



Kuwait leaders seek boost in relations with Morocco Page 2



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KUWAIT DEFENSES REPEL REPEATED IRANIAN AERIAL INCURSIONS

Iran crosses all red lines

- International support pours in for Kuwait and Bahrain
- Civil Aviation resumes air traffic after temporary closure
- Egyptian envoy praises Kuwait's care for victims
- Kuwait Fire Force on frontline after missile debris fallout

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

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Kuwait strongly condemned and denounced the repeated Iranian attacks, including the latest incident early Saturday, describing them as a blatant act of aggression that disregards international calls to halt such actions and poses a direct threat to the lives of citizens and residents, as well as to regional security and stability.

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the attacks constitute a flagrant violation of Kuwait's sovereignty, security, and territorial

integrity, as well as a clear breach of international law, the United Nations Charter, and UN Security Council Resolution 2817 (2026).

The ministry described the attacks as a dangerous escalation that risks pushing the region toward further tension and instability, at a time when the international community is intensifying efforts to halt hostilities and prevent further deterioration.

It stressed that such actions cannot be justified under any pretext, reaffirming that Kuwait reserves its full right to take all necessary measures to safeguard its security and defend its territory and vital facilities against any aggression or threat.

Kuwait also strongly condemned the Iranian attacks targeting Bahrain, calling them a flagrant violation of Bahrain's sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity.

The ministry said the attacks represent a dangerous escalation that threatens to further destabilize the region amid ongoing international efforts to de-escalate tensions and restore stability. It reaffirmed Kuwait's full solidarity with Bahrain and support for all measures taken to preserve its security and sovereignty, stressing that the security of GCC states is indivisible.

In a related development, Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received a phone call on Friday from Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty, during which the latter condemned the latest "blatant" Iranian attacks on Kuwait. Both sides reaffirmed Kuwait's full right to take all necessary measures to protect its sovereignty, safety, and stability, and to safeguard its people and residents.

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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

His Highness the Prime Minister's Thursday meetings are important

HIS Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah has established a commendable practice in ministerial work by holding weekly meetings every Thursday with the Ministerial Committee for Monitoring Major Development Projects.

This undoubtedly carries significant implications that should be reflected in decisions serving local development, boosting national output, stimulating the economy, and revitalizing the financial sector, which is suffering from a deficit that could affect Kuwait's future. Recent events have contributed to increased inflation, a problem that countries around the world are trying to combat through organized efforts and bold decisions.

Achieving this goal requires intensifying the efforts of all government entities and ensuring they fulfill their responsibilities in serving the development agenda.

Consequently, government agencies must reduce pressure on local investors and open up opportunities that are unavailable to foreign investors to complete the development process in line with the conditions sought by His Highness the Prime Minister.

Over the past two years, solid foundations have been laid for restoring the state's prestige. The political leadership has adopted reform as its paramount objective. This has enabled the government to operate without external obstacles that might arise from the interference of certain parties that previously sought to achieve private interests at the expense of the public interest.

Unfortunately, however, some government agencies have failed to heed the directives of the political leadership and have not worked to accelerate development, which is not limited to the maintenance of streets and roads, which is a daily task within the mandate of each government entity.

Sustainable development concerns both people and infrastructure, and requires a full understanding of the importance of

prioritizing the public interest, even in the smallest decisions.

This necessitates moving beyond the narrow confines of self-serving actions that benefit specific individuals and embracing the broader national interest. The solution does not lie in decisions that hinder projects serving narrow individual interests, but rather in unlocking potential to maximize gross domestic product. Some directives have been issued that do not serve the national economy.

For example, the decision to prohibit the sale or transfer of industrial plots hinders one of the most important steps in development. How can a beneficiary prevent a citizen from selling their usufruct rights after investing their money and effort in developing the plot for 30, 40, or even 50 years? A beneficiary may, for some reason, wish to relinquish the property, while at the same time wanting it to continue under new management.

Kuwait lacks complementary industries, especially in the food sector, which requires agricultural resources to support manufacturing.

However, when farmers face numerous obstacles, they leave their land fallow, ultimately leading to increased reliance on imported agricultural products.

Everyone noticed the importance of agricultural holdings, especially during the recent war and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unfortunately, however, agricultural holdings have not been utilized optimally.

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Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, visits the National Desert Shield and Desert Storm Memorial in Washington, D.C.



Sheikh Jarrah during a meeting with Brian Mast, Chairman of the US House Foreign Affairs Committee.



Ministry of Foreign Affairs photos

Sheikh Jarrah reaffirms Kuwait-US partnership

Kuwait FM honors liberation legacy in Washington

WASHINGTON, June 6, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, visited the National Desert Shield and Desert Storm Memorial in Washington, D.C., on Thursday as part of his official trip to the United States.

During the visit, he was briefed on the ongoing construction of the memorial,

which represents a key milestone in US-Kuwaiti relations, according to a statement from Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project commemorates the decisive role played by the international coalition in supporting Kuwait's liberation and restoring its sovereignty following the Iraqi invasion. It also honors the sacrifices made by coalition forces during

the liberation. The minister highlighted the significance of this year, marking the 35th anniversary of Kuwait's liberation, describing it as an important historical milestone. He emphasized that the memorial will stand as a lasting testament for future generations to the shared legacy of friendship,

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Domestic worker and driver visas enter digital era

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: The Human Resources and Information Technology Sector at the Ministry of Interior, in cooperation with the Nationality and Residency Affairs

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SMEs lead

Expat job shift exceeds 14,000

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: The total number of expatriate workers benefiting from the decision allowing the transfer of workers from certain previously restricted sectors has reached 14,440 since the decision came into effect at the beginning of May.

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Guyana slams attacks on Kuwait, lauds enduring bilateral relations

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy of the Republic of Guyana in Kuwait Troy Torrington said his country condemns the attacks on Kuwait, while affirming the full solidarity of Guyana with the Kuwaiti government and people.

Speaking at a press conference held in the embassy on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the independence of Guyana and the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the State of Kuwait, Torrington emphasized the deep-rooted relations and strong friendship that developed between the two countries over three decades.

He expressed his appreciation to the Kuwaiti government and people for the support and attention given to the embassy and the Guyanese community. He praised the hospitality and reception for Guyanese citizens in Kuwait, confirming that bilateral relations in various fields continue to develop.

He disclosed that the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplo-



Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

Troy Torrington, Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy of the Republic of Guyana in Kuwait

matic relations between Guyana and Kuwait is being celebrated this year as well, indicating these relations were officially established on Aug 17, 1995.

He stated that over the past three decades, the two countries built a solid relationship based on mutual respect, solidarity, understanding, and shared aspiration for peace, security, prosperity, development and upholding the rule of law at the international level.

He pointed out that Kuwait has been an important development partner for Guyana, and that his country's

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Emergency protocols key to safe sports restart: minister

KUWAIT CITY, June 6, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of State for Youth and Sport Dr. Tariq Al-Jalahma confirmed on Thursday the importance for relevant authorities to resume sports activities in the country in a safe environment.

This came in a statement by Minister Al-Jalahma to KUNA following his chairing of the seventh meeting of the joint committee concerned with studying the return of sports activity.



Al-Jalahma

He said that the current indicators reflect a successful plan, underlining the need to adhere to the implementation of emergency protocols. He affirmed that the safety of players and the public remains the highest priority.

Al-Jalahma stated that the committee carries on monitoring the procedures and protocols through inspection reports, violations, and legal action to the relevant authorities.

T2 contract draws 3 bidders

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) recently opened the bids of participating companies to operate, manage and improve training services, maintain and develop the new passenger terminal (T2) and the aircraft parking

areas, and manage the centralized operation and maintenance of Kuwait International Airport.

Three companies submitted bids that will be referred to the Public Authority of Civil Aviation (PACA) for review and presentation of technical recommendations within 30 days.

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KNET levels up digital payments

KUWAIT CITY, June 6, (KUNA): The Shared Electronic Banking Services Company (KNET) announced on Saturday a new payment mechanism on its online payment portal as part of its ongoing modernization and digital transformation strategy.

Beginning today (Saturday,) KNET will replace the existing bank selection lists with a direct and automated card input system, allowing users to enter their bank card numbers directly without first selecting their bank from a menu.

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9 ABK signs strategic partnership with Al Kazemi Air Conditioning as part of 'ABK Build'



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:14 Asr 15:21
 Sunrise .. 04:48 Maghrib .. 18:46
 Zohr 11:47 Isha 20:17



HH the Kuwait Amir



King Carl XVI Gustaf

Kuwait Amir congratulates Swedish King on Nat'l Day

KUWAIT CITY, June 6, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable to King Carl XVI Gustaf of the Kingdom of Sweden to congratulate him on his country's national day.

His Highness the Amir wished the Swedish King good health, and for Sweden and its people development and prosperity.

Kuwait Crown Prince congratulates Swedish King on nat'l day

Crown Prince congratulates
 His Highness the Crown Prince

Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable to King Carl XVI Gustaf of the Kingdom of Sweden Saturday to congratulate him on his country's national day.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished the Swedish King good health.

Prime Minister congratulates

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable to King Carl XVI Gustaf of the Kingdom of Sweden Saturday to congratulate him on his country's national day.



KUNA photo
 Kuwait's Ambassador to Morocco Ahmad Al-Bakr presents his credentials to Morocco's King Mohammed VI, as Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Kuwait.

Kuwait leaders seek boost in relations with Morocco

RABAT, June 6, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ambassador to Morocco Ahmad Al-Bakr presented his credentials on Thursday to Morocco's King Mohammed VI, as Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Kuwait.

In a news statement to KUNA, Al-Bakr said that he conveyed, during a ceremony held at the royal palace in Rabat, the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His

Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to the Moroccan King, wishing him everlasting good health and progress and prosperity to Morocco.

Al-Bakr expressed his pride for representing Kuwait to Morocco, affirming the keenness of Kuwait political leadership to boost bilateral cooperation and develop sisterly relations to serve the two countries.

EPA: Legal measures, big fines for marine polluters

KUWAIT CITY, June 6, (KUNA): The Environment Public Authority (EPA) affirmed on Friday its continued monitoring and follow-up on all practices and behaviours that violate terrestrial and marine environment and taking legal measures against violators.

Speaking to KUNA in a statement, Sheikhha Al-Ibrahim, EPA Director of Public Relations and Media, said the authority took legal procedures against a violator who dumped waste into the marine environment on Umm Al-Maradim Island.

This action comes as part of its efforts to protect the marine environment and preserve natural resources, she added.

Based on a video circulating on social media showing a visitor to the island throwing waste into the marine environment, the necessary measures were taken and an environmental violation report was issued, she noted.

The punishment for this violation is a fine of not less than KD 50 and not more than KD 500, she said.



Sheikhha Al-Ibrahim

Kuwait's Environment Public Authority (EPA) affirmed its continued efforts to strengthen environmental protection and achieve sustainable development goals through programs and initiatives implemented in cooperation with public, private and civil society institutions.

Speaking to KUNA on the occasion of World Environment Day, annually falls on June 5, EPA Director of Public Relations and Media Sheikhha Al-Ibrahim said the authority reiterated its commitment to its regulatory and awareness-raising role and to preserving natural resources.

Al-Ibrahim stressed that protecting the environment is a shared responsibility requiring collective action and greater environmental awareness to ensure a more sustainable future for coming generations.

She noted that the EPA participated in several awareness activities marking the occasion, including cooperation with Boubyan Bank to support initiatives promoting proper management of the recycling of electronic and electrical waste.

Al-Ibrahim added that the EPA also took part in an awareness event at the Scientific Center, featuring educational activities and an information pavilion aimed at promoting positive environmental behavior and raising awareness of environmental issues.

She said this year's theme, "Climate Action," underscores the importance of collective efforts to address environmental and climate challenges through sustainable practices and effective partnerships.

Three fingerprint scans mandatory for workers

Co-ops must hire Kuwaiti youths in summer break: MoSA

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: The Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) emphasized the need to instill employee discipline in cooperative societies, so it issued a directive to the Consumer Cooperative Societies Union to inform all cooperatives about this.

In a letter addressed to the union, the ministry stressed that all employees must use the attendance tracking system, which requires three fingerprint

scans during official working hours daily -- one for arrival, one for presence and one for departure.

Sources stated that the ministry confirmed the presence scan serves as proof of the employee's continuous presence during working hours. Sources warned that failure to do any of the three fingerprint scans is an administrative violation, which warrants legal accountability.

The ministry indicated that cooperative societies are in charge of monitoring the implementation of this directive and ensuring compliance. It added that cooperatives will bear the administrative and legal consequences of non-compliance.

In another development, the ministry urged the cooperative societies to employ young Kuwaitis during the

summer vacation in line with their national and social roles and commitment to support these youths and help them use their free time for worthwhile activities during the summer break.

It underscored the importance of giving the youths the opportunity to gain experience, develop cooperative and administrative skills, and strengthen their values of participation, responsibility and national belonging.

It also stressed the need to involve youths in activities that hone their abilities and prepare them for the job market, disclosing that employment opportunities for youths will be available from July 1 to Aug 31, for a maximum of six hours per day, either morning or evening, to cultivate a generation with work ethics.

Kuwait eyes end to paper transactions within 3 years

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: The Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) submitted a project contract valued at KD9,992,000 to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) for preliminary audit and oversight, confirming the report published by the newspaper about the goal of the government to eliminate paper transactions within three years.

Unless certain observations necessitate a formal response from the agency, SAB will present its official opinion on the contract.

Furthermore, the agency obtained two-thirds majority approval from its Board of

Directors for the direct contract with a global telecommunications provider. As the authorized distributor of AFA Cloud Google, this company will provide services for three years at an estimated cost of \$32,423,000.

This project signals the vital shift toward comprehensive digital transformation and supports the national development agenda to promote transparent and interconnected government.

By digitizing all administrative procedures, the project aims to phase out manual paperwork, and a secure digital infrastructure designed to boost service reliability and streamline integration in various platforms will be utilized.



KUNA photo
 Eid Al-Adha sacrificial animal meat ready for distribution at one of the refugees camps.

Kuwait provides food aid to Sudan camps refugees

KUWAIT CITY, June 6, (KUNA): Kuwaiti charitable organizations have continued their humanitarian and relief efforts across several countries through food assistance and educational projects aimed at supporting vulnerable communities and easing the burden on those in need.

The Kuwait Office for Charity Projects in Cairo continued implementing its annual Eid Al-Adha sacrifice project for the 39th consecutive year, funded by the Kuwait Zakat House. The project involves distributing sacrificial meat in several Egyptian governorates.

Office Director Jamal Al-Majdali told KUNA that the initiative embodies the values of compassion, generosity, and social solidarity, adding that meat was distributed through charities accredited by Egypt's Ministry of Social Solidarity to orphans, low-income families, and vulnerable groups in 11 governorates across the country.

He noted that the project also contributes to strengthening the close ties between Kuwait and Egypt.

Deputy Director General for Corporate Communications at the International Islam-

ic Charity Organization (IICO), Abdulrahman Al-Mutawa said the organization distributed meat from 7,916 sacrifices to more than 234,000 beneficiaries in 18 countries at a total cost of KD 268,402.

Al-Mutawa said the project was implemented in cooperation with 13 partner organizations, five overseas offices, and four volunteer teams in Kuwait to ensure timely delivery.

On his part, Head of Development and Relief at Namaa Charity, Khaled Al-Shammari said the organization's Eid sacrifice project benefited more than 21,420 families in 17 countries.

The project included the distribution of 1,110 sheep, 215 goats, 126 buffaloes, and 81 cattle in countries facing humanitarian challenges, including Palestine, Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, India, Uganda, Tanzania, Chad, and Benin.

Al-Shammari said the project was carried out in accordance with Islamic and organizational standards to ensure food assistance reached eligible families and brought relief to displaced persons, refugees, and impoverished communities.

'Healthy ecosystems crucial to food and water security'

KUWAIT CITY, June 6, (KUNA): United Nations Resident Coordinator to Kuwait Ghada Al-Taher, UAE Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Matar Al Neyadi and Senegal's Ambassador to Kuwait Assane Sougou underscored the importance of strengthening international cooperation to address accelerating environmental and climate challenges.

In a joint statement marking World Environment Day, observed annually on June 5, and ahead of the 2026 UN Water Conference, the three officials stressed that protecting ecosystems and water resources is essential for sustainable development, security and stability.

The statement noted that the United Arab Emirates and Senegal will jointly host the 2026 UN Water Conference from December 8 to 10.

It said recent regional developments have highlighted the importance of safeguarding freedom of navigation, supply chains, maritime infrastructure and waterways as a shared international responsibility for all UN member states.

The statement added that the UN World Environment Day campaign calls on governments, cities, companies and individuals to take practical steps to strengthen climate action and protect ecosystems, stressing that healthy ecosystems are fundamental to food and water security, community protection and sustainable development.

This year's World Environment Day theme, climate action, highlights the disproportionate impact of environmental challenges on vulnerable groups, including farmers, local communities and women who depend directly on natural resources, it added.

The statement cited the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2025, which identified biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change among the most significant threats facing the world over the next decade.



Ghada Al-Taher

Court acquits two individuals accused of drug trafficking

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: The Criminal Court acquitted two individuals of possessing hashish and the psychotropic substance, pregabalin, with intent to traffic, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The court ordered one of the defendants to be admitted to a psychiatric hospital for substance abuse treatment in accordance with the Anti-Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances Law.

The Public Prosecution charged the defendants with possessing hashish and pregabalin with intent to traffic, as well as possessing the substances for personal use.

The case was referred to the Criminal Court after the concerned authorities arrested the defendants, who were represented by Attorney Jarrah Mubarak Al-Wawan.

The lawyer argued that the evidence was insufficient and that the investigations supporting the arrest and search procedures were inconclusive.

He also pointed out that the warrant issued by the prosecution was invalid, because it was based on inconclusive investigations, in addition to the lack of evidence to justify issuing the search warrant.

He cited legal principles from the rulings of the Court of Cassation, which affirmed that the trial court is responsible for determining the seriousness and sufficiency of the investigations for issuing a search warrant.

He also pointed out that investigations conducted before the issuance of the warrant must be sufficient on their own to suggest the crime is attributed to the person authorized to be searched, while the outcome of the seizure conducted after the search cannot prove the seriousness of the investigations conducted before the issuance of the warrant.

Other Voices

The last fifth of life

By Ahmad alsarraf

HAVING passed 80 years of age, I have decided to retreat to my own space for a few days and hence moved to my chalet. Although they had long dreamed of having it, it has become too difficult for my children to move to the chalet.

I sat in my favorite chair and gazed at the horizon, the blue sea, and the gentle reflections of the setting sun on its surface.

Unconsciously, I began to revisit my memories of being a child, a boy, a teenager, a young man, an employee, and an adult, then reaching middle age and quickly entering old age.

I remembered moments of happiness and sadness, laughter and tears, wishes and thoughts, ups and downs, marriage and having children, and the joy of seeing my grandchildren.



alsarraf

I recalled many events, including the months of the Iraqi invasion and occupation, my near-emigration to America, my temporary asylum in Britain, and my return to Kuwait after six years of voluntary exile.

I returned just days before Iraq invaded Kuwait. I witnessed their chaos, corruption, and destruction, and their relentless pursuit, under orders from above, to ruin Kuwait, a country that Saddam Hussein had failed to transform into one of Iraq's provinces. Demolition was far easier than construction.

I remembered my family, friends, and loved ones, those who had left us forever and those who had moved on to other places. I looked at my life differently and thought, "Well, I have reached, at best, the last fifth of my life."

Illnesses, aches, and pains have become more frequent, and I have grown less patient. Spare parts for any broken or damaged part have become scarce. Incapacity is inevitable. Stillness and limited activity are undoubtedly on the horizon.

But what alleviates my anxiety is the feeling that I have fulfilled my role in life, that I have done my duty towards family, community, relatives, and children.

I must now live for myself in the years, or perhaps months, that remain, with all the harshness that entails. This living, this solitude, is necessary. Infirmary and old age are unforgiving. But why wait for them to strike when we can take action and do what brings us more joy in life?

We have compromised too much for everyone, and it is time to compromise with ourselves, to live in harmony with our own desires, even if only for a few years, months, or days. In any case, it will likely be short-lived, and all of this will soon come to an end. The soul's attachment to what it is accustomed to makes a return to the old routine of life inevitable.

I did what I believed was right, both in my dealings with my father and in my dealings with him. Perhaps my children will treat me the same way. If they do not, it is not their fault; it is mine. I can understand that children, too, have their own lives, problems, and families. How can I be closer to them than a spouse or children, when I have become, in my view, a burden?

A philosopher-physician once said, "Money is no guarantee against loneliness. And health cannot last forever. But money is more reliable than children, and we should not be upset by that. It is the truth."

Children are a source of love and joy, but they are not a retirement fund. We must preserve and enjoy our freedom as much as we can. Perhaps I am late to do so. However, it is better late than never.

Freedom here is somewhat restricted and limited, but there is still freedom of movement, freedom to travel, freedom to wear what we want, to walk in the rain, to tread on loose snow, to talk to whomever we want, and to continue getting out of bed in the morning whenever we like. Soon, we will not be able to do this, and many other things, with the same ease. Perhaps we will not even be able to prepare a few meals a week for ourselves. Distracting ourselves from the pains of aging is countered by joy, which is the best antidote to the depression that follows sadness.

We must forget the past, leave it behind, and not worry about the future. We must cherish the hours and minutes. Our present life, and our remaining days, are what truly matter, as long as we can. It is possible to live beyond seventy, eighty, and even a hundred. Through simple things, we can make what remains of our lives in this world more beautiful.



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diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Coexisting in a society with all its deformities

"We often see awareness campaigns, sometimes informal, advising visitors to respect local customs and avoid behaviors that may offend the people of a country. In Kuwait, there is also a need to raise awareness about behaviors that may offend public sensibilities, including among some citizens, by promoting public etiquette through all media channels," Kuwaiti writer **Zaid Al-Jalawi** for *Al-Seyassah* daily.



Zaid Al-Jalawi

"For example, posters could be displayed in schools, mosques, markets, and on social media platforms encouraging people to avoid noise pollution and to refrain from attending public gatherings when suffering from colds or flu. Such campaigns could encourage worshippers to stay away from mosques when ill and individuals to avoid diwanias and crowded markets until they recover.

"On public roads and in public spaces, awareness messages could also discourage some expatriate communities from littering and spitting.

"The practice of some drivers opening their car doors at traffic lights and spitting onto the road has become increasingly common, contributing to an unpleasant form of visual pollution.

"Public frustration with both visual and noise pollution in roads, public squares, and neighborhoods is widespread, yet these issues often receive little attention.

"Many people hesitate to make even the simplest effort to advise their driver or domestic worker against such behavior. Likewise, no one is willing to encourage those suffering from colds or flu to pray at home and avoid mosques until they have recovered. There is also a general reluctance to raise these concerns with the relevant authorities.

"As a result, society has gradually become accustomed to behaviors that diminish the quality of daily life, whether on the roads, in restaurants, or in other public places.

"I disagree with the culture of refusing to discuss these matters and dismissing them as trivial and unworthy of attention. We should not remain silent about mistakes simply because we inherited them and assume they will always remain unchanged.

