendly axed

MADRID, June 4, (AP): Congo was still hoping to play its World Cup warmup against Chile after the mayor of the Spanish city of La Linea de la Concepcion denied authorization for the match because of health concerns related to the Ebola crisis.

Congo's soccer federation said it was in discussions with the Spanish soccer federation and relevant international bodies to find solutions.

Government authorities in the southern city of La Linea de la Concepcion announced the decision to not authorize next Tuesday's friendly citing possible health risks linked to the Ebola crisis.

Congo was playing a warmup against Denmark in Liege, Belgium.

An outbreak of a rare type of Ebola virus has plagued Congo and Uganda. The World Health Organization has declared it a public health emergency of international concern.

Congo had already canceled a three-day World Cup preparation training camp and a planned farewell to fans in the capital Kinshasa because of the outbreak the eastern part of the country.

All of the Congo players and the team's French coach, Sébastien Desabre, are based outside of the central African country with

most of them playing in France.

Soccer's governing body FIFA previously issued a statement saying it was aware of and monitoring the situation regarding an Ebola outbreak and was in close communication with Congo soccer officials to ensure the team was made aware of all medical and security guidance.

Congo will play in Group K at the World Cup. It faces Portugal for its opening game in Houston on June 17.

The Leopards then face Colombia in Guadalajara on June 23 before playing Uzbekistan in Atlanta for their final group game on June 27.



ARAB TIMES
Kuwait's No.1 English Newspaper

For Subscriptions and Complaints

Please Call
51508991
51526559





South Korea midfielder Lee Kang-in (17) shoots past El Salvador defender Rudy Clavel (5) during the second half of an international friendly soccer match in Provo, Utah. South Korea won 1-0. (AP)

Sports

Super Globe race heats up

Asian Club Handball Championship begins in Kuwait

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 4: The 28th Asian Men's Club League Handball Championship, which serves as a qualifier for the 2026 IHF Men's Club World Championship (Super Globe) in Egypt, gets underway tomorrow at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex. The tournament, hosted by Kuwait Club, will run until June 15.

The competition features seven of Asia's leading clubs battling for continental glory and a coveted place at the Super Globe. Representing Kuwait are host club Kuwait and Burgan, who face strong opposition from Saudi Arabia's Al-Khaleej, Bahrain's Al-Najma, Qatar's Al-Arabi and Al-Duhail, and defending champion Sharjah of the UAE.

Burgan completed an overseas training camp in Cairo before returning to play warm-up matches against Kuwait Club and Al-Khaleej, while Kuwait Club prepared locally ahead of the tournament.

Following the withdrawal of the Chinese representative earlier this week, the Asian Handball Federation revised the competition format. The seven teams will now compete in a single round-robin stage, with the top four advancing to the semifinals. The first-place team will face the fourth-placed side, while the second and third-ranked teams meet for the other spot in the final.

A new draw was conducted



Burgan continues preparations with friendly against Al-Khaleej Saudi.

Tuesday evening at Safir Fintas Hotel after the Chinese club's withdrawal.

Tournament Director Sameh Al-Hajri confirmed that all organiza-

tional and technical arrangements have been finalized, stressing that the various committees are fully prepared to welcome the participating teams and delegations.

Al-Hajri described the championship as one of the strongest editions in recent years due to the high quality and competitiveness of the participating clubs. He also highlighted Kuwait's proven track record in hosting major continental events and expressed confidence that the tournament would showcase the country's organizational capabilities.

Qatar's Al Sadd remains the most successful club in the tournament's history with six titles. Kuwait's Kazma and Qadsia have each won the championship twice, alongside Qatar's Al Jaish and Al Duhail and Bahrain's Al Najma.

Former champions with one title include Kuwait Club, Al Fahaheel and Al Sulaibikhat of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli, Mudar, Al Noor and Al Khaleej, Qatar's Al Rayyan, Lekhwiya and Al Arabi, and UAE side Sharjah.

Meanwhile, Al Sulaibikhat has secured the services of Kuwaiti international Hussein Karam for the 2026-27 season as part of its efforts to strengthen the squad.

The club previously appointed national coach Hussein Habib and signed Serbian player Jovan Mil-savic, Brazilian international Leandro da Silva and French star Nicolas Claire.

Team manager Hussein Siwan praised the support provided by the club's management, expressing confidence that the coaching staff and players will deliver strong performances and achieve positive results in the upcoming season.

Blues take on Thailand in friendly

Kuwait continues Gulf Cup build-up



Players intensify preparation for the friendly.

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

BANGKOK, June 4: Kuwait continues its preparations with a friendly match against Thailand at 3:30 p.m. Kuwait time today at Thammasat University Stadium in Pathum Thani, north of Bangkok.

The team is set to return home tomorrow following the cancellation of a second friendly against Oman, originally scheduled for June 8. The match was called off at Oman's request, with both sides placed in the same group for Gulf Cup 27 and the AFC Asian Cup.