"In some societies, if a husband and wife are both HIV-positive and the husband dies, his healthy brother is obligated to marry his sick widow, as it would be disgraceful not to do so. This is similar to what happens in our society when we fail to try to change a mistake and prefer to coexist with it."

Also:

"Anxiety has become part of our daily routine due to the rapid flow of information, the constant noise of notifications, and endless social comparisons", certified life coach and consultant in personality science and public relations," **Hala Bader Al-Humaidhi** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"Anxiety is no longer just a fleeting external pressure. For many people, it has become a silent daily reality, to the point where it feels like a natural part of life.

"In the past, anxiety was often linked to significant and obvious events such as losing a job, a family crisis, or the end of an important relationship. Today, it stems from small, accumulating details such as an unanswered message, upsetting news before bed, constant comparisons between our lives and others, or a persistent inner feeling that we are falling behind everyone else.

"As a result, the nervous system remains in a constant state of alert, as if the mind no longer finds a real opportunity for calm. The current generation lives in an era that is considered the most comfortable and stable compared to all previous generations.

"Yet feelings of anxiety and inner turmoil continue to rise. We can reach anyone at any time, but the feeling of loneliness is also increasing. Social media has created a culture of comparison. It has become a constant cycle, as we witness the successes, achievements, and happy moments of others daily, and unconsciously begin to measure our own lives against theirs.

"In addition, there is an unspoken pressure from modern society to achieve rapid success and continuous self-improvement. In the silent spaces between these unspoken expectations, anxiety begins to grow.

"Over time, anxiety is no longer just a temporary feeling but it has become a way of life. We wake up mentally exhausted and carry it with us until the end of the day. Even moments meant to be calm and relaxing become filled with overthinking, self-recrimination, and inner turmoil.

"The important truth is that anxiety is not always a sign of weakness. Sometimes it is a message from the mind and body that we are overloaded. Recovery does not begin with pretending everything is fine, but it begins with asking the real question - what is happening inside me?"

"We do not always need to rush. Perhaps, we need to give ourselves a chance to slow down. We must stop trying our worth to the quantity of our output, the attention we receive, or the approval of others.

"We must understand that delay does not mean failure, and that stillness does not mean we have fallen behind.

"Mental health does not mean being happy all the time, but rather learning how to take care of yourself even in your toughest moments. Sometimes the most dangerous kind of anxiety is hidden behind a smile, while inside, the person is silently exhausted."

"Observing American statements, especially President Donald Trump's speeches, we notice a pattern - raising the stakes to the highest level, then returning to negotiation and agreement," Saudi writer **Saleh bin Abdullah Al-Muslim** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"This apparent contradiction is not political improvisation, as some may believe, but rather part of a political strategy Trump has employed for years. This approach relies on creating a state of ambiguity for the adversary, so that it does not know whether Washington is heading towards war or towards a deal.

"Not all wars are measured by the number of missiles launched or planes crossing the skies. Some wars are waged more with minds than with guns.

"This is what is happening today in the escalating confrontation between the United States and Iran. The current scene is unlike the traditional wars that the Middle East has known, rather, it appears closer to a long strategic conflict in which military force is used as a tool of political pressure rather than an end in itself.

"On the other hand, Iran does not appear to be a country seeking a full-scale confrontation with the United States, but it also does not want to appear as the defeated party. Therefore, Tehran is pursuing a different strategy based on absorbing pressure, managing time, and preserving its leverage without fully utilizing it.

"The mistake many analysts make is viewing the current war solely as a military confrontation. In reality, what is unfolding is closer to a battle of wills - political, economic, and psychological.

"The United States does not necessarily seek to occupy Iran or overthrow its regime through direct military force, as the cost of such a scenario would be enormous on both military and economic levels, in addition to its impact on US elections.

"Iran is aware that engaging in open warfare with the world's largest military power could threaten the very existence of the state. This is why what we are witnessing can be described as a war of attrition, where both sides approach the red lines but avoid crossing them.

"Strikes occur, threats escalate, and military bases are placed on high alert, but at the last moment, both sides revert to calculating interests and losses.

"On the economic level, the United States understands that pressure on Iran is not achieved solely through military force, but also by keeping the Iranian economy under constant strain.

"On the other hand, Tehran is betting that the world cannot afford prolonged disruption to energy markets and vital maritime routes. From this perspective, oil becomes part of the battlefield, and global trade becomes vulnerable to any new escalation.

"Major wars in the Middle East often do not begin with a declared decision, but rather with a series of miscalculations that gradually spiral out of control.

"However, an analysis of the current balance of power suggests that both sides still prefer managing the war to resolving it. The United States wants a weaker Iran, but it does not want chaos. Iran wants to persevere and improve its negotiating position, but it does not want an open existential confrontation.

"Therefore, the most likely scenario in the coming period seems to be neither full peace nor full-scale war, but rather a continuation of a state of controlled tension.

"The region today seems to be living inside a giant negotiating room, its walls defined by missiles and aircraft. Everyone is speaking the language of war, but they also realize that the true cost of war may be greater than any party can bear. Therefore, the current military posturing may, in essence, be an attempt to reach a political agreement on better terms, not a prelude to the final battle as some imagine.

"The question is not whether war will break out, but who will succeed first in convincing the other side that they are ready to go to war."

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



KFF photo

Boat hurries to the location as two persons saved from drowning.

KFF rapid response saves duo

By **Munif Naif**
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Marine rescue teams rescued two individuals on board a sinking boat off the coast of Al-Juliaia on Saturday afternoon.

The rapid response of the rescue teams prevented the drowning of the two people.

The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) revealed that teams from the Shuaiba Fire and Marine Rescue Center rushed to the scene and saved the two people who were on board the boat.

Appeal fails to save Asian drug dealer from life-term in prison

Two aides get 15 years, KD 10,000 fine

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

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: The Second Circuit of the Court of Appeals, presided over by Judge Nasr Salem Al-Haid and with Judges Mutaib Al-Aradhi and Saud Al-Sanea as members, overturned a ruling issued by the Criminal Court to acquit a Bangladeshi drug dealer and instead sentenced him to life imprisonment.

The court also upheld the 15-year prison sentence and KD 10,000 fine for his two accomplices, who are also Bangladeshi nationals.

The Public Prosecution had charged the defendants with possessing cannabis (hashish) and psychotropic substances with the intent to traffic them.

It also charged the second and third defendants with possessing heroin and psychotropic substances

with the intent to traffic them.

The Public Prosecution also charged the second defendant with possessing hashish, heroin, and morphine for personal use.

A drug enforcement team raided the home of one of the defendants in Abu Halifa based on confidential information.

The defendant confessed about his accomplices and admitted to storing various quantities of drugs and psychotropic substances in Fintas, in the possession of the second defendant. The third defendant was arrested in Mangaf in possession of various drugs.

The Criminal Court had sentenced the defendants to 15 years' imprisonment and a fine of KD 10,000 each, while acquitting the second and third defendants of heroin trafficking. The Court of Appeal overturned the acquittal of the main defendant (the second defendant) on heroin trafficking charges, sentencing him to life imprisonment on all charges due to their connection, and upheld the 15-year sentences for his two accomplices.

Drug-runner arrested

The General Department of Criminal Investi-

gation, represented by the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Criminal Investigation Department, apprehended a Bangladeshi expatriate in possession of narcotics and intoxicants for trafficking and use, reports *Al-Seyassah* daily.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Interior explained that several locations used by the suspect to conceal drugs and intoxicants were identified.

Following the issuance of the necessary legal warrant, the suspect's residence was searched, resulting in the seizure of various quantities of narcotics and psychotropic substances, including 182 sachets of heroin with a total weight of approximately 66 grams, 265 tablets of psychotropic substances prepared for distribution and divided into sachets, 68 bags of hashish weighing approximately 144 grams, approximately 160 grams of the narcotic substance "Kratom", 1,750 tablets of psychotropic substances, and tools and equipment used for storing and preparing narcotics.

The suspect confessed to possessing the aforementioned substances with the intent of trafficking and use. The necessary legal procedures were taken against him.

Kuwaiti nationality revoked for 17-member family

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Meetings by the Higher Committee for Kuwaiti Citizenship Investigations, chaired by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, have been ongoing for issuing decisions to revoke citizenship in several cases after completing investigations, examinations, and necessary legal procedures, reports *Al-Rai* daily.

A new case was uncovered involving individuals with forged documents and dual citizenship who illegally received national labor subsidies allocated for Kuwaiti nationals working in the private sector.

According to informed sources, the committee postponed its decision on a large and complex forgery case after new information emerged, requiring further investigation and the completion of all aspects of the inquiry before a final decision can be made.

The committee decided to revoke the Kuwaiti citizenship of an entire family of 17 individuals after it was proven they held another Gulf nationality. The father and his children are residing permanently in their original Gulf

country, and their visits to Kuwait were limited to renewing documents, completing official procedures, and receiving the national labor subsidy.

The files of non-resident Kuwaitis registered as national labor supporters will be opened, along with a review of the status of private sector companies whose employees are registered on their payrolls, to investigate any suspected collusion or facilitation in the misappropriation of support funds.

If collusion is proven, the companies involved will be referred to the Public Prosecution on charges of facilitating the embezzlement of public funds.

The sources revealed that Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef issued firm instructions to summon the companies and complete all investigations related to this case.

On another note, the sources reported that investigations are ongoing into a complex forgery case that involves children who were found to be only 12 and 13 years younger than their supposed father. New investigations have also uncovered an additional forgery case involving a third son registered in the same file, whose claimed father is only nine years older than him.

Kuwait will never forget his services for country

By **Munif Naif**
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 6 : Retired Lieutenant General Hudheiri Al-Hamlan, a prominent national figure whose long career was marked by dedicated service to Kuwait, has passed away.

Al-Hamlan left behind a legacy of distinguished service to his country and a record of achievements that earned him a special place in the hearts of his colleagues and admirers.

Throughout his years of service, he held numerous security positions and responsibilities, performed his duties with sincerity and devotion, and served his nation with utmost competence.

He had a remarkable presence in the sports arena through his work and contributions to Al-Fahaheel Club, where he was widely respected and enjoyed close relationship with various athletes and contemporaries.

May Almighty Allah have mercy on retired Lieutenant General Hudheiri Al-Hamlan, grant him eternal peace in Paradise, and give his family, loved ones and friends patience and solace.

The newspaper expresses its heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the family of the deceased, asking Almighty Allah to have mercy on him, forgive him and grant him a place in Paradise.



Al-Hamlan

Mol foils bid to smuggle sheets soaked in drugs

KUWAIT CITY, June 6, (KUNA): The Interior Ministry's General Directorate for Drug Control announced on Saturday the arrest of an Arab national in possession of papers soaked in psychotropic substances.

According to a ministry statement, the newfound concealment method failed to prevent the arrest of the suspect and the seizure of 140 A4-sized sheets of paper soaked in the synthetic drug "chemical," in addition to 15 grams of methamphetamine and 40 grams of hash, all intended for dealing.

Investigations confirmed that the modern tactic exploits the ease with which these substances can be concealed and transported without raising suspicions.

Singles staying in model areas get deadline to quit


KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Kuwait Municipality announced that the Engineering Audit and Follow-up Department in Ahmadi Municipality conducted a field inspection of violations in private, investment, commercial, and industrial residential areas, reports *Al-Seyassah* daily.


The campaign resulted in the issuance of 25 citations related to bachelor accommodations in private and model residential areas in Sabah Al-Ahmad Marine City.

The inspection is part of ongoing monitoring campaigns covering various governorates, according to a schedule prepared in coordination between the Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality and the relevant departments.

SOS for handicapped: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) urged people with disabilities and their families to register for its dedicated online service on the KFF website, with the aim of enhancing preparedness and speeding up response during emergencies, reports *Al-Anba* daily.


In an awareness video, KFF explained that the service allows users to register basic information, including name, civil ID number, contact number, and type of disability. Having this information available in advance helps firefighters and rescue teams reach people with disabilities and provide the necessary support more quickly and effectively.



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Sulaibiya cloud data site secures conditional cable route approval

Council approves draft law for public sculptures

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: The Kuwait Municipality approved the request of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to allocate the five-meter-wide, 434.61-meter-long underground cable route (medium voltage 11 volts) starting from the main substation (WABM 1Z) in Block One in West Abdullah Al-Mubarak residential area and up to the cloud data site in Block Eight in Sulaibiya Agricultural Area.

This approval is conditional, depending on the adherence to the requirements of the Subcommittee for Public Utilities and Services, coordination with the relevant service ministries prior to installation, and authorization for the relevant departments to relocate or modify the route, provided it does not exceed the allocated length, in the event of conflict with existing infrastructure or for regulatory reasons.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the technical opinion, approved by Municipality Director Manal Al-Asfour, stating that part of the proposed route is in Farwaniyah Governorate and another part is in Jahra Governorate.

Upon studying the route according to the provided coordinates, the Municipality found that it overlapped with several sites, such as two secondary transformer stations, one main transformer station, a mosque and roads.

Consequently, the ministry was informed and it agreed that the proposed route could not be allocated due to the aforementioned overlaps. The ministry then provided new coordinates for the route in order to avoid

these overlaps.

Meanwhile, the Legal and Financial Committee of the Municipal Council held its tenth meeting of the fourth session, chaired by Fahad Al-Abduljader, on Wednesday during which it approved a draft regulation governing the erection of monuments and sculptures.

The draft regulation has been referred to the Kuwait Municipality's executive body for review and feedback, in preparation for completing the necessary legal procedures.

The draft regulation, which consists of 10 articles, aims to establish a unified regulatory framework for the erection of monuments and sculptures in public squares, parks, gardens, district entrances, and on state-owned land. This framework seeks to preserve the architectural and aesthetic identity of the country and prevent the use of these structures for advertising or commercial purposes.

Article Two of the regulation, comprising 12 clauses, stipulates that monuments and sculptures must represent a historical, national, cultural, or social event and have aesthetic value that complements the overall character of the site. The use of monuments and sculptures for advertising or branding purposes is prohibited, except for the inclusion of the initiating entity's name within specific guidelines, provided that such inclusion does not exceed 30 percent of the monument's total size.

The regulations also stipulate that sites for which permits are sought for the erection of monuments and sculptures must not conflict

with the services of government ministries or with current or future projects. Compliance with safety regulations, all decisions of the competent authority, and all relevant laws and regulations is mandatory.

The initiator is obligated to plant or pave the area surrounding the monument or sculpture if the site design requires it, in addition to ensuring the use of environmentally sustainable materials. The use of unstable or flammable materials in monuments and sculptures is prohibited.

The regulations also specify technical and engineering requirements, most notably that the monument or sculpture must not obstruct pedestrian traffic or vehicular visibility, that the site must not conflict with current or future projects, and that sustainable and safe materials must be used.

The height of the monument or sculpture must not exceed nine meters, except in special cases requiring additional approvals.

The regulations require those wishing to erect a monument or sculpture to submit detailed engineering and architectural plans, as well as landscaping, planting, and lighting plans.

Applications are subject to review by the relevant authorities at Kuwait Municipality and the site supervisor before final approvals are issued.

The project stipulates a two-year construction permit for the completion of the work, while the occupancy permit is valid for three years and renewable for similar periods, subject to a fee of KD 150 per occupied area. A bank guarantee equivalent to ten percent of the project value is also required to ensure maintenance and removal upon the expiration of the permit. The initiating party bears all associated costs.

The competent authority has the power to cancel the permit if the work is not completed within the permit period, if the public interest so requires, or if the approved requirements and regulations are not met.



Al-Asfour



Al-Abduljader

Crown Prince, PM extend wishes to Danish monarch

Kuwait Amir congratulates Denmark's King on Constitution Day anniversary

KUWAIT CITY, June 6, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Friday a cable of congratulations to the King Frederik X of Denmark, on Denmark's Constitution Day anniversary.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished the King health and well-being, and his country further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent

on Friday a cable of congratulations to King Frederik X of Denmark, on Denmark's Constitution Day anniversary.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished the King health and well-being, and his country further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent on Friday a cable of congratulations to King Frederik X of Denmark, on Denmark's Constitution Day anniversary.



MoF photo Bank Group officials in Kuwait to review cooperation and development priorities.

Finance Minister and World Bank review economic reform priorities

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Minister of Finance Dr. Yaqoub Al-Sayed Yousef Al-Rifai on Wednesday met with Country Director of the World Bank Group in Kuwait Dr. Azhar Iqbal Hussain.

During the meeting, they reviewed the latest developments in current and future cooperation between the State of Kuwait and the World Bank Group.

They also discussed priority areas for technical and institutional support, in line

with the commitment of the State to focus on economic reform, enhancing fiscal sustainability, supporting the private sector and developing human capital.

Also present at the meeting were Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Services Saad Al-Alati, Director of the International Economic Cooperation Department and acting Director General for Economic Affairs Saad Al-Rashidi, and several other officials from the ministry.

Move to reduce electricity load

Social Affairs postpones extra summer duties for employees

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Financial and Administrative Affairs and Director General of the Planning and Administrative Development Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs Dr. Sayed Issa announced the postponement of assigning additional duties to ministry employees during summer.

In a press statement, Issa disclosed that this decision aims to reduce the electrical load, particularly in summer when temperatures are extremely high. He said this is in line with the directive of the government to rationalize electricity consumption and the circular of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) on the one-hour reduction of summer working hours for government entities in order to ease pressure on the electrical grid and streamline operations to meet the demand.

Meanwhile, Issa stated that the ministry is finalizing the general assembly schedule of cooperatives whose fiscal year has ended, confirming that 13 cooperative societies will hold their general

assembly in June.

He revealed that Jeeb Al-Shuyoukh Cooperative Society will hold its general assembly on Sunday at the Ardiya Center in Farwaniyah Governorate, Ahmadi Cooperative Society at the Dhafer Center in Ahmadi Governorate on Monday, Khaldiya Cooperative Society at the Qairawan Center in the Capital Governorate on Tuesday, Andalus and Riggae Cooperative Society at the Ardiya Center in Farwaniyah Governorate on Wednesday, Sulaibikhat and Doha Cooperative Society at the Qairawan Center in the Capital Governorate on June 14, Sadu Craft Society at the same center on June 15, Dasma and Bneid Al-Ghar Cooperative Society on June 16, Consumers Union at the Bayan Center in Hawally Governorate on June 17, Al-Naeem Cooperative Society at the Saad Al-Abdullah Center in Jahra Governorate on June 21, Savings Cooperative Society at the Bayan Center in Hawally Governorate on June 22, Northwest Sulaibikhat Cooperative Society at the Qairawan Center in the Capital Governorate on June 23, Abdally Agricultural Cooperative Society at Saad Al-Abdullah Center in Jahra Governorate on June 24, and Al-Naseem Cooperative Society at the same center on June 28.

He said more cooperative societies have completed their fiscal year and will hold their general assembly in the coming period, hence, the number will increase as the date of the general assembly is set once the fiscal year of a cooperative ends.

Education Ministry announces new appointments across technical units

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Minister of Education Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei issued several appointment decisions on Thursday to complete the administrative and technical work requirements in the Ministry of Education Departments.

Assistant Principal Bader Al-Shar-

han was appointed acting Head of the Gifted Students Office, Biology Technical Supervisor Sabah Mohammad Al-Bin Ali as acting Director of the Science Technical Supervision Department, Wahsh Al-Dosari as Director of the Arabic Language Technical Guidance Department, and Senior Mathematics Supervisor Sheikha Al-Hajraf as Director of the Mathematics Technical Guidance Department.

Criticism used for personal gain

Social Affairs rejects 'pressure' campaigns over appointments

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: The Ministry of Social Affairs says some individuals who claim to advocate for reform and express concern for the public interest, while repeatedly criticizing the ministry or cooperative societies on social media, often reveal upon meeting and discussion that the core of their complaints is not related to public interest or national issues. Instead, they are frequently driven by personal demands, such as seeking employment or special benefits, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement, the ministry explained that some meetings revealed that a number of these individuals attempt to exert media pressure or incite public opinion in order to achieve personal gains, such as appointments in cooperative societies

or obtaining special privileges. Some of these individuals explicitly stipulate that their personal demands be met in order to stop media campaigns.

The ministry affirmed its full respect for the right to objective and constructive criticism and freedom of expression within the framework of the law, while emphasizing the importance of not exploiting media platforms and social media as a means of pressure or bargaining to achieve personal gains.

It stressed that it would not accept or yield to any attempts at pressure, bargaining, or moral blackmail, and that all decisions related to appointments, assignments, or filling positions are subject to legal controls, standards of competence and merit, and equal opportunity.

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Move follows Cabinet decision and agreement from Social Affairs

Municipality approves rehab center handover to Mol

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: The Kuwait Municipality approved the transfer of the Social Rehabilitation Center, which is affiliated with the Juvenile Welfare

Department in Sulaibiya Industrial Area (Block One) and measuring 49,980 square meters, from the Ministry of Social Affairs to the Ministry of Interior as per the Cabinet decision.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the technical opinion on the transac-

tion, which was approved by Director General of the Municipality Manal Al-Asfour, stating that the executive body approved the cancellation of the decision of the Municipal Council on the allocation of the Juvenile Education and Rehabilitation Center in Sulaibiya

to the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The technical opinion of the Municipality indicated that its Survey Department submitted a report about the conflict between a road and the site allocated to the Ministry of Social Affairs, which was to be transferred to

the Ministry of Interior.

The report was referred to the relevant municipal departments to resolve the conflict. These departments confirmed that the juvenile care facility is located within the Central Prison in Sulaibiya Agricultural Area.

The Municipality affirmed that the Ministry of Social Affairs, after being notified about the request of the Ministry of Interior, agreed to transfer the Social Rehabilitation Center building to the Ministry of Interior, which needs the facility in the interest of the public.

Continued from Page 1

His Highness the

The reason is that some officials are influenced by the recurring question - "Why does so-and-so get a plot and I don't?" Is this the reason behind preventing citizens from disposing of their agricultural holdings?

Envy does not build a capable and strong nation. Unfortunately, this problem is widespread in various aspects of Kuwaiti life, and I have addressed it frequently.

The proposal for the state to purchase the debts of those unable to repay was met with the flimsy argument of "social justice," which has contributed to numerous economic and social problems since the "Al-Manakh Stock Market" crisis to the present day.

This issue must be addressed from a wide-angle perspective and with a forward-looking vision. Serious efforts must be made to maximize national output and establish a solid economic foundation.

Kuwait is rich in creative individuals who need only opportunity. These creative individuals are present in all sectors, including banks, major corporations, and others. When these institutions have sought foreign expertise, they have managed to position Kuwait as a pioneering state in several fields, representing a form of soft power that serves Kuwait on the world stage.

We must consider some facts. We have large commercial banks with substantial investments abroad, in addition to vast amounts of cash. However, these banks are restricted locally.

Kuwait possesses large oil reserves, in addition to an important and sensitive strategic location. These assets serve major development projects. Limiting the use of these tools and wasting time and effort in pursuing owners of industrial plots and agricultural holdings for minor violations hinders the progress of His Highness the Prime Minister in his development course.