Al-Azraq arrived in Bangkok last Sunday for a short training camp as part of their build-up for upcoming competitions, starting with Gulf Cup 27 in Saudi Arabia next September, followed by the West Asian Championship in Oman in November, and the AFC Asian Cup 2027 in Saudi Arabia, which kicks off on January 7.

The squad features Saud Al-Houshan, Khaled Al-Rasheedi, Abdulrahman Al-Fadli, Mahdi Dashti, Fahad Al-Hajri, Rashid Al-Dosari, Khaled Sabah, Jaseem Al-Matar, Reda Hani, Youssef Al-Haqan, Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi, Abdullah Al-Qurza'i, Abdullah Al-Awadhi, Ali Hassan, Nasser Fahal, Montaser Abdul Salam, Muath Al-Dhafiri, Fawaz Al-Mabileh, Bandar Al-Brazi, Khaled Al-Murshid, Shuaib Al-Khalidi, Youssef Nasser, Mohammed Daham, Youssef Majed, Mohammed Khaled, and Eid Al-Rasheedi.

Sousa is keen to rotate the squad and give opportunities to emerging young players who have impressed in domestic competitions, including Ali Hassan, Bandar Al-Brazi, Montaser Abdul Salam, Youssef Al-Haqan, Abdullah Al-Qurza'i, and Abdullah Al-Awadhi.

He is also assessing the readiness of several returning players who have recently been absent from the national team, including Shuaib Al-Khalidi, Nasser Fahal, Khaled Sabah, Abdulrahman Al-Fadli, Fawaz Al-Mabileh, and Eid Al-Rasheedi.

The match will be broadcast live on Kuwait TV Sports Channel 3, a move widely seen as a positive step in supporting coverage of the national team.

Brunson scores 30 as resilient Knicks steal Game 1 from Spurs



San Antonio Spurs forward Victor Wembanyama and New York Knicks center Karl-Anthony Towns (32) battle for the rebound during the second half of Game 1 of the NBA Finals basketball series in San Antonio. (AP)

Wembanyama struggles from field

SAN ANTONIO, June 4, (AP): The New York Knicks' winning streak lives on, and they struck first in the NBA Finals.

Jalen Brunson scored 30 points, Karl-Anthony Towns finished with 18 points and 12 rebounds, and the Knicks erased a 14-point second-half deficit to beat the San Antonio Spurs 105-95 in Game 1 of the finals.

OG Anunoby had 17 points for New York - which has won 12 consecutive playoff games, the seventh team to have such a streak in NBA history, and is the third to do it in a single season. Brunson scored 13 points in the fourth, only six fewer than San Antonio managed as a team in that quarter, and sealed it with a spinning jumper while falling to the court with 38 seconds left.

"He's a gamer, man," Knicks coach Mike Brown said. "In the biggest moments, he shows up. That's what MVPs are supposed to do."

And the Knicks, who finished on an 11-0 run, made a little more history. They became the first team to beat San Antonio in a Game 1 of the title series - the Spurs were 6-0 in those - and this is also the first time the Spurs have trailed a finals before the finish.

As far as single-season playoff winning streaks - Golden State won 15 straight games in the 2017 postseason on its way to the title. San Antonio won 12 straight in 1999 on its way to the title. And now New York has won 12 in a row, with its title status to be determined.

"I think we know what we have to do," Brunson said. "I think we're a pretty together group."

Victor Wembanyama had 26 points and 12 rebounds for the Spurs, but he shot 6 for 21 from the field in his finals debut. Stephon Castle scored 17, while Julian Champagnie and Dylan Harper each had 16 for San

Antonio.

"I was bad tonight," Wembanyama said. "It's not more complicated than that."

Game 2 is Friday in San Antonio.

Former San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich was at the game, as he's been for every finals game in Spurs history, albeit watching from a suite and not stomping the San Antonio sideline. The Spurs legends - David Robinson, Tim Duncan, Manu Ginobili, Bruce Bowen and more - were there, too.

So were Knicks great Patrick Ewing and the world's most recognizable New York fans: Spike Lee, Tracy Morgan, Ben Stiller, Fat Joe, Timothée Chalamet and more. Plenty of non-celeb Knicks fans made the trip as well; Tommy Sherlock, a auto sales manager from Brooklyn, said it cost less for two Game 1 tickets in San Antonio, with hotel and airfare, than Game 3 tickets in New York would have set him back.

"First-class air, too," Sherlock said. "By a lot."

The Knicks led 14-7 early, the Spurs answered with a 20-13 run to go up by 10, the Knicks rallied and the second quarter saw six lead changes before San Antonio took a 55-48 lead into the break.

San Antonio pushed the lead to 14 midway through the third quarter before the Knicks stormed back, finishing the period on a 22-9 run and sending the game into the fourth tied at 76.

New York's lead was eight midway through the final period. Wembanyama made a pair of free throws with 2:16 left to put San Antonio up 95-94, but Brunson made a corner 3 on the next possession to put the Knicks on top for good.