Iran crosses

Meanwhile, Bahrain announced on Saturday that its air defense systems intercepted and destroyed three missiles and several drones, saying Iran continued its hostile attacks targeting civilians in the Kingdom.

The Bahrain Defense Force said its air defenses successfully neutralized the incoming projectiles and confirmed that all military units remain at the highest level of readiness to defend the country and protect its security. It urged citizens and residents to exercise caution and avoid approaching suspicious objects or debris, and to report them immediately to the relevant authorities, noting that engineering units are prepared to safely dispose of remnants to ensure public safety.

The force also stressed that the deliberate targeting of civilians and private property constitutes a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law.

Saudi Arabia also strongly condemned the Iranian attacks on Kuwait and Bahrain, describing them

as a blatant violation of sovereignty and a threat to regional and international security. The Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the continued escalation undermines international efforts to restore stability, reiterating the Kingdom's solidarity with Kuwait and Bahrain in all measures taken to protect their security and territorial integrity.

The GCC Secretary-General Jasssem Al-Budaiwi likewise condemned the ongoing Iranian attacks, calling them "blatant" assaults on civilian facilities and infrastructure aimed at undermining the security, stability, and sovereignty of member states. He said the escalation constitutes a violation of international law and reaffirmed that the security of Kuwait and Bahrain is an integral part of GCC collective security, stressing unified Gulf support for all measures taken in response.

Jordan also strongly condemned the attacks, calling them a flagrant violation of the sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity of Kuwait and Bahrain. Its Foreign Ministry said the strikes represent a breach of international law and a dangerous escalation threatening regional stability, reaffirming Amman's full solidarity with both countries.

Egypt issued a similar condemnation, describing the attacks as a serious violation of sovereignty and a destabilizing escalation, and reaffirmed its support for Kuwait and Bahrain's measures to safeguard their security. It stressed that Gulf stability is essential to regional security.

In Belgium, Wallonia's Prime Minister Adrien Dolimont expressed full solidarity with Kuwait and the GCC in the face of what he described as Iranian attacks, reaffirming commitment to strengthening bilateral cooperation. Kuwait's Ambassador to Belgium, Nawaf Alenezi, said Dolimont condemned the attacks, including those targeting Kuwait International Airport, as a breach of international law and expressed readiness to deepen economic and trade ties.

Separately, the Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait, Mohamed Abu El-Wafa, confirmed the improved health condition of an Egyptian resident who is receiving treatment in a hospital after being injured in the Iranian attacks on Kuwait on June 3, 2026.

This came during a visit by the ambassador to check on the injured man and follow up on his health condition.

Ambassador Abu El-Wafa emphasized that the medical care provided to the injured reflects the deeply rooted humanitarian approach of the State of Kuwait, under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad, and his constant concern and care to ensure the protection of all citizens and residents.

He expressed his sincere appreciation and gratitude to the relevant Kuwaiti authorities, particularly the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Health, for the exceptional care and attention they provided to the injured.

The Egyptian Ambassador stated that the Egyptian Embassy and Consulate in Kuwait have been monitoring the condition of all the injured since the first moments of the incident, in close coordination with the Kuwaiti authorities.

He noted that a delegation from the

Consulate visited the injured, checked on their well-being, and addressed their needs.

Ambassador Abu El-Wafa reiterated the Arab Republic of Egypt's unwavering support for Kuwait and its full solidarity with the country in the face of this attack.

He emphasized Egypt's full support for all measures taken by Kuwait to safeguard its security and stability and to protect its territory and vital infrastructure.

He confirmed Cairo's condemnation of the Iranian attacks, describing them as a dangerous escalation that threatens the security of the entire region.

It is worth noting that eight Egyptian residents sustained varying injuries as a result of the attacks targeting Kuwait International Airport. Seven of them have been discharged from hospital after making a full recovery, while one remains under medical observation in stable condition.

Moreover, the Ministry of Defense announced that the Kuwait Armed Forces detected and engaged seven hostile ballistic missiles within Kuwaiti airspace on Saturday.

The missiles were intercepted over several residential areas, causing the fall of some debris.

In a press statement issued by the General Staff of the Army, official spokesperson of the ministry Colonel Saud Al-Atwan revealed that the Iranian attacks resulted in material damages, without casualties.

He affirmed that the Armed Forces continue to perform their duties and responsibilities in an efficient and competent manner, maintaining a high level of preparedness to enhance national security and guarantee the safety of citizens and residents.

Earlier, the General Staff of the Army announced at dawn Saturday that Kuwaiti air defenses intercepted hostile missile and drone attacks.

The General Staff Command stated in a press release that "the sounds of explosions were the result of air defense systems intercepting hostile attacks," urging everyone to strictly comply with the safety and security instructions issued by the relevant authorities.

In a related development, the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) said it handled three unusual incidents early Saturday morning due to debris falling from defensive interception operations.

Director for Public Relations and Media at KFF and its official spokesperson Brigadier General Mohammad Al-Gharib disclosed that the unusual incidents included two fires caused by falling debris, in addition to securing sites in coordination with the relevant authorities.

Al-Gharib emphasized the need for citizens and residents to avoid handling fires or objects suspected of being caused by falling debris, stressing the importance of immediately reporting such incidents through the emergency number 112 to ensure their safety and enable specialized teams to deal with these incidents according to established procedures.

He also urged everyone to fully abide by the official instructions and to refrain from approaching or tampering with the sites where shrapnel fell, leaving the handling of such incidents to the teams of experts to ensure

public safety.

The Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) confirmed that Kuwaiti airspace was temporarily closed from 4:15 am to 6:15 am on Saturday, as a precautionary measure following the Iranian attack involving missiles and drones.

In a press statement, PACA indicated that the relevant authorities activated the approved procedures and plans to deal with the emergency situation, guaranteeing the safety of passengers, aircrews and facilities in the civil aviation sector.

It stated that during the temporary closure, 11 flights operated by Kuwait Airways and Jazeera Airways were diverted to neighboring airports to ensure the safety of passengers and aircrews and to guarantee the continuity of operations according to the highest safety and security standards.

It explained that after coordinating with the relevant authorities and confirming the stability of the situation and the elimination of the threat, it was decided to resume air traffic and receive flights starting at 6:15 am.

It added that flights diverted to Dammam and Riyadh airports returned to Kuwait International Airport after air traffic resumed and Kuwaiti airspace reopened.

Guyana slams

progress is largely linked to effective partnerships with friendly nations that share the same values and goals, foremost among them is Kuwait.

He commended the role of Kuwait in supporting development projects in Guyana. He said many projects implemented with the support of Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) embody the friendship, cooperation and solidarity between the two countries. He added Kuwait remains a reliable development partner committed to supporting development efforts.

On the agreement concerning domestic workers, Torrington explained that his country does not face challenges related to domestic labor, as Guyana does not rely on this type of worker and that any isolated incident should not be generalized.

On the possibility of direct flights between Kuwait and Guyana, he said this depends on the demand and volume of trade and tourism between the two countries. He clarified that the legal and regulatory frameworks are already in place through the air services agreement between the two sides.

He affirmed the ongoing dialogue with a number of companies in Kuwait to increase trade between the two nations and ease the entry of Guyanese products to the Kuwaiti market, in addition to exploring opportunities for importing Kuwaiti products to Guyana.

He indicated that the oil boom increased the number of international flights to Guyana, particularly from the United States of America, with an increasing number of daily flights connecting the country to global energy hubs such as Houston, Texas.

Regarding travel options to Guyana, he said travelers from Kuwait can

reach his country through the United States, London or Panama, as direct flights are available from these destinations. He added numerous options are available for travelers wishing to visit Guyana and that holders of diplomatic passports are exempt from visa requirements.

In conclusion, on behalf of President of Guyana Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, and the government and people of Guyana, he congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and the government and people of Kuwait on the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

He added that his country aspires to build on these achievements to continue strengthening the bilateral partnership in the coming years.

Kuwait FM

cooperation, and solidarity among coalition nations, as well as their unified commitment to defending legitimacy and sovereignty.

Sheikh Jarrah also expressed his appreciation for the efforts invested in developing the memorial, noting its symbolic importance in reflecting the strong and enduring ties between Kuwait and the United States. He added that the project underscores the robust partnership between the two countries and their shared commitment to peace, stability, security, and common values.

In a separate engagement, Sheikh Jarrah met with Chairman of the US House Foreign Affairs Committee, Brian Mast, during his visit to Washington. The meeting addressed the longstanding historical relationship, strong partnership, and close cooperation between Kuwait and the United States.

Both sides discussed ways to further strengthen bilateral relations across various sectors and explored opportunities to expand cooperation in the interests of both nations. They also exchanged views on regional developments and key international issues of mutual concern.

T2 contract

The tender covers the airport expansion project, specifically T2, which is being implemented by the Ministry of Public Works. Upon completion of the three phases of the project, the terminal will be handed over to PACA, the governing body for the project that includes the construction of a passenger terminal with a capacity of up to 25 million passengers annually, 51 aircraft, transit hotel connected to the new terminal, VIP lounge, first-class and business-class lounges, central terminal building and a water tank building, all operating at service level A.

Once PACA presents its recommendations regarding the tender and CAPT awards the contract to the best bidder that meets the requirements, the project will be referred to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) for audit, review and approval to pave the way for the implementation phase.

Domestic worker

Sector, announced the launching of a new service through the unified government e-services application 'Sahel' for citizens to electronically obtain visas for their domestic workers and drivers.

The ministry explained that the new service allows citizens to complete procedures for the issuance of visas for domestic workers and drivers without visiting the concerned authorities. It affirmed that this is part of its ongoing efforts to complete the digital transformation, develop government services, and streamline procedures for citizens.

It added this is in line with the plan to develop e-services and raise government performance efficiency, thus, saving the time and effort of citizens and easing transactions through the 'Sahel' application.

KNET levels

KNET CEO Esam Al-Kheshnam said the upgrade is designed to provide a more efficient and seamless payment experience while aligning with international standards and strengthening the security of electronic transactions.

He added that the new system forms is part of a broader development plan aimed at enhancing its electronic payment gateway and preparing the platform to accommodate additional payment methods in the future.

Al-Kheshnam noted that the update reflects global trends in digital payments and supports efforts to improve the speed, flexibility and reliability of online transactions.

KNET is a Kuwaiti company that was established in 1992 with the participation of local banks to connect all local banking systems and provide banking services through an advanced network, enhancing security and efficiency in financial transactions.

Expat job

According to informed sources, Decision No. 2/2026, issued by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), covers the small and medium enterprises (SMEs), industry, agriculture, livestock, and fishing sectors. Applications for transfer, along with auditing and review procedures, will continue until the end of June.

The SME sector received the highest number of applications, with 8,553 cases, followed by the agriculture sector with 2,705, and the industry sector with 1,642. The livestock sector received 1,393 applications, while the fishing sector recorded 147 applications.

The sources expect the number of beneficiaries to increase in the coming period, noting that PAM rejected hundreds of applications that did not meet the transfer requirements, including obtaining approval from the original employer.

MoHE names Al-Nisf DG of Scholarships

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: The Ministry of Higher Education announced the appointment of Nusseiba Al-Nisf as Director General of Scholarships and Cultural Relations, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

On this occasion, the ministry, through its X account, extended its sincere congratulations and best wishes to Al-Nisf, wishing her success in her new position and continued achievements in serving the Scholarships and Cultural Relations Directorate.

Kuwait decries UNIFIL incident

KUWAIT CITY, June 6, (KUNA): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed on Thursday Kuwait's condemnation of the incident involving a patrol of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) that resulted in the death of a Serbian peacekeeper and the injury of several others.

In a statement, the Ministry affirmed Kuwait's categorical rejection of any acts that jeopardize the UN troops, stressing the need to ensure the safety of its personnel.



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Trump's deportation agenda about to get \$70b infusion from Congress

WASHINGTON, June 6, (AP): With virtually no strings attached, Congress is on the verge of providing a sizable infusion of cash to the Department of Homeland Security, powering President Donald Trump's mass deportation agenda for the remainder of his term in the White House.



Homan

The nearly \$70 billion package, which cleared the Republican-held Senate in a middle of the night vote and now heads to the House, was declared a "rotten bill" by the Democratic leader and an "ATM for ICE" by pro-immigrant advocates.

But for those aligned with Trump's campaign promise for the largest mass deportation operation in U.S. history, it all but guarantees an uninterrupted flow

of money to carry out the administration's immigration enforcement operations - and comes on top of some \$170 billion Congress already approved for the department last summer, as part of Trump's big tax breaks bill.

"We're going to continue to arrest people, we're going to continue to detain people and we're going to keep deporting people," Trump border czar Tom Homan told CBS News on Friday.

He hinted at summer sweeps of enforcement actions coming next to New York City.

The work of Congress comes at a pivotal time for the Republican president and his party as they face restless voters before the midterm elections. About one in three US adults know someone who has been impacted by Trump's immigration operations, according to an AP-NORC poll conducted in April. And as America celebrates its 250th anniversary, most say it's no longer a great place for immigrants.

Maine voters will 'have my back': Platner

Becerra advances to general election for Calif gov

SACRAMENTO, Calif., June 6, (AP): Democrat Xavier Becerra advanced to the general election for California governor Friday after pitching himself as an experienced choice to lead the nation's most populous state and succeed Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom.

Becerra leaned on his more than 35 years in public office, including as state attorney general and U.S. health secretary, to argue that he was the most qualified candidate in a crowded field.

"The people of the great state of California, in the greatest nation on earth, have spoken - loudly and proudly," Becerra said in a statement. "We are never backing down. November, here we come."

It was not yet clear who Becerra would face in the general election. His top rivals came down to Republican Steve Hilton, a former Fox News commentator backed by President Donald Trump, and Democrat Tom Steyer, a billionaire climate activist who poured \$215 million of his own money into his campaign.

Born and raised in Sacramento by



California gubernatorial candidate Xavier Becerra shakes hands with supporters during a campaign event in West Hollywood, Calif on May 28, 2026. (AP)

Mexican immigrant parents, Becerra has a wife and three daughters. He has said his family's immigrant background mirrored his "underdog" gubernatorial campaign, in which he initially failed to garner substantial support before surging in the final

months.

After one of the top Democratic contenders, Rep. Eric Swalwell, was accused of sexual assault and dropped out of the race, Becerra benefited from an opening to coalesce Democratic support. He quickly

racked up key endorsements from labor groups and Latino legislative leaders.

Also:

BAR HARBOR: Graham Platner, the insurgent Democratic candidate for US Senate in Maine, defiantly declared Friday that voters would stand by him despite a steady drumbeat of reports about his history with women.

Speaking to a crowd of hundreds in a coastal resort town, with Tuesday's primary around the corner, the first-time candidate pitched himself as a man with an imperfect past who remains Democrats' best chance to oust Republican Sen Susan Collins in November.

"When politically motivated, serious and false accusations are made against me, Maine, you have my back," Platner said. "The state of Maine raised me. And the state of Maine saved me."

Last weekend, his campaign wrestled with stories about messages that Platner sent to several women while he was married.

Court can't stop Trump ballroom construction, government lawyer tells judge

Federal judge strikes down WH immigration policy affecting 39 countries

BOSTON, June 6, (AP): A federal judge on Friday struck down a Trump administration policy enacted after the shooting of two National Guard members that made it harder for immigrants from dozens of countries to stay and enter the US.

In a ruling harshly criticizing the administration, US District Chief Judge John McConnell Jr. said the policy "threw the lives of countless immigrants living in the United States into indeterminate legal limbo," and he accused the US Citizenship and Immigration Services of ignoring the law.

"In enacting its latest immigration policies, USCIS: claims statutory and regulatory authority that it does not possess; makes decisions without the reasoned explanations that it must provide; acts without regard for the reliance interests of applicants that it must consider; and justifies its actions with pretextual concerns of 'national security' that mask anti-immigrant sentiments that it is forbidden from letting influence its decision-making," he wrote. "In legal terms that means USCIS's actions are contrary to law and arbitrary and capricious."

A spokesperson for the Department of Homeland Security did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The policies enacted after the National Guard shooting last year meant that immigrants from 39 African, Asian, Latin American, and Middle Eastern countries have been "categorically barred" from receiving final decisions on, among other things, their asylum, work permit, green card, and citizenship applications.

"This ruling reaffirms a basic principle: the federal government cannot shut down lawful immigration pathways or discriminate against people based on where they come from," said Skye Perryman, president and CEO of Democracy Forward, which represented the plaintiffs in the case. "These unlawful policies caused enormous harm to families, workers, asylum-seekers, and communities across the country who were left in limbo, unable to work, access protections, or move forward with their lives."

The policies apply to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services or USCIS, which approves applications for immigrants to work and become citizens. The agency, which is within the Homeland Security Department, often grants asylum, but only for those already in the United States when they apply. Immigration judges grant asylum to those stopped at the border; the ruling does not affect them, nor do the policies that



US President Donald Trump arrives on Air Force One on June 5, 2026, at Morristown Airport in Morristown, NJ. (AP)

sparked the lawsuit.

The broad ruling would impact all pending cases at USCIS involving people from the travel ban countries, not just those included in the lawsuit, Shev Dalal-Dheini, senior director of government relations at the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

"It is an important legal victory to ensure that legal immigration pathways remain open and that USCIS is held accountable to doing their congressionally mandated job of adjudicating applications," she said.

It is part of an ongoing effort by the administration to tighten US entry standards for travel and immigration, which critics say unfairly prevent travel for people from a broad range of countries. The administration suggested it would expand the restrictions after the arrest of an Afghan national suspect in the shooting of two National Guard troops over Thanksgiving weekend.

In its motion to dismiss, which the

court denied, the government argued that Congress gave the executive branch broad authority over immigration policy, including "the entry of aliens into the United States as well as discretion within the statutory scheme to confer as well as withdraw various discretionary benefits."

"This case rests on a remarkable premise: that a federal court should prevent an agency from issuing the very policy guidance that provides government personnel with the guardrails necessary to ensure consistent, non-arbitrary, and individualized decisionmaking consistent with federal law," the government wrote in its brief.

Immigration groups celebrated the ruling.

"This ruling sets a powerful precedent that the administration cannot ignore the law as laid down by Congress and cannot arbitrarily bar immigration benefits on the basis of national origin by fiat," Jamal Abdi, president at the National Iranian American Council, said. "Fortunately, this is still a nation of laws, and those who uphold America's values have recourse to challenge and push back on such discriminatory, arbitrary policies."

Shawn VanDiver, a Navy veteran who heads a coalition that supports Afghan resettlement efforts called

#AfghanEvac, said the ruling was a "significant victory for the rule of law and for thousands of Afghan allies and other immigrants who followed every requirement asked of them."

"Just this week in Dallas and Fort Worth, we met people who feared losing jobs because delayed work permit renewals threatened their livelihoods, families who postponed education, travel, and homeownership because they did not know when their cases would be resolved, and future Americans who had expected to become citizens only to see their applications stall without explanation," VanDiver said.

Also:

WASHINGTON: Lawyers representing the federal government argued Friday that a court could not stop construction of a White House ballroom because it was already underway and because of the sensitive security concerns they say the structure is meant to address.

Attorney Yaakov Roth, speaking during an exchange with US Appeals Court Judge Patricia Millett, said only Congress could halt the \$400 million project. The administration has been asking the court to allow it to press on with the ballroom without congressional approval.



Prime Minister Janez Jansa speaks before the Parliament during a session in Ljubljana, Slovenia on June 4. (AP)

Slovenia's parliament approves right-leaning govt

Slovenia's parliament on Thursday gave approval for the new government of Prime Minister Janez Jansa, marking a turn to the right for the small European Union country.

Lawmakers backed the new government in a 49-30 vote in the 90-member assembly.

The vote came after parliamentary elections held in March that produced no clear winner. Former liberal Prime Minister Robert Golob's Freedom Movement won most votes, but he

was unable to muster a parliamentary majority.

Jansa, 67, who was appointed as prime minister last month, and his populist Slovenian Democratic Party formed a coalition government with other right-leaning groups in Parliament. The new government also has the backing of a nonestablishment Truth party that first emerged as an anti-vaccination movement during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is Jansa's fourth term in office.

The political veteran is an admirer of US President Donald Trump and was a close ally of former populist Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, who was defeated in a landslide election in April.

Like Orbán, Jansa was staunchly anti-immigrant during the huge migration wave to Europe in 2015, and faced accusations of clamping down on democratic institutions and press freedoms during a previous term in 2020-2022. (AP)

cal impasse in the small Balkan country that is aspiring to move closer to the European Union and NATO.

The early parliamentary vote on Sunday was scheduled after Kosovo's main political parties failed to agree by a March deadline on who should replace former President Vjosa Osmani.

Prime Minister Albin Kurti's center-left Vetevendosje party has held a clear parliamentary majority since the early election in December. But the president in Kosovo is appointed by at least 80 lawmakers in the 120-member Parliament, a majority that neither Kurti nor the opposition could muster. (AP)

Dutch police detain 4 suspects: Dutch police have detained four men in a major investigation into allegations of drugging and abusing women they knew then sharing videos of the abuse, in a case that has echoes of French woman Gisèle Pelicot's ordeal.

The suspects, whose identities were not released in line with Dutch privacy rules, were detained after police, acting on information shared by authorities in Germany and the United Kingdom, searched several houses across the Netherlands over two days last week, police said in a statement Thursday. (AP)

UAE mediation succeeds again in Russian-Ukrainian prisoner swap

ABU DHABI, June 6, (Agencies): UAE mediation effort between Russia and Ukraine has succeeded, once again, in releasing 370 prisoners.

A statement from the UAE's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the new exchange involved 185 prisoners from each side.

This brings the total number of prisoners exchanged between the two countries; through 24 mediations, to 7,471 so far.

The Ministry affirmed the UAE's continuing efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Ukraine and mitigate the humanitarian consequences of it.

Also:

MOSCOW: Residents of St Petersburg, Russia's second-largest city, were told not to leave their homes after a "large-scale" Ukrainian drone attack targeted the city Saturday morning, local officials said, underscoring Kyiv's growing ability to hit deep inside Russia.

St. Petersburg Governor Alexander Beglov advised St. Petersburg



People wait to greet Ukrainian soldiers as they return from captivity after a POWs exchange between Russia and Ukraine, in Chernyiv region, Ukraine, on June 5. (AP)

burg residents not to go outside and warned of possible disruptions to mobile internet service.

Regional Gov. Alexander Drozdenko said 141 drones were shot down over the surrounding Leningrad region. Russia's Defense Ministry said its air defenses shot

down 376 Ukrainian drones.

Although no casualties were immediately reported, the renewed attack on St. Petersburg strikes a further embarrassing blow to Russian President Vladimir Putin's efforts to cast the conflict as a distant event that doesn't affect Russian daily life.

Pope urges Spain to stop fanning flames of polarization on 1st papal visit in 15 yrs

MADRID, June 6, (AP): Pope Leo XIV urged Spaniards on Saturday to stop "fanning the flames of polarization" as he arrived in Spain at a moment of political turmoil for the Socialist-led government and a credibility crisis for the Catholic Church.

The American pope, who has Spanish ancestors, traveled to Spain dozens of times as a priest, but this is the first visit by a pope in 15 years. It signals Leo is returning papal attention to Europe's Christian roots after Pope Francis largely stayed away from the traditional centers of Christianity in favor of smaller Catholic communities farther away.

Leo is seemingly keen to bring his message of peace, unity and human dignity to a continent sorely polarized over migration, Russia's war in Ukraine and anxiety over artificial intelligence.

The pope opened his weeklong trip in Madrid, greeted at the airport by the country's Catholic monarchs,



Pope Leo XIV arrives at Madrid's Adolfo Suarez International Airport, Saturday, June 6, 2026, as he starts a seven-day apostolic journey to mainland Spain and the Canary Islands. (AP)

King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia, and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez. He told reporters, while traveling, that he was particularly

heartened by reports of a spiritual awakening among young people in the once-staunchly Catholic but now secularized country.

Europe

British PM criticizes Vance: British Prime Minister Keir Starmer's office on Friday condemned comments by US Vice President JD Vance, who blamed immigration for the death of a university student who was handcuffed as he lay dying from a stab wound.

Henry Nowak, 18, died after being stabbed by Vickrum Digwa in the English city of Southampton in December. Digwa, who is Sikh, falsely claimed to police he was the victim of a racist assault by Nowak, who was white. When police officers arrived, they initially treated the wounded man as a suspect before noticing his injury and trying to resuscitate him. (AP)



Starmer

Kosovo set to hold third election: Kosovo will hold its third parliamentary election in 18 months this weekend as frustration grows over a continued politi-

'Trip will serve to advance ties and strengthen regional peace and stability'

N.Korean leader Kim showcases new warship ahead of visit by China's Xi

SEOUL, South Korea, June 6, (AP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un observed sea trials of a new warship repaired after a failed launch last year and vowed to accelerate efforts to build a nuclear-armed navy, state media said Saturday, showcasing his expanding military capabilities ahead of a visit by Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said Kim visited the 5,000-ton destroyer Kang Kon on Thursday as it underwent capability tests. Photos released by the agency showed him accompanied by his increasingly prominent teenage daughter, believed to be named Kim Ju Ae, whom South Korean officials say may be being groomed as his successor.

Kim Jong Un called for "rapidly developing" naval forces capable of playing a larger role in the country's nuclear deterrent and dealing a "deadly blow at the enemy any moment under the water or on the water," KCNA said. He said the navy was a key focus of a new five-year defense plan approved at a ruling party congress earlier this year, which he said includes building larger 10,000-ton-class destroyers and developing unspecified "underwater secret weapons."

The agency did not report any

direct remarks by Kim about Washington or Seoul amid persistent tensions over his nuclear ambitions and a prolonged freeze in diplomacy. The report came a day after North Korean and Chinese state media confirmed that Xi would visit North Korea on Monday, the latest sign of Beijing's efforts to reinforce ties with its nuclear-armed neighbor. In recent years, Kim has prioritized relations with Russia, notably by sending troops and military equipment to support Moscow's war in Ukraine.

Xi's trip was announced a day after North Korea unveiled what South Korea's military assessed as a new uranium-enrichment facility for producing nuclear bomb fuel. During a visit to the unspecified site, Kim pledged to expand the country's nuclear forces "at an exponential rate," a move that experts say reflects his desire to cement North Korea's status as a nuclear weapons state ahead of Xi's visit.

Kang Kon is the second of two destroyers North Korea unveiled last year, following the Choe Hyon, whose development Kim hailed as a major step toward expanding the operational range and preemptive strike capabilities of his nuclear-armed military. State media said the ships are designed to carry a range



People watch a TV screen showing a file image of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, (right), and Chinese President Xi Jinping, at the Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea on June 5, 2026. (AP)

of weapons systems, including anti-aircraft and anti-ship weapons as well as nuclear-capable ballistic and cruise missiles, though some experts have questioned their effectiveness in active duty.

Kang Kon was damaged during a botched launching ceremony in May last year at the northeastern port of Chongjin, triggering a furious reaction from Kim, who called the failure "criminal." North Korea

said Kang Kon was relaunched in June after repair, but outside experts have questioned whether the ship is fully operational. Kim has called for building two more 5,000-ton-class destroyers.

Chinese leader Xi will travel to North Korea next week, both countries announced Friday, in what will be his first visit in nearly seven years.

Xi will make a state visit from Monday to Tuesday, Chinese and

North Korean state media said in brief dispatches. His last visit was in June 2019.

The trip will serve to advance ties and strengthen regional peace and stability, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said Friday.

"The traditional friendly and cooperative relations between China and the DPRK have continued to develop in a sound and stable manner, bringing tangible benefits to both countries and their peoples," spokeswoman Mao Ning said, using the abbreviation for North Korea's full name.

The trip is coming just a few weeks after Xi hosted US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin in quick succession in Beijing.

North Korea's nuclear weapons program has long been a major concern for the United States, which opposes it. The UN has imposed economic sanctions on North Korea because of its nuclear and missile development.

The announcement of the trip came a day after North Korea unveiled a new facility to produce the material for nuclear bombs. It is believed to be a uranium enrichment plant, though North Korea has not confirmed that.

During a visit to the plant, Kim

announced plans to bolster the country's nuclear forces "at an exponential rate." Experts say the plant's disclosure implies that Kim was eager to cement his country's status as a nuclear weapons state ahead of Xi's visit.

The experts say Kim wants international recognition as a nuclear state so he can demand the lifting of the sanctions. They say Kim would ultimately push for arms reductions talks with the U.S. to win concessions in return for a partial surrender of his country's nuclear capability.

Kim has been focusing on expanding his nuclear arsenal since his high-stakes diplomacy with Trump collapsed in 2019.

Trump has repeatedly expressed his desire to restore diplomacy with Kim, but the North Korean leader has said the U.S. must first drop its demand for North Korea to denuclearize as a precondition for talks.

Analysts will be watching to see what if anything China says during Xi's visit about calls for North Korea's denuclearization.

Xi and Kim met in Beijing in September and pledged mutual support and enhanced cooperation. Kim was in the Chinese capital to attend a Chinese military parade alongside other foreign leaders including Putin.

Mock political party for India's young 'cockroaches' holds 1st protest in Delhi

NEW DELHI, June 6, (AP): Hundreds of supporters of the Cockroach Janta Party, an online joke that drew millions across India, gathered for the first time in the national capital on Saturday, taking the social media movement off screens and into its biggest real-world test yet.

The protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi, marks the movement's first foray into street politics after weeks of dominating social media feeds and news headlines, attracting millions of online followers and widespread support among young Indians.

Hundreds of mostly young Indians gathered in the heart of New Delhi's protest zone near Parliament, some with placards and cockroach masks. How many ultimately would join remained unclear, making the event an early test of whether the movement can channel its online popularity into a broader grassroots support around growing frustration among young Indians over education, jobs and economic prospects.

The other main challenge would be how the party navigates the kind of pushback earlier protest movements have faced under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government.

Over the past decade, authorities have sought to stamp out protests against his government, including demonstrations against a controversial citizenship legislation and year-long farmers' protests. Some protest movements also have faced legal action against organizers and activist arrests, which critics say reflects a broader effort by the government under Modi to suppress dissent.

Abhijeet Dipke, founder of the online movement, arrived in the capital from the U.S. on Saturday to participate in the protest. Police laid steel barricades at arrivals at New Delhi's international airport.

Dipke said in a social media post that police granted permission to the Cockroach Janta Party, or CJP, to hold the protest, saying, "Cockroaches gather at Jantar Mantar." Later Saturday, he arrived at the protest site.

CJP organizers used social media to rally supporters for Saturday's march, demanding the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. The demand grew out of an exam irregularity controversy in May that quickly became a broader outlet for frustration over India's education system and limited job op-

portunities.

Supporters chanted slogans including, "Cockroaches are coming, Dharmendra Pradhan is going!"

Participants were encouraged to bring India's national flag and a book, which organizers said symbolized right to education and equal opportunity for all. Organizers also urged demonstrators to remain peaceful and avoid any confrontations with police.

"Time to turn this tiny joke into a revolution," the official CJP account on X posted Friday.

The CJP emerged only three weeks ago to become an unlikely outlet for discontent among supporters who proudly call themselves "cockroaches."

India's Chief Justice Surya Kant likened critics and some unemployed youth to cockroaches during a May hearing, sparking backlash among frustrated young Indians. Dipke, a political communications strategist and Boston University student, used the insult as inspiration for a parody political party. Weeks after launching a website and social media accounts, CJP's Instagram page has until now amassed more than 22 million followers.



Abhijeet Dipke, (right), founder of the Cockroach Janta Party addresses supporters during a protest demonstration in New Delhi, India, Saturday, June 6. (AP)

US sanctions Cuban president in latest move to pressure island's leadership

WASHINGTON, June 6, (AP): The United States imposed sanctions on Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel, his wife and three other individuals, in the latest move by the Trump administration to pressure the island's leadership that drew immediate condemnation from Havana.

Included in the sanctions are Alejandro Castro Espín, the sole son of former Cuban President Raúl Castro and Vilma Espín. He served as an adviser to Cuba's Defense and National Security Commission and was present when Raúl Castro greeted then-US President Barack Obama in Havana during a historic March 2016 meeting. Castro Espín's son, Raúl Alejandro Castro Calis, also was listed.

The new penalties come as US President Donald Trump has been threatening military action in Cuba since ousting Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro in January and then ordering an energy blockade that choked off fuel shipments to Cuba. That has led to severe blackouts, food shortages and an economic collapse across the island.

The threats took on additional weight after the US announced criminal charges against Raúl Castro last month. Thursday's penalties, which follow Trump signing an executive order expanding sanctions against the island, freeze individuals' property and bank accounts in the US. But it's unclear how intertwined their finances are with the US financial system.

It's "pretty unlikely" Cuba's presi-



Cuba's President Miguel Diaz-Canel, (second left), and Raul Castro's grandson Raul Guillermo Rodriguez Castro, (center back), take part in a rally in support of former President Raul Castro in front of the US Embassy in Havana, Cuba on May 22 after US prosecutors filed an indictment accusing him of ordering the 1996 shootdown of civilian planes flown by Miami-based exiles. (AP)

dent and others have assets in the US, said Richard Feinberg, former US national security adviser on Latin America and professor emeritus of international political economy at the University of California, San Diego.

He said the sanctions "could be seen as preliminary to an intervention or increasing pressure on the regime to cut a deal," adding that the rhetoric of Trump and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio "could take you in either direction."

Díaz-Canel accused Trump of

making "new threatening statements against Cuba" and said "these measures are aimed at reinforcing the blockade and escalating the conflict between Cuba and the United States."

"This political blindness adds to the coercive measures applied in recent weeks against our country, designed to harm the Cuban people," he wrote on X. "The aggression and perversion of the U.S. government will clash with our resolve to confront the worst-case scenarios and resist the imperial onslaught."



Nigerian soldiers ride on an armored personnel carrier during Eid al-Fitr celebrations in Maiduguri, in Borno state, Nigeria on Aug 8, 2013. (AP)

Attack by Islamic militants kills five Nigerian soldiers

ABUJA, Nigeria, June 6, (AP): Islamic militants attacked a military base in northeast Nigeria killing five soldiers, the Nigerian army said Friday.

The base located in Mandaragirau in the Biu area of Borno state was attacked by "terrorists" early Friday, army spokesman Haruna Sani said in a statement.

The army did not specify what group was responsible, but it has linked similar attacks to the militant group Boko Haram or its splinter faction, the Islamic State West Africa Province, or ISWAP. IS is known for attacking military formations in the country's northeast.

Sani said the troops repelled the attack and inflicted casualties on the assailants, who launched the assault under severe weather conditions.

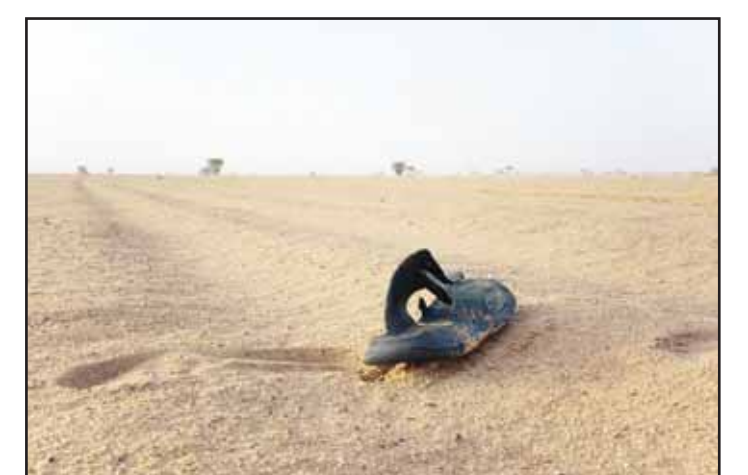
49 die of thirst in Niger's Sahara Desert after truck breaks down

NIAMEY, Niger, June 6, (AP): At least 49 people died of thirst after a truck broke down and they were stranded for days in the Sahara Desert in northern Niger, authorities said.

The victims, all Nigeriens, were returning home from a religious festival in Mali when the truck stopped running more than 80 kilometers (49 miles) west of Assamaka, near the borders with Mali and Algeria, Niger's Agadez region governorate said in an on-line post late Thursday.

Two men survived after trekking more than 50 kilometers (31 miles) to a water source and then continuing to Assamaka, where they alerted authorities, the governorate said.

A delegation sent to the scene by the Agadez Region Governor Gen. Ibra Boulama Issa learned the truck had traveled for several days from the Malian town of Talhandek about 300 kilometers (187 miles) from the Nigerien



A sandal lies on the ground in Niger's desert region of the south central Sahara, Sunday, June 3, 2018. (AP)

border.

It was not immediately clear what led to the breakdown or how long the passengers waited.

"On the spot, the findings were particularly disturbing. Dozens of lifeless bodies were found under

the immobile truck and in its surroundings," the Agadez governorate said.

Photos published by the governorate showed bodies in the desert with pieces of clothing and other belongings scattered around.

Family questions rescue efforts for Sherpa guide found alive on Mt Everest

KATHMANDU, Nepal, June 6, (AP): A Sherpa guide who survived a week on the treacherous slopes of Mount Everest was recovering at a hospital in Nepal's capital on Friday, while his family angered by a delay in rescue efforts sought legal action against those responsible.

Dawa Sherpa was found Thursday crawling in the snowy slopes around the Khumbu Icefall, just above Everest base camp, a week after he went missing. The 57-year-old was flown to a Kathmandu and reunited with his family. He was being treated for frostbite, dehydration and problems in his thighs but was stable and recovering, HAMS Hospital said in a statement.

His family said they were upset that the search had not begun earlier and filed a police case against Dawa's employer, the Kathmandu-based Himalayan Traverse company, and a complaint at the Department of



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)

Tourism, which handles mountaineering in Nepal.

"Action needs to be taken by the mountaineering department. It was

negligence of the company that resulted in so much delay in starting rescue." Dawa's nephew, Karma Gelje Sherpa, said.

Kuwaiti oil down \$4.13 to \$103.82

KUWAIT CITY, June 6, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil barrel went down USD 4.13 to reach USD 103.82 per barrel on Friday, compared to USD 107.95 pb the previous day, according to Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on

Saturday.

In international markets, Brent crude oil went down USD 1.94 to reach USD 93.09 per barrel, while West Texas crude went down USD 2.50 to reach USD 90.54.

Other Voices

Strait shutdown hurts Iran more than rivals

By Kamel Al-Harami

Independent Oil Analyst

NEWS about the Strait of Hormuz has become hourly, in terms of whether it will be opened or remain closed. We are now entering the fourth month but there are no signs of it reopening. Despite widespread international condemnation, Iran still refuses to take any action to reopen it.



Al-Harami

With its own ports blocked and limited movement into Iran's ports on the Arabian Gulf, just as it did by blocking marine movements, the same has happened to it. What a smart decision!

Most countries located in the Gulf can afford to remain without oil income for a period, as they have sufficient financial reserves and the ability to borrow on a short-term basis. Iran, however, does not have the same ability to borrow or access urgent financial assistance, as it has limited access to international banking systems.

As a result, Iran has damaged its own economic position, increasing hardship on its population. Inflation is estimated at 54 percent, reaching up to 77 percent, leaving very little in the way of savings for many.

All earnings are being spent on food alone, as no one can keep up with such a rate of inflation. The currency is subject to severe devaluation, along with mass layoffs and hyperinflation.

With the decision to close the Strait of Hormuz and allow only certain flagged vessels to pass, Iran is now facing the same consequences itself, even without exporting a single drop of oil. What benefit was gained from terrorizing and blackmailing by blocking global trade

through the Arabian Gulf?

As a result, oil prices surged and reached historic levels, while Iran did not gain a single US dollar in revenue from its own proceeds.

Meanwhile, some Gulf countries benefited significantly, such as Saudi Arabia through exports from the Red Sea, and the UAE through the Gulf of Oman. Iran, however, gained nothing.

Yes, most Arabian Gulf countries did not export oil during this period, and here we are in the fourth month. However, their accumulated wealth was immediately utilized, with no significant harm or reduction to annual budgets or expenditures. The Arabian Gulf countries have demonstrated their financial strength without needing to make major adjustments to approved budgets.

Now, oil prices are declining without any sign of an imminent reopening of the Gulf. There has been no major impact or shock sufficient to drive prices higher. This has disappointed speculators who were betting on oil reaching \$120 or more, with some even expecting \$150 per barrel. Across markets from the United States and Europe to the Arabian Gulf, oil prices are now trading below \$100 per barrel.

In the meantime, oil markets are still waiting for the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz for prices to reflect their true value in open markets. Demand is expected to pick up.

Meanwhile, oil-consuming countries will be buying at two stages - first, to meet their daily business needs, and second, to build up commercial and strategic reserves.

Some may also seek to increase their future stockpiles. The current situation surrounding the closure of the Strait of Hormuz may provide a new perspective, encouraging countries, if necessary, to expand their strategic reserve storage capacity.

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Boosting SME spending to \$31 mln

Duqm Refinery delivers \$275 mln EBITDA in '25

MUSCAT, June 6, (KUNA): Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Industries Company (OQ8), the Kuwaiti-Omani joint venture, posted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) of OMR 106 million (about USD 275 million) in 2025.

According to the refinery's 2025 Sustainability Report, the company recorded improved financial and operational performance following the completion of its transformation strategy at the end of 2024.

Chief Executive Officer of OQ8 Duqm Refinery, Abdullah Al-Ajmi, said total procurement spending exceeded USD 270.8 million in 2025, including more than USD 31.2 million directed to small and medium-sized enterprises.

Al-Ajmi said the refinery continued to strengthen sustainability through responsible operations, efficient resource utilization and support for environmental and community initiatives.

It also reviewed efforts related

to the protection of biodiversity, promoting health, safety and environmental practices, and supporting innovation and digital transformation to improve operational efficiency and enhance business reliability.

The report highlighted operational improvements, including enhanced crude-processing flexibility through the introduction of 12 new crude types.

It also noted the release of shareholder guarantees worth around USD 4 billion after the refinery fulfilled all financing requirements and achieved project completion milestones.

Since export operations began in May 2023, the refinery has shipped more than 19 million tons of refined products to markets across Asia, Africa and Europe.

Officially inaugurated in February 2024, the Duqm Refinery is a 50-50 joint venture between OQ Group of Oman and Kuwait Petroleum International (Q8). It has a refining capacity of 255,000 barrels per day.

Business

Kuwait Finance House Group wins 7 EMEA Finance Awards for 2025 Sukuk Issuances

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Group has won seven prestigious 2025 EMEA Finance awards, recognizing its leadership and achievements in the Sukuk market.

The accolades, including Best Islamic Finance Issuer, Best Sukuk House (KFH Capital), and Best Financial Institution Sukuk, underscore the Group's excellence in Islamic finance, driven by its innovative products and world-class banking services.

In addition, the Group won awards for best Sukuk deals, including:

- Best Sukuk in EMEA: Qatar's US\$4bn dual-tranche bond with Sukuk US\$3bn 10-year tranche.
- Best corporate Sukuk: Türk Telekom's US\$600mm debut 5-year Sukuk.
- Best supranational Sukuk: ICD's US\$500mm 5-year Reg S senior unsecured Sukuk.
- Best sovereign Sukuk: Bahrain's US\$1.75bn hybrid Ijarah and Murabaha 8-year Sukuk.

The EMEA Finance Awards are among the Middle East banking sector's most prestigious, recognizing institutions for their financial performance, innovation, service quality, and business strategy.

Ahmad Eissa Al-Sumait

Commenting on the accolades, KFH Chief Treasury Officer - Kuwait, Ahmad Eissa Al-Sumait said that the awards reinforce the Group's track record and efficiency in developing regional and global Sukuk markets. He explained that KFH leverages its capabilities to drive innovation and positive impact within Islamic finance, as reflected in its strategic shift toward supporting sustainability through green Sukuk issuances.

Al-Sumait added that in 2025, KFH's Treasury and Financial Institutions successfully issued \$850 million Additional Tier 1 (AT1) Mudaraba Sukuk. The historic transaction, Kuwait's largest ever, carried a 6.25% annual yield and was twice oversubscribed, with subscription orders exceeding \$1.7 billion.

He explained that KFH's excellence in issuing Sukuk reflects its strong confidence among regional and international investors. This highlights the



Ahmad Al-Sumait



Abdullah Al-Haddad

- **Al-Sumait:** The awards highlight the Group's growing role in developing the Sukuk market
- **Al-Haddad:** KFH Capital has established the Sukuk product in global financial markets

bank's robust financial position, credit rating, operational efficiency, and reputation for reliability as Kuwait's largest private sector bank by market capitalization and profitability.

Abdullah Sulaiman Al-Haddad

Meanwhile, KFH Capital CEO, Abdullah Sulaiman Al-Haddad emphasized the company's commitment to leading Sukuk arrangements and issuances for corporations, governments, and financial institutions, serving its diverse clientele and reinforcing its leadership in this market. He added that the company successfully arranged and participated in most of the largest, most significant Sukuk transactions executed in 2025.

Al-Haddad called these awards an incentive for growth and development, noting that years of positive market feedback confirm the company's sound strategy and its accumulated success and excellence.

He added: "KFH Capital is highly active in the Sukuk market, serving as lead coordinator for

most of the issuances it arranged in recent years. It has also acted as lead coordinator or bookrunner in numerous transactions for leading development and commercial banks regionally and internationally."

Al-Haddad emphasized that the company's advanced expertise and capabilities in the Sukuk market have strengthened its standing as a leading, trusted brand. Consequently, it has become the preferred choice for Sukuk issuers and investors.

EMEA Finance stated that KFH Group's rankings support its access to international capital markets, driven by its extensive Sukuk market experience, leadership, and contributions to developing this thriving Islamic finance industry.

London-based EMEA Finance is an international magazine covering financial and banking developments in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. It specializes in sectors such as Islamic banking, Sukuk issuances, and capital markets.