"I think we let that one go," Wembanyama said.

San Antonio's run of never trailing the finals had some close calls over the years.

Errani and Vavassori win the mixed doubles final

No handshake and no photo as Andreeva beats Kostyuk to reach French Open final

PARIS, June 4, (AP): Russian teenager Mirra Andreeva reached her first Grand Slam final by beating Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine 6-1, 6-3 at the French Open on Thursday.

The 19-year-old Andreeva converted her first match point when serving for the match. There was no post-match handshake between them and Kostyuk walked off quickly, turning only to wave and blow kisses to the crowd on Court Philippe-Chatrier, which saw some fans draped in Ukrainian flags.

"I am happy that I am in my first ever Grand Slam final. All of these feelings combined, it is amazing," Andreeva said. "I just told myself no matter what happens, I am going to fight and give my best. With this kind of mindset, I ended up winning."

The atmosphere beforehand was somewhat tense as the players had separate photos taken as they each stood next to two children on their respective side of the net. Usually the players pose for the same photo, standing right next to each other by the net.

Kostyuk and countrywoman Oleksandra Oliynykova have spoken out during the tournament about the impact Russia's invasion of Ukraine is having on their country.

Andreeva saved three break points at 0-40 in her opening service game, then raced into a 4-0 lead with a flurry of blistering forehand winners. There was a big cheer when Kostyuk held serve in the fifth game, but the Ukrainian then handed Andreeva the first set when her backhand hit the net.

The semifinal began at shortly after 3 p.m. amid sunny conditions and an open roof, like on Wednesday when beaten quarterfinalists Aryna Sabalenka and Anna Kalinskaya complained of swirling wind on Chatrier and said the roof should have been closed.



Russia's Mirra Andreeva reacts after winning during the semifinal tennis match against Ukraine's Marta Kostyuk at the French Open in Paris. (AP)

It was closed toward the end of the second set of Thursday's semi, offering Kostyuk better conditions for her clay-court game. She broke back to trail 4-3, prompting huge applause and loud chants of "Marta, Marta."

But she dropped her next service game and the comeback ended almost as briefly as it began, along with Kostyuk's 16-match winning streak on clay.

"Obviously, she (Kostyuk) has had an amazing season. Until this match, she has not lost a match on clay," Andreeva said. "She is an amazing player and a very tough opponent."

Top-seeded Sara Errani and Andrea Vavassori of Italy won the mixed doubles final earlier Thursday, beating Gabriela Dabrowski of Canada and American Evan King 4-6, 6-3, 10-4.

An Italian is guaranteed to be in Sunday's men's Open singles final, with Flavio Cobolli facing fellow Italian Matteo Arnaldi on Friday in

the first Grand Slam semifinal for both players.

An Italian man will be in the French Open final and it's not Jan-nik Sinner.

Not Lorenzo Musetti, either. Flavio Cobolli will play fellow Italian Matteo Arnaldi on Friday in the first Grand Slam semifinal for both players.

Cobolli beat Felix Auger-Aliassime 4-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 and Arnaldi advanced when Matteo Berrettini, yet another Italian, retired because of an injury to his left hip with Arnaldi leading 7-5, 5-2 on Wednesday.

Berrettini had received treatment during a medical timeout earlier in the second set.

"We have to be happy for Italian tennis," Cobolli said.

While Sinner and Musetti were both in the last four a year ago, they were on opposite sides of the draw, meaning it will mark the first all-Italian men's semifinal in Grand Slam history.

Mourinho backs Pérez as presidential race heats up

BARCELONA, Spain, June 4, (AP): Real Madrid's two presidential candidates have stepped up their campaigning, with incumbent Florentino Pérez featuring prospective new coach Jose Mourinho in promotional material and challenger Enrique Riquelme angering Manchester City with comments about under-contract star Erling Haaland.

The tossing around of the big names comes ahead of the vote by club members on Sunday.

Mourinho was reportedly already lined up for a second spell in charge of Madrid before the 79-year-old Pérez called for elections last month. Now it appears that Mourinho's return is contingent on Pérez winning another term as president of the Spanish giant.

"MOUcha historia por hacer ('So MOUch history to make')," read the caption on a post by Perez on X published late Wednesday that included a video of

Mourinho saying "Si" ("Yes").

Mourinho, who coached Madrid from 2010-2013, would replace Alvaro Arbeloa after the club finished a second straight campaign without a major trophy.

Riquelme, meanwhile, announced his intention of luring Haaland away from City late on Wednesday on a popular late night talk show. The TV show's host held up a fake Real Madrid shirt with Haaland's name on the back while the crowd applauded.

"Haaland has a clause (in his contract) and wants to come to Madrid," said the 37-year-old businessman who has made his career in renewable energy.

Riquelme also said if elected he would negotiate with City to bring in Spain midfielder Rodri.

City reacted with a statement on Thursday that read: "The stories which have emerged from Spain regarding the future of Erling Haaland are untrue."