Through impactful initiatives that foster a culture of continuous learning

The National Bank of Kuwait advances talent development to support innovation & growth

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: As part of its firm commitment to developing human capital and prioritizing investing in people, National Bank of Kuwait continues its journey in empowering its employees and promoting a culture of continuous learning, through launching initiatives that improve their skills and qualify them to keep pace with the rapid developments in the financial sector, stemming from its deep-rooted belief that competencies are the foundation of sustainable growth and institutional excellence.

In this context, and as part of its unwavering commitment to supporting professional education and developing specialized skills in the financial and investment sector, NBK recently participated in the 16th annual CFA charter ceremony for 2026, in collaboration with the CFA Society Kuwait, which saw the honoring of 19 new CFA charterholders and was attended by leading figures and experts in the investment community.

NBK is a strategic partner of the CFA Society Kuwait, sharing its commitment to raising professional standard.

This comes as part of a broader strategy led by Group Human Resources at NBK, which focuses on incorporating the principle of "continuous learning" in its job offer, which is achieved by providing a comprehensive learning environment that includes study leave, cost reimbursements, and rewards, in addition to comprehensive policies that support the acquisition of accredited professional certifications.

Over the past three years, NBK has successfully supported 34 employees from 13 different work groups in obtaining prestigious professional certifications in various fields. The Bank has also strengthened its efforts through its partnership with the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), which enabled 10 employees from 7 work groups to obtain advanced professional certifications in less than two years.

As part of its commitment to diversifying learning pathways, NBK has also rewarded and reimbursed the costs of 19 professional certifications across 38 achievements that included several leading international certifications specializing in vital fields such as cybersecurity, financial analysis, auditing, project management, and international trade.

Additionally, NBK continued to develop its learning ecosystem by adding 11 new professional certifications during 2024 and 2025 in high-demand areas such as information security, risk management, organizational analysis, and human resources. This brings the total number of certifications supported by the Bank to over 23, in addition to sponsoring six professional development



Najla Al-Sager

Najla Al-Sager: At NBK, we believe that investing in people is the most sustainable and impactful investment.

- We continue to empower our employees to achieve excellence within a work environment that promotes ambition and accomplishment.

NBK policies support the acquisition of accredited professional certifications:

- Supported 34 employees from 13 different work groups to obtain prestigious professional certifications over the past three years
- Added 11 new professional certifications in 2024 and 2025 in high-demand fields
- Supported more than 23 professional certifications, in addition to sponsoring 6 development programs, with plans to add more in 2026
- Supported 10 employees from 7 work groups to obtain advanced professional certifications through a partnership with KFAS in less than two years
- Over the past 10 years, NBK has successfully organized Moody's Credit Curriculum programs, expanding on prior participation through IBS, with a total of 177 employees having benefited from the training
- Rewarded and reimbursed 19 professional certifications across 38 achievements, including specialized international certifications in vital fields

programs, with plans to add more during 2026.

NBK's commitment extends to long-term development programs. Over the past 10 years, the Bank has successfully organized Moody's Credit Curriculum programs, following its earlier participation through the Institute of Banking Studies (IBS). A total of 177 employees have benefited from this training, reflecting NBK's strong dedication to developing specialized expertise and enhancing the readiness of its workforce to meet evolving market demands.

In this light, Najla Al-Sager, SVP - Head of Talent Management and Learning at NBK, said: "We believe that investing in people is the most sustainable and impactful long-term investment, which is why we are keen to build a learning system that keeps pace with the aspirations of our employees and supports their professional development in various fields. Our continuous support for them to obtain international professional certifications and our strategic partnerships with prestigious lo-

cal and global educational institutions reflect our commitment to developing a qualified workforce capable of leading the future of the financial and banking sector".

"At NBK," Al-Sager added, "learning is considered an ongoing journey as opposed to merely a temporary phase, and we strive to establish a corporate culture that encourages innovation, personal growth, and knowledge sharing. As we expand our programs and add new fields and certifications, we continue to empower our employees to achieve excellence within a work environment that fosters ambition and accomplishment and supports the development of long and sustainable career paths".

Through these comprehensive initiatives, NBK reaffirms its commitment to continued investment in human capital, promoting a culture of lifelong learning, and strengthening its leadership in supporting the development of professional competencies and contributing to growth and innovation in the financial and banking sector.

Al Ghais calls for greater producer cooperation

OPEC sees limited impact of Middle East conflict on oil demand

MOSCOW, June 6, (KUNA): OPEC Secretary General Haitham Al Ghais has affirmed that the repercussions of the conflict in the Middle East led to a slight slowdown in global oil demand growth.

In remarks to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Thursday on the sidelines of the 2026 St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, Al Ghais said that these repercussions have not reached the level of an actual decline in consumption or altered the overall trend of global markets.

The fundamentals of the oil market remain robust and available data do not indicate any structural shift in the global demand, despite uncertainty and geopolitical volatility, he said.

The OPEC has kept its outlook for growth demand for global oil this year at levels of 1.2 barrels per day without change, he said, noting that it does not see, at the moment, any required changes in these statistics.

Oil markets have shown an ability to adapt to geopolitical develop-

ments, including the repercussions of the conflict in the Middle East, he noted, affirming that slowdown in oil demand remains limited within the upward trend in growing global consumption.

He underlined the importance of continued investments in oil and gas to ensure supply security and the stability of markets in the long run.

Meanwhile, he lauded the outcomes of meetings he held on the sidelines of the forum topped with the meeting with Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, where they discussed global oil markets developments and the need to boost cooperation among producers to support stability and supply security.

He also pointed to his meeting with Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak to discuss means of enhancing cooperation within the framework of the Declaration of Cooperation between OPEC and non-member states as well as the cooperation charter.

He stressed the key role played by Russia in backing global oil market stability.

In addition, Al-Ghais also met with Venezuelan Vice President Ricardo Menendez, where they discussed the latest developments in energy markets and emphasized the importance of continuing coordination and cooperation among producing countries.

He further pointed to his meeting with the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) chief Philip Mshelbila.

They affirmed the need to boost cooperation between both sides in sharing data and energy dialogue.

Al-Ghais pointed out that the Declaration of Cooperation, whose tenth anniversary of founding falls in December 2026, represents a key framework for supporting oil market stability and boosting understanding among producers, contributing to a balance between supply and demand.

To simplify home construction journey

ABK signs strategic partnership with Al Kazemi Air Conditioning as part of 'ABK Build'



Signing the agreement.



A group photo taken on the sidelines of the partnership announcement.

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) has signed a strategic partnership agreement with Al Kazemi Air Conditioning Company, further expanding its innovative 'ABK Build' platform, the first initiative of its kind within Kuwait's banking sector. The partnership aims to support customers embarking on the journey of building their dream homes by providing financing solutions, exclusive offers, and specialised services from the planning stage through to execution, reinforcing the Bank's role as a responsible banking institution in the local market.

The agreement was signed in the presence of Mohammed Al Qattan, Chief Consumer Officer at ABK and Abdulrazzaq Al Kazemi, Deputy CEO of Al Kazemi Air Conditioning Company, along with representatives from both parties. The signing ceremony included a presentation highlighting the key benefits of the partnership and how customers can take advantage of the exclusive discounts and offers available.

On this occasion, Al Qattan stated, "This partnership stems from our ongoing commitment to delivering added value to our customers and addressing their needs in the best possible ways. Through our collaboration with Al Kazemi Air Conditioning Company, we aim to provide financing solutions that ensure customer satisfaction and further strengthen confidence in the ABK Build platform, which accompanies customers throughout the entire journey of building their dream homes according to the highest standards."

He added that this step reflects the Bank's vision of building strong local

partnerships that contribute to delivering an integrated banking experience extending beyond traditional services to support customers' lifestyles. He further noted that the partnership represents a model for alliances that place customer interests at the heart of their priorities, while helping ease financial burdens on consumers through convenient and innovative financing solutions.

Al Qattan emphasised that the importance of this partnership is centred around three key pillars: enhancing customers' purchasing power through exclusive discounts and offers, supporting the local business sector and leading companies to help stimulate the national economy, and reinforcing the concept of responsible financing by enabling customers to acquire essential products in a financially sustainable manner without imposing burdensome obligations.

He concluded, "We believe that successful partnerships are those that create a tangible impact in customers' lives. This is precisely what we aim to achieve today by providing comfort and convenience to our customers through the ABK Build platform, through which we continue to establish additional partnerships to position ourselves as the ideal banking choice for housing finance solutions."

Meanwhile, Al Kazemi, said, "We take pride in this agreement with ABK, which reflects the shared values between our organisations. Through this partnership, we aim to provide exclusive offers to customers seeking the best air

conditioning and cooling systems available in the local market, while delivering an exceptional customer journey that begins with financing and extends to after-sales services."

He added that this collaboration highlights the importance of partnerships across different sectors in supporting economic activity within Kuwait and delivering suitable solutions that meet customers' expectations and needs.

Al Kazemi concluded, "We are fully prepared to meet the needs of ABK customers by providing the latest and highest-quality air conditioning solutions, including central air conditioning systems and other units, in addition to engineering design services such as layout planning and air distribution tailored to buildings, homes, and villas. We will also provide regular maintenance, technical support, repair services, and genuine spare parts in cooperation with leading international brands in the market."

The ABK Build platform is distinguished by its speed, simplicity, and customer-centric approach, offering customers a wide range of options, benefits, products, and solutions in collaboration with a select group of specialised partners in the local market. This enables customers to enjoy a seamless and convenient experience while building their dream homes, from design through to execution.

ABK will continue to establish additional partnerships in the coming period to further develop the ABK Build platform, attract more customers to its growing network, and continuously meet their financing needs.

Iran war worsens global hunger crisis

UNITED NATIONS, June 6, (AP): The U.N. food agency said millions of people are being pushed into acute hunger by the Iran war, as it warned would happen if the conflict escalated and oil prices remained high.

The World Food Program said an analysis in three vulnerable countries found that an additional 2.5 million people in Somalia, 2.3 million in Afghanistan and 1.3 million in Sri Lanka are struggling to meet their basic food needs.

In March, WFP predicted that 45 million people could be pushed into food insecurity by the end of June. That would be on top of the 318 million people around the world who are already food insecure.

"We remain by that prognosis," WFP's acting Executive Director Carl Skau told U.N. reporters. "That's mainly because the correlation between the prices of energy and food is so tight in many places, and also that in the poorest countries people are already spending all their

money on food, and hence when food prices rise, they eat less."

WFP said in its report, circulated late Thursday, that its findings indicate the Mideast crisis is generating "significant spillovers," particularly on the prices of food and fuel, and disrupting trade. Especially in already vulnerable countries, the Rome-based U.N. agency said, these factors interact and quickly impact food security and livelihoods.

"These impacts are expected to intensify in the coming months, even if the crisis in the Middle East de-escalates," WFP said.

Skau cited other global hotspots with food insecurity, including Sudan, Gaza, southern Lebanon, Yemen and Haiti.

WFP has had to limit aid to millions of needy people because of funding cuts, and Skau urged donors to step up, especially for Somalia and Afghanistan "because the human consequences of not doing more will be massive."

Summer on water gets pricier

Boaters scale back as fuel prices surge

DEXTER TOWNSHIP, June 6, (AP): On the kind of warm, bright afternoon that Michigan boaters wait all year for, Malik Amine and his brother readied their family's pontoon boat for the summer.

The cover was off and Portage Lake sparkled in the sun. But before the brothers could leave a narrow wooden dock, they had a decision to make: how much gasoline to put in the pontoon's 52-gallon engine.

Recreational boaters, like motorists, are feeling a pinch from the Iran war. U.S. gas prices have come down in recent weeks, but a gallon of regular gas still cost an average of 34% more Friday than it did a year earlier, according to motor club AAA. The price of diesel fuel, which is also used by some boaters, is up 53% from last year.

Ethanol-free gas, which many boaters, classic car owners and lawn mower users prefer, is anywhere from 20 cents to \$1 per gallon more than regular fuel, according to the National Association of Convenience Stores, which also represents fuel retailers.

One gas station near Portage Lake, which is 60 miles west of Detroit, is selling ethanol-free fuel for \$7 per gallon. Amine said he didn't plan to fill the boat's tank ahead of Memorial Day weekend.

"The cost is going to be a lot more than it was last year," Amine said. "I think it's probably a little bit smarter to do what you need and fill it as much as you need, because who knows when this conflict's going to end."

prices are curtailing their plans.

"There were a number of people within that who said, 'I am going to have to change my behavior,'" said Ellen Bradley, the association's chief brand officer. "I may not go as far. I may not as fast. I may spend more time anchored and swimming. I may spend more time at the dock."

Neil and Kathleen Donohoe sold their home in Colorado and now live aboard a 50-foot, diesel-powered boat dubbed the Granuaile, which is the Gaelic name of Grace O'Malley, a 16th century sea captain known as Ireland's pirate queen. They've spent the last seven years cruising up and down the East Coast and to the Bahamas.

Maintenance on the boat - not fuel - is typically their greatest expense, Neil Donohoe said. But lately, the cost to fill up the boat - which can hold 1,500 gallons - is eye-popping. They talk to other boaters and use various marine apps to find the cheapest gas.

"It's not driving us not to cruise, but it's making a difference," he said.

This summer, the couple plan to stick around the Chesapeake Bay area instead of heading further north. They've already been to Maine and to Canada, they reasoned, and they don't feel the urge to go again while gas prices are so high.

"It seems a little gross to spend that kind of money when so many people are struggling," Kathleen Donohoe said.

Gas prices are also impacting boating-related businesses. The Seattle Sailing Club, which offers lessons, chartered cruises and rentals, said its fuel bill has gone up 10.7% since the beginning of the war.

Lindsey Brown, the club's office manager, said its fleet of 30 boats usually rely on wind power, but they all have gas or diesel backup engines. In April, the marina where the boats are docked charged \$6.50 per gallon for diesel, she said. By late May, that had risen to \$7.99 per gallon.

Aligned with global disclosure standards and CMA requirements

Bursa Kuwait publishes its 5th standalone Sustainability Report

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Bursa Kuwait has published its fifth Sustainability Report, highlighting its environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2025 and reflecting the cumulative institutional approach across five consecutive years. It comes at a time when sustainability disclosures in the Kuwaiti capital market are transitioning from a voluntary practice to a mandatory regulatory requirement.

The report is aligned with an integrated set of internationally recognized frameworks, including the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards, the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) Standards for the Exchanges and Commodity Markets sector, relevant elements of the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) requirements, Bursa Kuwait's ESG Reporting Guide and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This enhances comparability and supports consistency with the global trends adopted in leading capital markets.

Commenting on the release, Head of Markets Sector at Bursa Kuwait Noura AlAbdulkareem said: "Bursa Kuwait's fifth Sustainability Report represents a natural continuation of the company's mission to enhance transparency and embed a culture of responsible market conduct. Sustainability has become a key factor in assessing investment merit and building trust with investors and stakeholders. As Kuwait's official stock exchange and a listed company, we continue to work towards developing a more mature disclosure ecosystem while supporting listed companies in advancing their governance, environmental and social responsibility practices."

The 2025 Sustainability Report comes at a particularly important time and on the heels of Capital Markets Authority Circular No. 4 of 2025, which requires "Premier" Market companies to prepare and publish sustainability reports for 2025 and disclose them on the Bursa Kuwait website before the end of the second quarter of 2026.

As an entity with dual responsibilities as Kuwait's official stock exchange and a listed company, Bursa Kuwait reaffirms its early compliance with this requirement and its role in setting a benchmark for institutional disclosure.

The report is also in line with the updated edition of Bursa Kuwait's ESG Reporting Guide, which provides a guiding framework to support listed companies in preparing their reports in accordance with best practices, while enhancing transparency, comparability and responsiveness to the expectations of investors and stakeholders.

Commenting on this, AlAbdulkareem added that "Bursa Kuwait's consistent publication of sustainability reports reflects a well-established disclosure strategy that goes beyond responding to regulatory requirements to setting an example in the field."

This approach is aligned with the proactive stance Bursa Kuwait has adopted over the years through the publication of sustainability reports, the provision of guiding frameworks such as the ESG Reporting Guide and its regular updates, as well as supporting listed companies in developing their disclosure practices. These efforts contribute to enhancing transparency and strengthening the confidence of investors and stakeholders."

Bursa Kuwait's fifth Sustainability Report highlights its efforts to develop the capital market and promote innovation, including the continued enhancement of the market's digital infrastructure, improved operational efficiency and support for the introduction of financial instruments and products that help deepen the market and expand the investor base.

These efforts are part of a broader vision to build a diversified capital market capable of keeping pace with global developments and accommodating new asset classes, strengthening the competitiveness of the Kuwaiti market and reinforcing its role in supporting the national economy.

The company's fifth sustainability report also reflects Bursa Kuwait's commitment to embedding a culture of responsible market conduct and promoting sustainable growth, building on an institutional approach that began with its membership in the United Nations Sustainable Stock Exchanges initiative in 2017 and has continued through the publication of sustainability reports, the development of guiding frameworks and the establishment of strategic partnerships that support the community and the environment.

Enhancing operational efficiency and developing human capital

Bursa Kuwait enhanced the efficiency of its operational resources and further embedded responsible management practices across the organization. In



Noura AlAbdulkareem



ESG Performance Highlights for 2025	
471 tons Recycled plastic through the strategic partnership with Omniva Plastic Collection	Over 173 tons Hazardous waste removed from Kuwait Bay
Over 1100 students Beneficiaries of financial literacy programs	44 Missions Environmental field missions in 2025
2017 Bursa Kuwait joins the Sustainable Stock Exchanges (SSE) initiative	1972 kilograms Operational waste disposed of efficiently

2025, the total amount of waste processed was around 1972 kilograms, including 472 kilograms of plastic waste and 1500 kilograms of paper waste that were recycled or securely disposed of. This reflects the company's approach to reducing its operational environmental impact, improving resource efficiency and embedding sustainability practices within the workplace.

Bursa Kuwait continued to invest in its human capital, regarded as a key pillar of sustainable institutional performance, through training programs and internal initiatives aimed at developing leadership and professional capabilities, strengthening specialized knowledge and supporting a culture of engagement and development.

The company also remains committed to building a motivating work environment that empowers employees, enhances the efficiency of internal operations and supports the organization's ability to meet the requirements of a more advanced and sustainable capital market.

Empowering youth and promoting financial literacy

Bursa Kuwait continued to support initiatives aimed at promoting financial literacy, empowering youth, developing skills and strengthening its strategic partnerships with local and international organizations as part of its corporate social responsibility.

These efforts included continued collaboration with CODED Academy through the sponsorship and hosting of the fifth edition of the UNICODE program, which attracted more than 320 university students, as well as signing a strategic partnership with INJAZ Kuwait to support and empower more than 800 high school and university students through educational and training programs focused on financial literacy, entrepreneurship and life skills.

These efforts were complemented by support for specialized professional initiatives, including a partnership with CFA Instituteto host and sponsor the CFA Research Challenge.

In addition, the company strengthened its partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and supported its humanitarian initiatives in the region. These initiatives reflect an integrated approach that combines education, youth empowerment, humanitarian action and the development of partnerships with sustainable impact.

Tangible environmental impact

Bursa Kuwait continued to support initiatives aimed at protecting the environment, enhancing re-

source efficiency and reducing its operational environmental impact through multiple partnerships and initiatives that reflect its commitment to translating sustainability principles into measurable practical impact.

This included the company's continued sponsorship of the Environmental Voluntary Foundation'sKuwait Dive Team in its efforts to preserve Kuwait Bay, one of the country's vital economic and environmental assets.

Through 44 field missions during the year, the team removed more than 173 tons of waste, including 76 tons of hazardous materials across 29 missions and seven tons of abandoned fishing nets, in addition to recovering six vessels and boats with a total weight of 90 tons. These efforts reflect the importance of long-term partnerships in addressing environmental challenges and embedding responsible environmental practices.

Bursa Kuwait also continued its strategic partnership with Omniva Plastic Collection Company to support plastic recycling efforts and promote the concept of a circular economy, which was complemented by internal initiatives aimed at rationalizing energy and water consumption and reducing the company's carbon footprint.

In 2025, Omniva successfully recycled more than 471 tons of plastic waste, equivalent to around 23.6 million plastic bottles, reflecting the growing scale and effectiveness of the environmental initiatives supported by the company.

Sustainable growth and lasting impact

Bursa Kuwait's fifth Sustainability Report is an extension of the company's sustainability strategy, which is built around the pillars of community and the environment and aims to create long-term value for stakeholders through practical initiatives and institutional partnerships with tangible impact.

The report also reflects Bursa Kuwait's approach to aligning its disclosures with international standards and national priorities, meeting the expectations of investors, regulators and stakeholders while enhancing their quality and comparability.

In 2025, Bursa Kuwait affirmed that sustainability has become an embedded part of its institutional framework and a key element in enhancing operational efficiency, developing human capital and expanding its social and environmental impact and that transparent disclosure of ESG practices is a central factor in building trust, reinforcing credibility and serving as a strategic asset for any institution seeking to achieve sustainable long-term success.

What's On

SPOTLIGHT



Got a birthday or event?
Share your story and snapshots with Arab Times!
Email your write-up and photos to
arabtimes@arabtimesonline.com
We'll feature it on our What's On page!

178 blood donations collected for Kuwait attack victims

Bangladeshi expatriates in Kuwait donate blood in support of those injured in attack

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Upon learning of the urgent necessity for blood for the injured individuals undergoing medical treatment who were injured in the drone attack at the Kuwait International Airport on 3 June 2026, His Excellency the Ambassador of Bangladesh to Kuwait, Major General Syed Tareq Hussain, OSP, awc, psc, accompanied by four embassy employees, immediately visited the Central Blood Bank in Jabriya and donated blood. In solidarity with the brotherly people of Kuwait, the Embassy of Bangladesh in Kuwait requested the Bangladeshi expatriates in Kuwait to participate in this noble initiative of blood donation.

Responding to the call of the Bangladesh Embassy in Kuwait, a large number of Bangladeshi expatriates donated blood on 04 and 05 June 2026 at the Kuwait Central Blood Bank in support of those injured in the drone attack. A total of 266 Bangladeshi expatriates registered to donate blood. However, blood could be collected from 178 donors after the required medical screening process. This humanitarian response reflects the solidarity of the Bangladeshi expatriates in Kuwait with the victims and the people of Kuwait during this difficult time.



Bangladesh Ambassador leads humanitarian blood donation effort.

Bangladeshi expats rally to support Kuwait Blood Bank

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: The Bangladeshi expatriate community in Kuwait organized a large voluntary blood donation drive to support the Kuwait Central Blood Bank and assist victims injured in the recent accident at Kuwait International Airport.

Organized under the banner of "Bangladesh Community Kuwait," the campaign saw a strong turnout, with expatriates arriving from across the country to the Central Blood Bank in Jabriya.

The four-hour drive, held from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM, recorded 211 registered applicants, with 149 successfully donating blood after medical screening and health checks.

Organizers thanked all participants, including those unable to donate for medical reasons, and praised their willingness to contribute. They described the initiative as a strong humanitarian effort to support patients in need.



Photos during the event.

Fifty expatriates join blood donation campaign

Kuwait-BD Press Club hosts blood donation drive

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Demonstrating a profound sense of community responsibility, the Bangladesh Press Club, Kuwait organized a voluntary blood donation campaign at the Central Blood Bank in the Jabriya area on Friday. Led by a delegation from the journalists' organization, approximately fifty expatriate Bangladeshis enthusiastically participated in the drive to support the local healthcare system. Emphasizing the deep bond between the expatriate community and their host country, AH Jubed, General Secretary of the Bangladesh Press Club, Kuwait, stated that donating blood is a noble act that saves countless lives, and the community stands ready to extend all possible support to Kuwait during any critical moment, as they rightfully consider it their second home. This impactful initiative follows a



Expat Bangladeshis support Kuwait through blood drive.

recent noble gesture by Major General Syed Tarek Hussain, the Ambassador of Bangladesh to Kuwait,

who, along with other embassy officials and staff, had previously donated blood and subsequently inspired

and urged the wider expatriate community to actively participate in such lifesaving humanitarian causes.

IDAK-KAHI host Yoga Workshop in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Indian Dentists' Alliance in Kuwait (IDAK), in collaboration with Kerala Ayurvedic Health Institute (KAHI), and the Embassy of the Republic of India in Kuwait conducted the IDAK-KAHI Yoga Workshop 2026 on 30 May, 2026. The workshop was centered on the theme "Yoga for Healthy Ageing."

The workshop was inaugurated by Her Excellency Mrs. Paramita Tripathi, Ambassador of India to the State of Kuwait. In the inaugural address, the Ambassador emphasised the importance of wellness and healthy ageing and highlighted the significant role that yoga can play in achieving both. She also noted the growing popularity and appreciation of Indian arts and traditional sciences like yoga across the globe.

Dr. Shalin Anna Simon, President of the Indian Dentists' Alliance in Kuwait (IDAK), welcomed the col-



IDAK and KAHI partner with Indian Embassy for yoga for healthy ageing workshop.

laboration between IDAK, KAHI and the Indian Embassy in organising the workshop. She noted that amidst the demands of hectic and

stressful professional lives, workshops such as these help everyone, especially the dental professionals and the community at large, to rein-

force the understanding of yoga and help participants to alleviate stress, reinvigorate healthy living and lifestyles.

Hybrid work seen as both opportunity and challenge

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

By Radostina Purvanova,
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A truce of sorts has quelled the return-to-office wars that have raged in the post-pandemic workplace.

Hybrid work policies, which require some in-office work while allowing flexibility to work from home, have become commonplace. In 2023, only 20% of companies had implemented hybrid policies. That number had shot up to 38% in 2024 and to 42% in 2025, according to the workplace survey Flex Index.

Hybrid work supporters can point to research suggesting that hybrid policies improve employee retention and decrease turnover. Some human resource professionals agree, citing their personal experience, with some job seekers seeing hybrid work as a bare-minimum expectation as they consider opportunities.

As business scholars who study management and communication technologies, we have discovered a more complicated picture. Our research shows that employees actually have more mixed feelings about hybrid work, with some becoming disillusioned. In fact, a hybrid solution may not always be the sustainable compromise it's hyped to be.

We tracked a group of employees from three large companies in the financial services sector starting in 2022. Coming out of the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, one company decided to go fully back to the office, one chose to stay fully remote, and one adopted hybrid policies.

In each case, not surprisingly, employees had mixed responses to whatever the policy was. It was clear, though, that the hybrid policy had the fewest fans. While office work was preferred by 50% of employees in the back-to-office company, and remote work by 62% of employees in the fully remote business, only 44% of employees in the hybrid workplace told us they were happy with their company's policy.

When we checked back with our participants in 2025, it looked like most employees in each company were now on board with their company's chosen policy: The share of approval rose to 60% for back-to-office, 72% for fully remote and 63% for the hybrid format. Notably, these companies also experienced very low turnover, so the sample of workers remained largely the same.

At first glance, the almost 20-percentage-point jump in the approval rating for hybrid work would suggest it had turned into a golden compromise over time. But a closer look reveals an unstable support base.

In the other two scenarios, all of the employees who preferred in-office or remote work back in 2022 were still on board with their company's policy in 2025. In contrast, in the hybrid company, only half of those who preferred hybrid in 2022 had the same outlook in 2025. The other half now said they preferred either in-office or remote work. The hybrid policy had gained new support, but it had lost half of its original fans.

Those who now embraced the office spoke about better collaboration and relationship building opportunities. "Because I like my team and my work is somewhat collaborative, I tend to find it more enjoyable and productive to be in most of the time," said one worker who said their preference changed from hybrid to in-office.

Meanwhile, those who switched to preferring remote work often spoke of personal arrangements as a key driver. "My wife and I have made decisions about childcare based on me being able to work from home," is how one employee put it.

The upshot: Back-to-office and fully remote work policies create more durable, or "sticky," preferences for those respective types of work. In contrast, hybrid policies form preferences that are more fluid.

In our book "The New Workplace," we explore this divergence through the eyes of employees. One reason the nonhybrid policies create sticky preferences is that they help employees set routines with predictability. And people like predictability in their work and life.

But going to the office every day isn't just predictable. It offers an added bonus of work-life separation. "I need structure!" was a common refrain we heard from office-preferring participants, who spoke of work and life "bleeding together" without

workplace boundaries.

Working remotely every day is predictable in a different way. It offers the added bonus of increased autonomy and freedom. Remote-preferring participants prized their independence so much they described their employer's remote policy as "golden handcuffs" that kept them there even though they otherwise might leave.

Hybrid policies, in contrast, create competing demands that challenge employees, forcing them to constantly switch between work and home modes. This requires both personal flexibility and adaptability - psychological traits that few people naturally possess.

Even hybrid-preferring employees spoke of having to "train my brain" and "flip my mind" as they tried to adjust to the format's unpredictability. In the long run, some adapted to hybrid successfully by developing a new skill we called task-location fit. They learned to do focused, heads-down work at home and collaborative work at the office. This was the crowd that remained on "team hybrid."

But others got tired of trying to adapt to the competing demands of hybrid - what we called paradox management fatigue - and decided either fully in-office or fully remote work was best for them. This fatigue, in the end, is what made the hybrid preference fluid.

"I still value the flexibility to be able to work from home when needed, but I think getting out of a consistent rhythm has made me prefer working in the office," said one worker who came to appreciate full-time in-office work.

A second reason hybrid policies lose fans is poor implementation. One error, we believe, is when companies hire across geographies. Most participants worked on teams where at least some, if not most, team members were in a different city, state or even country. This defeated the purpose of an in-office requirement, as it effectively required remote team meetings. "I can Zoom from my home," many participants said.

Another mistake, in our view, is letting employees choose their in-office and remote work days. While this lives up to the flexibility promise of hybrid, it leads to a half-empty office that's lonely for those who come in.

Furthermore, employees know they'll find their teammates in the office under a back-to-office policy, or that their teammates will be available online under a fully remote policy. But a "choose-your-adventure" hybrid policy removes the certainty of how, when, and where to reach teammates.

With these challenges, no wonder Dropbox recently called hybrid work "the worst of both worlds" and declared the company will stay fully remote.

At the same time, given the rising adoption of hybrid work, employers that are jumping on that bandwagon need to figure out how to prove the critics wrong and make hybrid work more sustainable.

For example, employers can implement a structured hybrid schedule by setting one or more days when employees have to come in. While this may sacrifice some personal flexibility, structured hybrid solves the coordination challenges. When everyone's in the office at the same time, it won't feel empty - and co-workers will collaborate more smoothly.

Managers can also make the physical office a place of community where people want to be. This means investing in livening up the office.

In our research, participants' stories were steeped with nostalgia for the days of company picnics, Oscar-style end-of-quarter celebrations, and disco-at-the-office parties. They said they also appreciated the little things, like pizza at the office or a food truck in the parking lot. Participants wished these social activities would come back, even with a hybrid work schedule.

Finally, companies can better align hiring and team design practices. Hiring across geographies allows locally unavailable talent to join the ranks. But geographically dispersed teams aren't hybrid - they're fully remote. To solve this contradiction, managers should assign employees to teams based on geographic location. When that's not possible, they should provide teams with a generous travel budget and encourage periodic in-person team gatherings.

These are just some tactics that can help companies make hybrid work. As one manager, a believer in hybrid work from the start, said: "I continue to see huge benefits for my team members feeling like they can show up as their best selves at work because hybrid allows for work-life integration." (AP)

Javier Bardem gives new life to a notorious villain

Apple TV's 'Cape Fear' brings a modern twist to a classic tale of terror

NEW YORK, June 6, (AP): If there's ever been a terrifying screen villain, it's got to be Max Cady. He's the sadistic, unhinged former inmate bent on getting revenge against the lawyer who put him away in "Cape Fear."

Robert Mitchum played Cady in 1962 and Robert De Niro portrayed him in a chilling 1991 remake. Now it's time for Javier Bardem to slip into the menacing shoes of the cold-blooded murderer for a version on Apple TV. It debuts Friday with the first two episodes.

"It's a great classic thriller, but each version so far is different in a way that reflects its time," says showrunner Nick Antosca. "I wanted to do a new version that honored the classics that I love, but also is a nightmare for today."

The 10-part series stars Amy Adams and Patrick Wilson as well-to-do lawyers in Savannah, Georgia, whose family gets upended by Bardem's revenge-seeking missile.

Exonerated after 17 years in prison for the killing of his pregnant wife, Cady infiltrates the couple's lives and those of their daughter and son. "You deserve a good life. I had a good life," he tells them, menacingly. Each member of the family has a very exploitative secret.

The American Film Institute ranks Max among the among the Top 50 greatest villains of all time, higher than Count Dracu-

la, Freddy Krueger and Travis Bickle from "Taxi Driver," another De Niro nightmare.

"This is a man who has lost it all and, so far, he has nothing else to lose," says Bardem. "He has all the time in the world to enjoy the revenge. He doesn't seem to care about any external approval of anything or any kind. So he's unleashed."

Antosca had the blessing of Martin Scorsese, who directed 1991's "Cape Fear" and executive produces the Apple TV series alongside Steven Spielberg. "He was very generous and encouraging and like, 'Try this. Try that. Don't be afraid to get crazy,'" Antosca says of Scorsese.

Antosca looks forward and back, rooting his "Cape Fear" in 2026 - with TikTok, true crime podcasts, microdosing - but leaning on the instantly recognizable theme music from the 1962 movie by Bernard Herrmann and the 1991 version by Elmer Bernstein. There's even a cameo or two from one cast member from 1991.

"We think of the show sometimes as like a nightmare remix," Antosca says. "When I do an adaptation, I want it to feel like you watched the original and then you went to sleep and had a nightmare about it. So there's new unexpected stuff that comes to it. There's the visceral energy of the original that's preserved, but maybe they're in a different order or context and seen in a new light. So we had fun with it."

So fans will return to key scenes in the



This image released by Apple shows Javier Bardem in a scene from 'Cape Fear.' (AP)

1991 film - like the psychological seduction of the daughter, or Max Cady doing pushups in the prison gym revealing his tattoos or him behaving badly in a movie theater - but they're made different.

"We also wanted to capture but not exactly copy some of the feverish energy

that Scorsese brought cinematically. So there are a lot of camera moves and kinetic camera work, and we really gave ourselves permission to go nuts a little when the action gets heightened."

It is a franchise that refuses to die, so to speak, with two movies and a TV show,

not to mention being parodied on "The Simpsons" - the "Cape Feare" episode is a classic - and "Family Guy."

Ten or so hours of plot runway gave Antosca a chance to slowly increase the tension on the family, as opposed to the movies, which are like two-hour runaway trains of terror.

"I wanted to pull back on some of the kind of brute force aspect of it and explore the creeping paranoia and sense of devastation of a family being picked apart," says Antosca. "That, to me, is the scariest thing."

Wilson, who plays a dad fighting to stay connected to his rebellious teenage children and his spinning-out wife while also battling his own demons, says the longer running time means a deeper experience.

"Your family in turmoil - that's really, I think, something that's completely universal. And that's the benefit of having 10 episodes to tell it and adding other characters and other storylines and seeing the kids' own storylines," he says.

Setting it in 2026 also gave the series makers plenty of ways for Max to infiltrate his prey in ways he couldn't decades ago - cloned smartphones, drones, artificial intelligence and high-tech surveillance.

"Max is using surveillance in a much more highly technical and much more invasive way," says Adams. "But that feeling of being watched, I think that's a very timeless terror."

'Trainspotting' turns 30

Boyle, McGregor look back as cult classic gets 4K re-release

LOS ANGELES, June 6, (AP): Ewan McGregor, for a fleeting moment after "Trainspotting" came out, felt like a rock star.

It wasn't his first significant project; it wasn't even his first film with director Danny Boyle. And he was, in his words, fairly arrogant and cocksure at the time. But that kinetic film about four heroin addicts in late-1980s Scotland was and, 30 years later, remains defining - in his career, in the culture and in his understanding of what true artistic satisfaction can feel like.

"It's very much in that early part of my career, and of course, even today, probably the most important piece of work that I was involved in, just because it had such a massive effect on my life. Not only because of what it did, but because of how it felt to make," McGregor told The Associated Press in a recent interview. "It set the bar unknowingly high because it's been quite hard to match ever since."

Both McGregor and Boyle are a little wistful about the time, and what they made, on the eve of its 30th anniversary re-release. Starting Friday, a 4K digital restoration will be in theaters nationwide. Though "Trainspotting" was very much of its moment with its Britpop soundtrack, its Thatcher-era grit, its darkly comedic tone and shrewd blend of giddy highs and tragic lows, it's also one that has stood the unforgiving test of time.

"You get kids coming up to you who are 17 who said they'd just seen it," Boyle said. "I could be their grandfather ... yet it still spoke to them."

Boyle was a hot commodity after "Shallow Grave," a 1994 black comedy about flatmates in Edinburgh starring McGregor, and Hollywood was calling. Literally. A peak-famous Sharon Stone cold-called him and asked if he'd want to come make a film with her. But he had his sights set on Irvine Welsh's buzzy debut novel, teaming once again with screenwriter John Hodge and producer Andrew Macdonald.

The budget would be small, 1.5 million pounds or about \$1.9 million, and the shoot would be quick and local. They didn't know what they didn't know: Boyle remembers asking his cinematographer, the late Brian Tufano, if they could use an anal probe camera for the "worst toilet in Scotland" scene.

"I remember him saying, 'Well, Danny, yes, you can get that. But I'm not sure how Ewan and his family and agent will feel about that,'" Boyle said with a laugh. "He tempered my kind of extreme way of approaching this material."

And somehow it all worked, driven by youthful energy, a bit of arro-

gance and a passionate commitment to the material.

"Trainspotting" had to be made that way," said McGregor, who was 23 at the time. "It would have been a disaster if it had been done differently."

For McGregor, at least part of the vitality came from the fact that they were shooting on film; money was going through the camera on every take.

"We shoot on these cards now, and it just doesn't matter anymore," McGregor said. "There's no natural sort of like rhythm to filmmaking like there used to be. ... I think back to 'Shallow Grave' and 'Trainspotting' and it feels almost like a different job."

Boyle too has been chasing that kind of innocence ever since. He said he might have come close on his upcoming film "Ink," with Jack O'Connell.

"It was liberating not having enough money because you don't have that limitation of thinking, oh, that's going to be too extreme for the studio or for the audience reach we're meant to have," Boyle said. "You could make it so that if it didn't work, you just, you know, sulk away with your tail between your legs and call back Sharon Stone and say 'I was wrong.'"

Like any film about drugs, there was a fair amount of discourse around its release. U.S. presidential candidate Bob Dole even denounced it, unseen, for romanticizing heroin during his campaign. But the film was in the conversation - and it had an enviable group of supporters, including Pulp frontman Jarvis Cocker and Blur's Damon Albarn, both of whom provided songs for the film.

After "Trainspotting" became a hit, life changed profoundly for McGregor. In London, he said, "it was madness." At the time he was sharing a flat with his co-star Jonny Lee Miller, Jude Law and Sean Pertwee. When they'd go out to clubs, they felt like rock stars.

"There was a real energy around it," McGregor said. "We were part of that, you see, the Blur and Oasis and Pulp and The Verve and all of that amazing music that was happening then. We were the sort of movie version of it, I guess, because Danny knew what he was doing with the soundtrack and because the novel was so huge and current and ... and maybe because it was ours. It was British and it wasn't pandering to America. We didn't make it for America."

Boyle hopes that audiences take a chance on "Trainspotting" in the theater, whether they're revisiting it or seeing it for the first time. It was, he said, made with an absolute love of cinema.



This image released by Sony Pictures Classics shows Ewan McGregor in a scene from 'Trainspotting.' (AP)



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Anna Faris, left, and Regina Hall in a scene from 'Scary Movie.' (AP)

Pop-culture references fly fast in uneven franchise comeback

Scary Movie 6 brings back Wayans and Core Four for a rapid-fire horror spoof

LOS ANGELES, June 6, (AP): The knife-wielding serial killer known as Ghostface unwisely tries to stab Teyana Taylor in the opening scene of "Scary Movie" and it goes rather poorly. The dagger the psycho plunges into the famously fit actor's abdomen bounces off, horribly bent.

"I'm Teyana Taylor," she announces. "My abs have abs."

Ghostface accepts the loss but then taunts the actor for having lost the best supporting Oscar this year. She accepts that but then smacks him across the face with what she did win - a Golden Globe. Thank!

It's a sequence that perfectly captures the Wayans family sense of humor: Cartoonish, topical, gross, profane, absurd and sometimes - just sometimes - hysterical.

What seems like a dozen of Wayans have reunited for the latest chapter in the parody horror franchise "Scary Movie," a pastiche of loosely tied skits that riff off current and past horror movies as well as topical events like ICE raids and the Drake and Kendrick Lamar beef. It's a dizzying, breathless chapter, as you might expect with pent-up targets stocked up since the last outing in 2013.

The script is by Marlon Wayans, Shawn Wayans, Keenen Ivory Wayans, Craig Keyes and Rick Alvarez, with direction by Michael Tidde. More Wayans lurk in the credits.

Like any movie with that many writers of different ages, you can almost assign the jokes - a "The Jeffersons" reference mixes with one for ChatGPT. The guys actually return to scream "Wazzup!," which is over a quarter of a century old.



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Marlon Wayans in a scene from 'Scary Movie.' (AP)

If you wanted a tight plot, this is not the movie for you. Basically, Ghostface from the "Scream" franchise is hunting the "Scary Movie" original Core Four - Marlon Wayans' Shorty, Shawn Wayans' Ray, Anna Faris' Cindy and Regina Hall's Brenda. There are a ton of uncredited guest stars and returning ones, some who have been long dead (Don't ask).

The Core Four are adults now - one has a daughter named Tuesday (get it "Wednesday" fans?) - and they're all a bit of a mess. Cindy is hitting the bottle (not of conditioner, if you know what I mean) while Shorty is still a stoner who plays video games but now he's super rich thanks to crypto. One of Cindy's kids chugs pills from a prescription bottle labeled "Mommy issues."

"We've got to save the franchise," they agree.

There are jokes about Kanye

West, how promiscuous people are these days, COVID-19, Ted Bundy, "Saltburn," Candace Owens, DEI hires, and "Silence of the Lambs." Scatological humor abounds, as well as a deep vein of good, old fashioned homophobic yucks. One actor is told to stop trying to win an Oscar: "It's a horror movie. Ask Demi Moore."

The writers goof on "Terrifier 3," giving a nod to the iconic mall Santa scene in which Art the Clown now hands out very gross presents, as well as "Sinners" - in which Shawn Wayans reprises his barely closeted gay character - and "Weapons," where the children running across lawns with their arms out are doing so because they ate Halloween candy spiked with drugs.

But especially toward the end, the filmmakers tread water with their references to "M3GAN," "Get Out," "Candyman" and "The Sub-

stance" - simply showing us a set-up from those films without doing anything to really skewer them. Just putting M3GAN in the subway isn't that funny. Better is an amusement park themed on "Final Destination" - with rides that constantly crash and the slogan "Where everybody dies."

There's a lazy, bizarre sequence that takes on "KPop Demon Hunters" with a jolt of animation and the song "Golden" - the original lyrics "We're gonna, gonna be golden" become "We about to be tokin'" - that ends up with one character in bed with three demon hunters.

There are moments when the franchise folds in on itself, as when Cheri Oteri returns as Gail Hailstorm, parodying Courtney Cox's "Scream" character Gale Weathers, and Chris Elliott reprises his creepy haunted mansion caretaker with a tiny, deformed hand from the second film entry.

Can you parody your own previous parody? While we're at it, why is "Scream" so lazily and heavily leaned on in 2026? And how much did Angry Orchard hard cider pay for its product placement?

It's best not to ask such deep questions. "I know who goes to a Wayans brother movie," says Taylor before she assaults Ghostface. She's right: It's us, willing to slog through tons of gross-out misfires for that one, great killer bit.

"Scary Movie," a Paramount Pictures release that hits theaters Friday, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for "crude sexual content, graphic nudity, strong violence and drug content and language throughout." Running time: 95 minutes. One and a half stars out of four.

Obituary

Tributes gather in Buenos Aires to honor his life and music

Indio Solari, legendary voice of Argentine rock, dies at 77

Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 6, (AP): Carlos Alberto Solari, the Argentine singer-songwriter known as "the Indio" who led Patricio Rey y sus Redonditos de Ricota, one of the country's most popular and influential rock groups, died Friday. He was 77.

Solari, who had struggled with Parkinson's disease for at least a decade, was found dead near an indoor pool at his house in the provincial town of Ituzaingó, about 30 kilometers (18 miles) west of the Argentine capital, Buenos Aires, authorities said, without identifying a cause of death.

His family confirmed his death on social media, saying they would hold a public funeral to allow people to bid farewell to the rock legend. Fans began gathering at his home, with some bearing flowers and wearing T-shirts printed with his nickname. Crowds filled a large plaza in downtown Buenos Aires to mourn, commune and sing Solari's hit songs. People wept. Strangers hugged.

Eros Ruarte, 19, said he woke up Friday to his mother breaking the bad news.

"I said, no, mom, you can't say that. I couldn't believe it, that the Indio had died. ... He is the biggest idol in the world. I grew up listening to him," he said from the impromptu wake. "I heard his songs from my mom, my uncle."

As the lead singer of Patricio Rey y sus Redonditos de Ricota - known more simply as "Los Redondos" - Solari became a countercultural icon for disaffected Argentines coming of age as their country transitioned from a bloody military dictatorship to a democracy characterized by newfound freedoms but also instability and hyperinflation



In this file photo, Argentine singer Indio Solari performs in Olavarría, Argentina, March 11, 2017. (AP)

in the 1980s.

During the consumerist frenzy that gripped Argentina the 1990s, under the free-market policies of then-President Carlos Saul Menem, Solari's classic rock anthems, punchy dance tunes and cryptic lyrics gave voice to a spirit of rebellion against the excesses of capitalism and influences of foreign powers. Los Redondos released 10 studio

albums, eschewing major record labels to maintain artistic independence.

The band broke up in 2001, but Solari found continued success as a solo artist, releasing five more albums under his own name that mixed mainstream rock and electronic influences and drawing hundreds of thousands of fans to parks and stadiums across Argentina.

At a massive concert in 2016, he announced that he had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. "Mr. Parkinson is nipping at my heels. But here I am," he said. The crowd went wild. He later retired from touring, speaking candidly in interviews about the debilitating effects of the disease.

Tributes poured in from politicians, artists and soccer stars across the country.

The Argentine Soccer Association said Solari's voice "became a popular rallying cry" and "echoed in the stands" of the soccer-crazed country.

The Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo, a prominent activist group which sought to find relatives who had been killed or "disappeared" by the 1976-83 dictatorship, said the singer "inspired society as a whole to doubt, to question and to think critically."

Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, Argentina's former president who is serving a corruption sentence under house arrest, posted one of his famous lyrics on social media, popularized as a call to live courageously: "Just living costs you your life."

Solari is survived by his wife, Virginia Mones Ruiz, and 25-year-old son Bruno.

'I Knew It, I Knew You'

Swift brings pop-country back with 'Toy Story 5'



In this file photo, Taylor Swift appears at the MTV Video Music Awards in Elmont, N.Y., on Sept. 11, 2024. (AP)

NEW YORK, June 6, (AP): Taylor Swift's new song for the Disney and Pixar's forthcoming "Toy Story 5" film is here. On Friday, Swift released "I Knew It, I Knew You," a bit of a return to country music for the performer who first made a name for herself in the Nashville music scene before taking over the world.

Here's everything you need to know about "I Knew It, I Knew You."

Swift doesn't sing with a familiar twang on "I Knew It, I Knew You," but no matter - the song features some elements inextricable from the country genre: Live instrumentation, plucky banjo and harmonica that opens the track.

Most view Swift's last official foray into the country music genre to be 2012's "Red," though the album is much more of a crossover experiment. It would be more astute to label "Speak Now" as her last true-blue, full-length, country music release - and that was more than 15 years ago.

Additionally: "I Knew It, I Knew You" is also Swift's first original material since "The Life of a Showgirl" was released in October.

The song is also co-produced by Jack Antonoff, her former, frequent collaborator. Swift started working with Antonoff on 2014's "1989" through 2024's "The Tortured Poets Department."

Notably, the pair started their long collaboration after Swift's country era, perhaps with the rare exception of "Betty" from her 2020 "Folklore" album.

"Writing this song felt like a musical departure and coming home at the same time. Creating something for Jessie was a new challenge and also felt like second nature all at once," Swift wrote on social media Friday, referencing the beloved cowgirl character. "And being a 'Toy Story' kid from the age of 5 til now... is an adventure I plan to be on, to infinity and beyond."

Last weekend, billboards with the initials "TS," stylized like the "Toy Story" logo, appeared in Los Angeles, Chicago, Dallas, San Francisco, Toronto, Mexico City and London - fitting, as "TS" works both for the beloved franchise and the musician.

On Monday, Swift confirmed the song was forthcoming, writing on Instagram, "I've always dreamed of getting to write for these characters who I've adored since I was a 5-year-old kid watching the first Toy Story movie. I fell instantly in love with Toy Story 5 when I was lucky enough to see it in its early stages, and I wrote this song as soon as I got home from the screening. Sometimes you just know, right?"

She also shared that preorders for three CD single versions of the track were available on her site. They quickly sold out: One features the song as it appears in the film, another is an acoustic version and the last is a piano version.

"It's incredible just how meaningful it's been having Taylor write and perform this song. Her connection to Jessie and the immediate way she understood what the character was going through was undeniable," "Toy Story 5" director and writer Andrew Stanton said in a press statement at the time. "The song is so deeply connected to 'Toy Story.' So much so that on first listen, it instantly felt like it had always belonged there, like a long-lost family member. It was kismet."

Some fans online have begun speculating: Could this be an Oscar contender in the original song category?

Quite possibly, if it adheres to all relevant rules and regulations! For 2027 Academy Awards consideration, a feature film - and its song submissions - must have a qualifying theatrical release between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31 this year. "Toy Story 5" will be released in theaters worldwide on June 19, so it qualifies there.

It also depends on when "I Knew It, I Knew You" is placed in "Toy Story 5." There's a new rule this year: If the song plays over the end credits, it must also overlap with the last 15 seconds of the film before the credits actually begin.

At any rate, if Swift's song is submitted - and if she were to win - she'd be just that much closer to an EGOT. She has 14 Grammys and an Emmy. An Oscar would mean she'd only need a Tony. Could Broadway be next?

Stage

The 'Lost Boys' and 'Schmigadoon!' lead with 12 nods each

Broadway braces for big night as Tony Awards return to Radio City

NEW YORK, June 6, (AP): Twenty-four shows on Broadway received Tony Award nominations this season, but not all will walk away with a trophy and the box office attention they usually bring.

Here are some key things to know as Broadway's biggest night approaches, including how to watch, the top nominees, who is poised to make history and what shows secured performance slots.

The Tonys will be broadcast to both coasts on Sunday from 8-11 p.m. EDT/5-8 p.m. PDT, live from Radio City Music Hall.

On CBS and streaming for Paramount+ subscribers in the U.S.

Pink, a three-time Grammy Award winner, will make her debut as MC. "I just want it to be, first and foremost, just celebratory and fun and entertaining and over-the-top and ridiculous," she says.

She promises a big, honking opening number - written by Benj Pasek, Justin Paul and Mark Sonnenblick that ends with some 170 people on stage - lots of costume changes and some wire work, which she has done in her concerts. She has tapped Amber Ruffin, a writer and performer for "Late Night with Seth Meyers," for help with jokes.

A pre-show will be broadcast on Pluto TV from 6:35-8 p.m. EDT/3:45-5 p.m. PDT. Laura Benanti and Tituss Burgess will host that telecast, in which some technical Tonys will be handed out. Viewers can access it on their smart TV, streaming device, mobile app or online by going to Pluto TV and clicking on the "Live Music" channel, found within the Entertainment category on the service.

The seven best new musical and best musical revivals - "The Lost Boys," "Schmigadoon!," "Titanique," "Two Strangers (Carry a Cake Across New York)," "Cats: The Jellie Ball," "Ragtime" and "The Rocky Horror Show."

The presenters include: Adrien Brody, Annette Bening, Ariana DeBose, Ben Platt, Bernadette Peters, Billy Crystal, Bowen Yang, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Carrie Coon, Cole Escola, Darren Criss, Jack O'Brien, Jeremy Pope, John Leguizamo, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Kara Young, Kelli O'Hara, Kristin Chenoweth, Law Roach, Lena Waithe, Lily Rabe, Maya Rudolph, Megan Thee Stallion, Neil Patrick Harris, Nicole Scherzinger, Patrick Wilson, Paul Rudd, Ruben Santiago-Hudson, Sarah Paulson and Sting.

A total of 26 competitive categories, from lead and featured actors to scenic, costume and lighting design. Some technical award handouts may be pre-taped, and winners won't appear on the live show, only cut down into edited bits sandwiched into the telecast.

There are two top nominees: "The Lost Boys" and "Schmigadoon!" each earned a leading 12 Tony Award nominations. "The Lost Boys" is an adaptation of a 1987 teen movie vampire thriller, and "Schmigadoon!" is an adaptation of an Apple TV series that gently mocks Broadway musicals. They're followed by a revival of "Ragtime," a big, soaring musical celebrating early 20th-century America, with 11 nominations, and "Death of a Salesman," Arthur Miller's masterpiece that looks at the unraveling of the American Dream, starring Nathan Lane, which nabbed nine nods.

For new musicals, it's "The Lost Boys," "Schmigadoon!," "Titanique" and "Two Strangers (Carry a Cake Across New York)."

For new plays, it's "The Balusters," "Giant," "Liberation" and



In this file photo, Joy Woods, left, and Audra McDonald appear during a performance of the Broadway musical 'Gypsy' in New York. (AP)



Audra McDonald attends the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute benefit gala celebrating the opening of the 'Superfine: Tailoring Black Style' exhibition on Monday, May 5, 2025, in New York. (AP)



George Clooney appears at the 'Good Night, and Good Luck' Broadway opening night on April 3, 2025, in New York. (AP)

"Little Bear Ridge Road."

History has already been made, in a way. June Squibb became the oldest Tony-nominated actor in history at 96 and could become the oldest Tony winner, surpassing

Lois Smith, who was 90 when she won in 2021.

Nathan Lane is hoping for his fourth Tony, which would make him tied as the most-awarded male performer in Tony history, along-

side Boyd Gaines and Frank Langella. If he does win for best lead actor in a play for the revival of "Death of a Salesman," he'd have Tonys in three separate acting categories, previously winning featured actor in a play for "Angels in America" and lead actor in a musical twice for "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" and "The Producers."

And for the first time since 2002, the contenders for best leading actress in a musical are all first-time nominees: Sara Chase ("Schmigadoon!"), Stephanie Hsu ("The Rocky Horror Show"), Caissie Levy ("Ragtime"), Marla Mindelle ("Titanique") and Christiani Pitts ("Two Strangers (Carry a Cake Across New York)").

Other performances include the original lead cast members of "The Book of Mormon" - Josh Gad, Andrew Rannells, Rory O'Malley and Nikki M. James - this year celebrating its 15th anniversary.

Another show celebrating a milestone, "Chicago" now at 30, will have a performance slot featuring Queen Latifah, Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Alex Newell, Adrienne Warren, Julianne Hough, Whitney Leavitt, Dylan Mulvaney and Pink. Plus, "A Chorus Line," which last year celebrated its 50th anniversary, will get a special tribute by Rachel Zegler. Leslie Odom, Jr. will sing "Without You" from "Rent" during the In Memoriam section, in honor of that show's 30th anniversary.

The 2025-2026 Broadway season set a new box office record for the second year in a row. Over the 52 weeks of the season, Broadway brought in a combined total of \$1,910,903,835, a smidge higher than last season's then-historic total of \$1,892,650,959. Last season also had 53 weeks instead of the usual 52, a Broadway accountant trick.

In more gloomy news, attendance was actually down - 14,577,322 versus 14,658,531 from last season. And the average paid admission was \$131.09, continuing an ever upward trend.

Beijing approves space computing industry innovation center

BEIJING, June 6, (Xinhua): Beijing has approved the establishment of the capital city's first space computing industry innovation center, now set to connect the entire industrial chain of space computing and boost the development of the satellite Internet of Things (IoT) sector, according to the Science and Technology Daily.

The innovation center has identified six major research areas, including highly reliable, heat-resistant space-native computing chips, high-performance hyper-interconnected space computing payloads, space computing satellite platforms and standard systems, space-based large models under constrained power conditions, integrated space-ground cloud-based measurement and control networking, and space computing power service-oriented and tokenized operations.

The innovation center is expected to be officially unveiled at the end of June, the report said.

Space computing refers to an emerging computing paradigm that deploys data processing, storage, intelligent analysis and decision-making capabilities on orbital platforms such as satellites and space stations, according to another report by Beijing Daily.

The innovation center is jointly

led by Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications (BUPT) and leading enterprises in the space computing sector.

Beijing is home to the most complete aerospace and computing industrial chain in the country, Wang Shangguang, dean of the School of Computer Science at BUPT, was quoted as saying by the Beijing Daily. He added that the city brings together rocket and satellite companies, large model firms, and chip enterprises, providing unique foundation for the development of space computing.

Also:

BEIJING: Chinese researchers have developed a new approach to significantly enhance the performance of lithium-sulfur batteries, a breakthrough that could one day enable drones to fly much farther on a single charge.

The study, recently published in the journal *Nature*, opens a new path toward longer-lasting, more powerful batteries for low-altitude aviation and beyond.

Most conventional drones currently rely on lithium-ion batteries, which are approaching their energy density limits. Their energy density – the amount of power stored per unit of weight – typically falls below

300 watt-hours per kilogram, leading to the “range anxiety” that restricts flight duration.

Lithium-sulfur batteries are considered a promising alternative due to their high theoretical energy density, as well as the abundance and low cost of sulfur. However, in practice, these batteries have faced a major hurdle, as during charging and discharging, sulfur undergoes a complex chemical process that generates lots of soluble intermediates. These intermediates tend to drift away, slow down the reactions, and waste energy.

A team led by Tsinghua Shenzhen International Graduate School (Tsinghua SIGS) has proposed a new solution by introducing a “premediator” for sulfur electrochemistry.

“Think of it as a special additive that sleeps inside the battery until it is needed. When the sulfur reaction starts, the additive wakes up right where the action is and begins to work,” explained **Zhou Guangmin**, a researcher at Tsinghua SIGS.

Once active, this molecule grabs onto the soluble intermediates and keeps them from drifting away. It also helps build fast lanes for the electrical reactions, making the whole process much smoother and more efficient, Zhou said.



This photo provided by Roscosmos shows the International Space Station from a Russian Soyuz MS-19 spaceship after undocking on March 30, 2022. (AP)

Astronauts briefly take shelter during repair to fix leak on ISS

NASA on Friday temporarily ordered astronauts to take shelter during repairs to fix a fresh leak aboard the International Space Station.

The five astronauts moved into the SpaceX capsule that is docked at the station while cosmonauts worked to fix the leak, which is on

the Russian side of the orbiting laboratory.

The decision was made “out of an abundance of caution,” NASA spokesperson Bethany Stevens said via X.

The crew left the capsule and returned to regular operations after repair work was paused.

That part of the space station has suffered from cracks and leaks over the years. NASA said Roscosmos decided to do a more extensive repair after fresh problems were found.

The space agencies have been working to determine the cause of the cracks. (AP)

Major event venues increasingly using technology

Powerful artificial intelligence making facial recognition better at identifying you

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

By Vijayan Asari
University of Dayton

If you are fortunate enough to have a ticket to an event at Madison Square Garden in New York - say, an NBA Finals game - one aspect of your visit will be having your face scanned by a facial recognition system.

Major event venues are increasingly using the technology. Some, like Madison Square Garden, use it for surveillance purposes, and some, like Citizens Bank Park in Philadelphia, to offer visitors optional ticketless admission.

Adoption of facial recognition technology is increasing, becoming more prevalent in daily life, from public buses to public buildings. The Transportation Security Administration has deployed the latest facial recognition technology at security checkpoints at numerous airports. The agency says the new system will be used in cities across the US that are hosting World Cup 2026 soccer matches.

The growing use of facial recognition has broadened concerns about accuracy and bias. But in my research studying facial recognition technology in the Vision Lab at the University of Dayton, I've found that advanced deep learning models have made face recognition systems more accurate and reliable. The AI models, trained on hundreds of millions of face images, are more than 99% accurate in controlled environments - settings such as cellphones, airports and border checkpoints.

Facial recognition involves three steps: locate a face in an image or video frame, create a faceprint that catalogs salient features - including the shape of the face and landmark points such as eyes, nose and mouth - and record the texture of the skin. Then it compares the faceprint to those in a database, which may be inside a smartphone or at a bank or hospital, to verify a person's

identity or allow access.

In the physical world, these systems are faster and simpler than requiring people to show IDs. In the online world, they are easier than entering a login name and password. Facial recognition also significantly reduces the possibility of forgery or fraud when compared with ID cards or passwords.

Improvements in the technology have come from a variety of research projects. FaceNet, a deep learning model developed by Google, has upgraded recognition of faces that are partly covered or hidden in images. DeepFace, a landmark AI-powered facial recognition system developed by Facebook AI Research, achieves the same high level of verification shown by humans.

NeoFace, a highly accurate AI-powered algorithm developed by NEC, is built into Mobile Fortify, the mobile facial recognition system used by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement to identify people.

Real-world conditions such as poor lighting, difficult viewing angles, extreme facial expressions, concealment by face masks or sunglasses, and poor image quality can still hamper performance, leading to faulty identification. False positives and false negatives are the two primary errors. False positives are when a person is incorrectly matched to a different person in a database. False negatives are when an individual is not found in a database, even though their image exists there.

False positives are more critical in security and safety applications. They can lead to wrongful accusations, discrimination or detention. In 2025, a 50-year-old woman in Tennessee was arrested and put in jail for six months based on an AI-powered facial recognition system that incorrectly tied her to a North Dakota bank fraud investigation. False negatives may prompt authorities to deny services to people who qualify for them.

Accuracy can suffer if models are trained on data that does not reflect real-world demographics. A 2025 study showed that systems trained on public databases in which people with darker skin tones are lacking leads to lower

recognition accuracy. This kind of unintentional bias in training data may lead to misidentification of women, people of color and young and old people. One report found that facial recognition systems used by 42 US government agencies falsely identified African and Asian American faces 10 to 100 times more often than white faces, in some cases leading to wrongful arrests.

Accuracy also deteriorates when people are wearing heavy makeup and for young children and old people because their landmark features tend to change more quickly than adults of other ages. Balancing datasets by collecting more representative images across age, gender and ethnicity, and frequently updating databases, can improve accuracy and produce fairer results.

Adjusting images before they are sent for matching - for example, changing brightness levels - can improve accuracy, too. People squint their eyes when they are in dark or very bright light. Advanced processing software can mimic this human trait to improve the facial recognition system's ability to extract facial features from the image.

Humans are good at identifying a person even if part of their face is covered by sunglasses or a face mask. The brain assigns more significance to the exposed details. If facial recognition programs can learn to do the same, that would reduce false positives and false negatives, including when cameras only capture part of a face.

Facial dynamics can help, too. It may be difficult for someone to instantaneously recognize a middle school friend they haven't seen for many years, but if the old friend smiles, that change in expression can immediately improve recall.

Researchers are developing a facial recognition method for doing this, known as volumetric directional patterning. It captures the subtle movements of facial muscles, as well as eyelid blinks, in consecutive frames of a video. It tracks how facial landmarks shift over time, as well as the context in which a face is being observed, which can improve recognition accuracy. (AP)



Health workers prepare for duty at the Mongbwalu treatment center in Mongbwalu, Congo on June 5. (AP)

Ebola outbreak in C.Africa could reach 20,000 cases without strong public health measures

NEW YORK, June 6, (AP): The Ebola outbreak in Central Africa could grow to 20,000 cases or more, depending on how quickly infected people are isolated to slow the spread, according to a new analysis by US health officials.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published a range of scenarios generated by computer models Friday, spanning from 10,000 cases to more than 20,000. If accurate, a worst-case scenario could approach the worst Ebola outbreak in history, the West Africa epidemic in 2014-2016 - which resulted in more than 28,000 reported cases and more than 11,000 deaths.

“Without strong public health interventions, the modeling work suggests an outbreak of that scale is possible,” said Dr. Satish Pillai, incident manager for the CDC's Ebola response, in a briefing with reporters.

Jennifer Nuzzo, director of Brown University's Pandemic Center, said the modeling “affirms what we have worried about since the beginning: This outbreak is following dangerous trajectory” if more is not done to stop the spread of Ebola.

But she cautioned it can be extremely difficult to predict how outbreaks will progress. “I wouldn't read too much into the specific numbers. It's really hard to make an accurate projection when you have limited data,” she added.

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said Friday that there have been about 400 confirmed cases, including 63 deaths. Experts say there likely others that haven't been diagnosed or reported.

Viruses that cause Ebola disease spread through con-

tact with bodily fluids such as vomit, blood and semen. There are no specific treatments or vaccines for the Bundibugyo virus at the heart of the current outbreak. The disease is often fatal.

The World Health Organization declared the outbreak a global health emergency in May. Some experts believe infections may have been occurring in February, but health officials initially tested for a different kind of Ebola virus.

The outbreak response has been complicated by an armed conflict between Congo's government and the Rwanda-backed M23 rebel group, as well as attacks by the Islamic State-affiliated group the Allied Democratic Force. The violence has caused massive displacement of people living in the conflict areas, officials say.

Earlier this week, Nuzzo said the risk to the United States seems low. “I don't think it's a scenario that it's going to come here and spread broadly,” she told reporters. The CDC echoed that assessment in an article released Friday.

That's due in part to decisions but the US government to ban the entry of people without US passports, as well as US green-card holders who visited Congo, Uganda or South Sudan in the previous 21 days. Also, people with US passports who traveled to those countries are undergoing health screenings and being funneled into four receiving airports.

CDC's modeling report attempts to project how things might play out, depending on different factors - including how many infections and deaths have already happened, and how successful responders are in quickly identifying and isolating infected people before they can spread the infection to others.

Argentina expands hantavirus probe, sending teams to trap and test rats

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, June 6, (AP): Argentina on Friday said it was expanding its investigation into the origins of the hantavirus outbreak that struck an Atlantic cruise ship last month, sending scientists to trap and test rats in the western province of Mendoza while lab results are pending from the southernmost city of Ushuaia.

Argentine authorities said biologists from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention were joining the mission next week in Mendoza.

The rare outbreak on the MV Hondius was caused by the Andes hantavirus, a disease carried by rodents endemic to Argentina and Chile and the only hantavirus thought to be able to spread between people in some cases.

Reconstructing the chain of transmission is difficult work, and Argentine authorities say it may never be possible to pinpoint exactly where the first known victims - a Dutch couple who died in April - contracted the virus before boarding the cruise in Ushuaia. But experts say getting to the bottom of the outbreak will offer valuable information about how the rare virus spread and carry important lessons for management of the disease.



Argentine scientists collect traps placed at different points across Ushuaia, Argentina on May 19, as part of an investigation for the source of the hantavirus outbreak on the MV Hondius cruise ship. (AP)

As repatriated cruise passengers from more than 20 countries have disembarked and entered specialized quarantine centers, epidemiologists are examining the 11 confirmed hantavirus cases, including the schedules of the three people killed, to better understand the chain of transmission.

Argentine scientists are working to

retrace the path of the Dutch tourists, believing that the original source of the onboard virus to be the man's exposure to rodent droppings or urine during their monthlong trip across Argentina and Chile before the ship's departure. The typical incubation period before symptoms appear is around three weeks but can extend up to eight.



A hive of honeybees on display at the Vermont Beekeeping Supply booth at the annual Vermont Farm Show at the Champlain Valley Expo in Essex Junction, Vt on Jan 28, 2014. (AP)

Diet of royal jelly isn't the only thing that makes a queen bee

NEW YORK, June 6, (AP): Scientists have identified a group of worker honeybees that are specially adapted to build their queen's waxy abode within the hive.

Worker bees perform a myriad of jobs to keep up the hive, including collecting food, nurturing young bees and caring for the queen, who lays all the eggs. New research reveals that the honeybees responsible for crafting the queen's home effectively run a fever to help melt and blend special chemicals into the wax.

“No one had ever thought that there might be a specialized group of workers that were building these queen cells,” said bee researcher Julia Bowsher with North Dakota State University, who had no role in the study.

These newly identified bees were younger and also had patterns of expression in their genes that made them uniquely suited to the task. The resulting peanut-shaped home was also distinct in its makeup, as it was made of softer wax with a higher melting point than the kind used to build worker bees' homes.

Queens are raised eating royal jelly secreted from the glands of worker bees and scientists have long believed diet was the main key to making a monarch. The new findings, published Wednesday in the journal *Nature*, suggest that the queen's environment might also play a role.

IPL heroics force national selection

Wonderkid Sooryavanshi gets maiden India call-up

MUMBAI, India, June 6, (AP): Wonderkid Vaibhav Sooryavanshi was called up by India for the first time on Saturday as he was named in the T20 squad for the tours of Ireland and England, as well as the Asian Games.

The 15-year-old opening batter is the youngest cricketer to get an India call-up. If he plays against Ireland on June 26 in Belfast he will overtake Sachin Tendulkar, who was 16 when he made his test debut against Pakistan in November 1989.

Sooryavanshi set the Indian Premier League alight this season, finishing as the highest run-getter with 776 in 16 innings. He scored at a remarkable strike-rate of 237.31 and hit 72 sixes.

"He has forced us to pick him with how well he's played," chief selector Ajit Agarkar said. "I know his age...how young he is and (it is) early in his career. But...we can see the kind of talent he has and we are hopeful, if he gets the opportunity to play for the country, he will show the same ability."

"Playing for the country will mean tougher challenges, but he has shown tremendous temperament. He has picked himself through his performances - he single-handedly carried Ra-

jasthan Royals in the IPL play-offs. Like everyone else who's watched him play, we have high hopes of him."

Sooryavanshi made his first-class debut at 12. At 13, he became the youngest to get an IPL deal when Rajasthan bought him for the 2025 season. He scored 252 runs in seven games at a strike-rate of 206, including a 35-ball century - the second-fastest in IPL history.

He then starred in India's win at the 2026 Under-19 World Cup, smashing 175 off 80 balls in the final against England - the highest individual score in any ICC global tournament final.

Shreyas Iyer will captain a full-strength India squad in Ireland and England, a precursor to the Asian Games T20s in Japan. He replaces Suryakumar Yadav, who has been dropped.

Iyer led Kolkata Knight Riders to a third IPL title in 2024 before guiding Punjab Kings to the final in 2025. He had previously steered Delhi Capitals to the final in 2020 - the only player to lead three different franchises to a final.

Yadav's reign comes to an end due to poor form in both IPL and international cricket.

India will play two T20s in Ireland on June 26 and 28, and another five in England next month.

The squad for Japan also includes pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, underlining India's challenge for gold ahead of the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

Squads for Ireland and England tours: Shreyas Iyer (captain), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson, Ishan Kishan, Shivam Dube, Tilak Varma, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Varun Chakaravathy, Ravi Bishnoi, Mohammad Siraj, Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Prince Yadav, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi.

India squad for Asian Games: Shreyas Iyer (captain), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson, Ishan Kishan, Shivam Dube, Tilak Varma, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Varun Chakaravathy, Ravi Bishnoi, Jasprit Bumrah, Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi.



In this file photo, Rajasthan Royals' Vaibhav Sooryavanshi reacts after Gujarat Titans won against Rajasthan Royals during the Indian Premier League cricket match in New Chandigarh, India. (AP)

Knicks survive Spurs rally, move two wins from title



San Antonio Spurs forward Victor Wembanyama defends as New York Knicks forward Og Anunoby (8) shoots during the first half of Game 2 of the NBA Finals basketball series in San Antonio. (AP)

Late miss by Wembanyama caps wild finish

SAN ANTONIO, June 6, (AP): Go crazy, New York. Or, perhaps more accurately, crazier.

The red-hot Knicks are going home, two wins away from an NBA championship that the capital of the world has been waiting to see for generations.

Jalen Brunson hit a go-ahead free throw with 9.5 seconds left after a turnover by Victor Wembanyama moments earlier, then Wembanyama missed a jumper at the end of New York's 105-104 win over the San Antonio Spurs for a 2-0 lead in the NBA Finals.

"What a ballgame," Knicks coach Mike Brown marveled.

Karl-Anthony Towns had 21 points and 13 rebounds, while Brunson and Mikal Bridges each scored 20 for the Knicks. They have won 13 straight, the

second-longest streak by any team in NBA playoff history.

"New York City showed up," Towns said. "The fans showed up. The energy showed up. And we found a way to get it done."

The Knicks are now just the third team to win the first two games of a finals on the road, joining Michael Jordan and the 1993 Chicago Bulls, and Hakeem Olajuwon and the 1995 Houston Rockets.

Both of those teams won championships, the Bulls needing six games to oust the Phoenix Suns, the Rockets going home after winning those first two games in Orlando and sweeping the Magic. The Knicks, seeking their first championship since 1973, are in position to join them.

Wembanyama, after a very quiet first half, scored 29. De'Aaron Fox had 20 for San Antonio.

"We can't change the past," Wem-

banyama said, "We're already thinking about Game 3."

The series now shifts to New York. Game 3 is at Madison Square Garden on Monday night.

President Donald Trump - a native New Yorker - plans on attending Monday. And ticket prices on the secondary market, for the worst seats at MSG, were approaching \$9,000 apiece on Friday night, with Knicks fans evidently willing to pay tippy-top dollar just to be in the building as the team nears what would be its first championship in 53 years.

The Spurs were down 14 midway through the fourth and came all the way back - scoring the next 14 points to tie the game. Wembanyama's three-point play with 57 seconds left gave the Spurs their first lead in nearly two full quarters, putting San Antonio up 104-102.

"We showed tremendous desperation, urgency and competitive re-

sponse," Spurs coach Mitch Johnson said. "Hopefully we can try to bottle that up ... and try to play to that same level."

But the Knicks got the last three, Brunson - the hero of Game 1 for the Knicks - getting them all.

Brunson scored on the next possession, just his seventh basket in 24 shots on the night, and the game was tied. Wembanyama missed a long jumper, OG Anunoby got the rebound for New York with 30 seconds left, the Knicks called time and the stage was set.

The Spurs got a stop, but Wembanyama threw the ball away. Brunson got fouled, the Knicks had the lead back and before long Spurs fans were filing out of the arena - possibly for the final time this season.

The Spurs called time with 7.5 seconds remaining. Fox took the inbound pass, then set up Wembanyama for a jumper that would have won it. The shot bounced off the rim, and it was over.

Canada settles for draw with Ireland

Germany loses young star Karl to injury

CHICAGO, June 6, (AP): Germany's 18-year-old midfielder Lennart Karl has been ruled out of the World Cup after injuring his thigh in training on Friday ahead of Germany's final pre-World Cup tuneup against the United States.

Karl was considered one of the top young players in any World Cup squad after a breakout season with Bayern Munich, for which he became the club's youngest ever goal-scorer in the Champions League.

Karl was sent to the hospital for scans and Germany coach Julian Nagelsmann said it "didn't look so good."

Hours later, and barely a week before Germany's first game of the tournament, Karl was replaced in the squad by midfielder Assan Ouédraogo under World Cup rules allowing extra players in cases of serious injury.

German soccer association president Bernd Neundorff said there were tears at a team meeting as an Nagelsmann broke the news to the squad, German agency dpa reported. Germany plays the U.S. in Chicago on Saturday and then starts its tournament against Curacao on June 14.

Karl made his debut for Germany in March to continue a rapid rise to prominence and has played three games for the national team, including a key role as a starter in last week's 4-0 win over Finland.

Leipzig's 20-year-old midfielder Ouédraogo has played just once for Germany, scoring in a 13-minute appearance off the bench at the end of a 6-0 win over Slovakia in November.

Nagelsmann also said on Friday he would not risk 40-year-old goalkeeper Manuel Neuer against the U.S. because of continuing concerns over a calf injury he picked up at Bayern last month.

Chiedozie Ogbene's goal pulled Ireland into a 1-1 draw with Canada on Friday night in the Canadians'



Canada's Liam Millar (11) shoots against the Republic of Ireland during first half of an International Friendly soccer match in Montreal. (AP)

final tune-up before the World Cup. Canada went up in the 24th minute on an own goal off Ireland defender Jake O'Brien, who was in front of the net on Stephen Eustáquio's corner kick.

Ireland was awarded a penalty in the second half after Cyle Larin's reckless challenge of Ireland's Jamie McGrath.

Canada defeated Uzbekistan 2-0 in Edmonton, Alberta, on Monday.

Chris Richards joined the U.S. for training on Friday in Chicago in a positive sign for the top American defender as he tries to make it back in time for the World Cup.

Richards tore two ligaments in his left ankle while playing for England's Crystal Palace on May 17. He has been ruled out for Saturday's friendly against Germany, but the U.S. is holding out hope that he might be able to play in its World Cup opener next week against Paraguay.

"Chris Richards is on the right path to coming back and being completely with the squad," midfielder

Weston McKennie said. "I think everyone trusts his body and what he feels and the coaching staff as well. He's an important piece of the group, (with) his energy, his leadership on and off the field. And so obviously we're just all behind him and can't wait to have him back and out with the group."

During the 15-minute portion of practice that was open to the media, the 26-year-old Richards showed no signs of any issues as he warmed up with the rest of the team at Endeavor Health Performance Center, the practice home for Major League Soccer's Chicago Fire.

Richards, who missed the 2022 World Cup because of a hamstring injury, is considered the best central defender for the United States.

"His training and his evolution is well, but he still is not ready to compete and to play," U.S. coach Mauricio Pochettino said before practice.

Pochettino and the U.S. are running out of time when it comes to making a decision on Richards. They can be replaced by injured players on their 26-man roster until Thursday.

Short-handed Phoenix tops Portland

PORTLAND, Ore., June 6, (AP): DeWanna Bonner scored a season-high 19 points, Natasha Mack added 16 points and the short-handed Phoenix Mercury beat the Portland Fire 78-72.

Phoenix (4-8) was without usual starters Alyssa Thomas (left calf) and Kahleah Copper (left hip) due to injuries.

Bonner sank a 3-pointer from the corner with the shot clock winding down to give Phoenix a 64-62 lead. Jovana Nogie made the Mercury's final field goal with 2:46 remaining for a 68-67 lead and they never trailed again.

Five Phoenix players combined to make 10 of 12 free throws in the final three minutes, with Bonner going 4 for 4. The Mercury finished 19 of 22 from the line.

Noemie Brochant and Monique Akoa Makani each added 11 points for Phoenix. Nogie had a team-high six assists.

Sarah Ashlee Barker led Portland (6-6) with 15 points and seven rebounds. Karlie Samuelson made her first four 3-pointers and finished with 13 points. Teja Oblak added 11



DeWanna Bonner

points. The Fire were undone by 20 turnovers.

Wings 104, Sparks 96

In Los Angeles, Arike Ogunbowale scored 30 points and made six 3-pointers, Paige Bueckers had 18 points and a career-high 14 assists and the Dallas Wings beat the Los Angeles Sparks for their fourth straight victory.

Bueckers tied Ogunbowale's franchise record of 14 assists in a game.

Jessica Shepard had a double-double with a career-high 22 points, 15 rebounds and five assists for Dallas. The Wings (7-3) have won six of their last seven for

the franchise's best 10-game start since relocating from Tulsa for the 2016 season.

Ogunbowale grabbed her own miss and put it back to give Dallas a 99-95 lead. Maddy Siegrist, who scored 10 points in the fourth quarter, also had a putback with 50.3 seconds left to make it 101-96.

Bueckers sealed it by making two free throws with 47.1 left.

Siegrist scored 16 points and Azzi Fudd had 11. The Wings had 25-plus assists for the fourth time this season, with six from Ogunbowale.

Kelsey Plum, who returned after missing three games with an ankle injury, scored 27 points for Los Angeles (4-6). Ariel Atkins added 16, Dearica Hamby scored 15 and Nneka Ogwumike had 13 points, 10 rebounds and five assists. Cameron Brink scored 10 points off the bench.

Los Angeles held a 55-54 lead at halftime after Bueckers' baseline jumper at the buzzer was overturned after a review.

Dallas guard Odyssey Sims did not return after suffering a left ankle injury in the first half.

Best of the Rest

West Ham co-chairman quits: West Ham joint-chairman David Sullivan stepped down on Saturday ahead of what the English soccer club called "historic allegations" to be made against him by British media.

Sullivan was "made aware of the impending publication of serious historic allegations," West Ham said.

The BBC said later Saturday that the broadcaster and the Times newspaper were due to publish a joint investigation into Sullivan's "behavior." The BBC said its story will run on Monday. West Ham said it "understood none of the allegations relate to West Ham United or any of its operations." (AP)

Tottenham sign Liverpool defender Robertson: Tottenham announced the signing of Liverpool defender Andy Robertson on Friday.

The Scotland left-back was out of contract and joins Spurs as a free agent after nine years at Anfield.

"He is a proven winner at the highest level over a long period," Tottenham coach Roberto De Zerbi said.

The 32-year-old Robertson won a full set of trophies at Liverpool, including two Premier League titles and the Champions League. Tottenham did not say how long his contract would run. "We are delighted to welcome Andy to the club," Spurs sporting director Johan Lange said. "First and foremost, he is an outstanding left-back, one of the best of all time in the Premier League, and someone who will improve our squad."

"In addition, his quality, character and leadership have been evident throughout a career in which he has regularly competed for, and won, major honours."

Robertson also won the FA Cup, two English League Cups, the UEFA Super Cup and Club World Cup with Liverpool. He will captain Scotland at this month's World Cup. (AP)

Change Name

I. AJAB (current name in passport) holder of Indian Passport No. S5879926, Civil id no 270651507258 having permanent Address- Bohra Colony, galiakot, DIST- DUNGARPUR, RAJASTHAN, INDIA PINCODE NO. 314026. Residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth in future my name will be read as under: Given name: AJAB and Surname: MITHAWALA.

New Leverkusen coach Martínez aims to build on Alonso's legacy

LEVERKUSEN, Germany, June 6, (AP): The legacy of Xabi Alonso still looms large at Bayer Leverkusen. Now the team he led to an unlikely Bundesliga title is trying to find success again with another Spanish coach.

Carles Martínez told the Associated Press he wants to learn from Alonso's example, and might seek the now-Chelsea coach's advice, but he wants to put his own imprint on Leverkusen.

It's barely a year since Alonso left

Leverkusen for Real Madrid, and two since he led Leverkusen to the German title and an historic unbeaten league season.

Martínez arrives from Toulouse amid hopes he can turn things around after Leverkusen started 2025-26 under Erik ten Hag, only to fire him after three games, then missed Champions League qualification under replacement Kasper Hjulmand.

"One thing I have learned a lot is to accept the reality, accept the place that

you are (at), and here in Leverkusen it's normal that the brand of Xabi Alonso (remains) because what they did was amazing and we have to try to take advantage of a lot of things from that," he told the AP on Friday.

"But also it's important that now it's one year without Xabi Alonso. I'm sure that if I talk with him he will try to help (the club) to be better. But the most important is that after one year, come on, (I have to) learn about which type of

things was amazing, which type of things Kasper (Hjulmand) did as well, and which type of things can improve, and after (that) it's keep growing, keep building Leverkusen history. This is very, very important."

Martínez said he wants to focus on communication with players and building team spirit - something that was much criticized during Ten Hag's brief tenure last year.

Once a Barcelona youth coach who

worked with a young Gavi and Xavi Simons, Martínez wants to develop more young talent at Leverkusen, which has a reputation for producing some of Europe's top players like Kai Havertz and Florian Wirtz.

Leverkusen sporting managing director Simon Rolfes told the AP he was aiming for stability in the squad after last season's turmoil, and signings this offseason would focus on "more precise" changes to the team.

SPORTS

Morocco aims to build on historic 2022 World Cup run

Díaz thrives at the heart of team attack

RABAT, June 6, (AP): Legal disputes and acrimony have replaced the accolades and euphoria for Morocco's national soccer team ahead of this year's World Cup.

Morocco became embroiled in controversy after hosting the most recent edition of the Africa Cup of Nations - three years after the Atlas Lions made history by becoming the first African team to reach the World Cup semifinals.

Morocco's astonishing run to the semifinals at the tournament in Qatar - with knockout stage wins over Spain and Portugal, with whom the kingdom will co-host the 2030 World Cup - electrified fans and galvanized support across Africa for the team.

But the chaotic Africa Cup final against Senegal in January is still fresh in the memory after Morocco was declared the champion two months after losing the match 1-0 in extra time.

Senegal initially was awarded the Africa Cup trophy after beating Morocco in the final on Jan. 18 in Rabat. But the Confederation of African Football stripped the Teranga Lions of the title on March 17 after the body ruled that Senegal should forfeit the result because its players walked off the field in protest following a late penalty call before later returning to complete the match. It turned Senegal's 1-0 win in extra time into a 3-0 default victory for Morocco.

Senegal has appealed to the Swiss-based Court of Arbitration for Sport. The Senegal team also subsequently paraded the trophy in Paris.

Moroccan celebrations have been muted pending the outcome of the appeal, which is still outstanding.

Morocco's players should be relieved to put the politics behind them and get back to playing after all the fallout from CAF's unprecedented decision.

The Atlas Lions will face five-time champion Brazil at New York New Jersey Stadium on June 13, then face Scotland at Boston Stadium six days later. The team's final Group C match will be against Haiti at Atlanta Stadium on June 24.

Success at the tournament co-hosted by Canada, Mexico and the United States is a prerequisite for a country that has invested heavily in a bid to become a soccer superpower. Becoming a co-host for the 2030 World Cup is just part of that endeavor.

Morocco coach Walid Regragui, who took over shortly before leading the team to 2022 World Cup semifinals in Qatar, quit after the Africa Cup in January - a couple months before CAF awarded his team the title.

Despite the unprecedented World Cup success, Regragui faced criticism for how the team played and he was criticized after the disappointing performance at the previous Africa Cup of Nations in Ivory Coast in 2023.

Mohamed Ouahbi, who led Morocco's under-20 team to the Youth World Cup title in 2025, took over as Regragui's successor and led the team to a draw against Ecuador and a win over Paraguay in World Cup warmup games in March.

Influential right back Achraf Hakimi has been sidelined with a right thigh



In this file photo, Morocco players pose for a photo ahead of their World Cup Group E qualifying soccer match against Niger at Stade Prince Moulay Abdallah in Rabat, Morocco. (AP)

injury and faces a race to be ready for the World Cup. Hakimi was also late for Morocco's Africa Cup campaign with an ankle injury but returned in time to help the team for the knockout stage.

Brahim Díaz was the star of the Africa Cup with five goals - nearly one per game - to help Morocco reach the final. The Real Madrid forward, who could barely get any playing time at the Spanish team, thrived at the heart of Morocco's attack, spurring the team forward with boundless energy.

Brahim looked set to deliver the title with the controversial penalty his team

was awarded at the end of the final against Senegal, but the decision sparked protests and fighting at the other end of the field. By the time Senegal's players returned from their walk off, some 16 minutes had elapsed.

Brahim's weak attempt at a Panenka penalty was easily handled by goalkeeper Édouard Mendy, and Senegal went on to win the game in extra time.

Brahim was jeered by the Morocco fans when he went to get his runner-up medal and did not start either of the team's recent games under Ouahbi.

The Conversation

As an American, should you feel guilty about rooting against US in World Cup?

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

By Adam Kadlac

Wake Forest University

The 2026 World Cup promises to be the planet's most-watched sporting event. It's also poised to generate its fair share of controversy.

Taking into account the history of corruption in FIFA, the sport's governing body, it would be hard to blame anyone who decided to ignore this year's competition.

However, some viewers of this summer's tournament may face an additional dilemma.

Political tensions are high in the U.S., where most of the tournament's matches will be played. The Trump administration is historically unpopular, and its critics are already concerned about sportswashing: when governments use the spectacle of athletic competition to burnish their image and distract the public.

As I point out in my 2022 book, "The Ethics of Sports Fandom," fans who are critical of their country's behavior sometimes feel ambivalent about rooting for their national sports teams - and may even feel compelled to root against them.

After all, it's one thing to pull for your national team when patriotism feels uncomplicated. It's quite another when you aren't feeling very proud to be an American.

The Cold War made it easy for many Americans to rally behind the 1980 U.S. men's hockey team in its victory over the Soviet Union in the "Miracle on Ice." But what do you do when you don't see your country as the "good guys"?

Some fans might double down on their patriotic commitments during the tournament. They'll use the occasion to champion America in all things, whether it's the country's battles in the Middle East or its national team taking on Paraguay at SoFi Stadium in Los Angeles.

Sports have a way of fueling national-

istic passions, and I fully expect plenty of people who don't care much about soccer to channel their patriotic sentiments into the tournament.

However, rooting for your country's national soccer team doesn't mean that you endorse everything your country does, any more than wanting a friend to get a promotion at work requires you to support all of their behavior. As the philosopher Eamonn Callan has argued, a proper love of country requires citizens to be clear-eyed about its faults. The true patriot highlights problems and works to correct them, independent of how much they want the national team to win their next match.

By the same token, I think a deep love of country can coexist with ambivalent feelings about how the national team performs on the field. If patriots can disapprove of their country's military adventurism - either because they see it as flatly unjust or because it casts their country in an unfavorable light on the international stage - there is nothing fundamentally unpatriotic about not wanting the U.S. to do well in the World Cup.

Other fans might invoke the mantra that it's important to simply keep politics out of sports - that the games should be a refuge from the controversies that plague so many other aspects of civic life.

But as I argue in my book, fully separating politics and sports is almost impossible. It requires fans to view athletes as nothing more than bodies who exist to perform on the field. It means team executives and owners do little more than sign paychecks. And it ignores the reality that sports are woven into the social, economic and political life of communities.

For fans who choose to watch, then, my suggestion is to view the action on the field as you would any other sporting event.

Root for whomever you want to win, for more or less any reason that moves you.

Because for all the political significance attached to the World Cup, the winner or loser of any given contest has essentially no broader political significance. The problems that existed before the tournament will still demand attention when it is over, no matter who happens to win.

Success or failure on the pitch isn't likely to bring about meaningful political change. After all, whether a government has the right legislative agenda or approach to foreign policy is totally divorced from its national soccer team's ability to score goals.

Viewed in this way, rooting for your country's national soccer team doesn't imply blind loyalty to your country or ignorance of its flaws. It simply means that you want the athletes who represent your country to win the game they are playing on that particular day.

Athletes have long been able to navigate this ambivalence. You'll regularly hear them trying to separate a love of their country and its people from support of problematic regimes.

When Iranian soccer player Mehdi Taremi refused to celebrate a goal in a January 2026 Greek Super League match, he embraced precisely such a position. Thousands of people had been killed during protests of the Iranian regime, and the moment called for a different reaction.

"There are problems between the people and the government," he said. "The people are always with us, and that's why we are with them." For Taremi, publicly celebrating as an Iranian citizen abroad felt too much like endorsing the current regime, something he had no desire to do. If the athletes who wear their national colors can maintain such nuanced views, surely fans can, too.

Of course, nuance can be difficult in today's political climate, and the rhetoric around the World Cup likely won't change that. When the U.S. men's hockey team won gold at the Olympics back in February, Donald Trump attempted to turn it into a personal political victory by inviting the team to his State of the Union address.

"Our country is winning again," Trump said, devoting nearly six minutes of his speech to the team's victory.

The outlook for the U.S. men in this year's World Cup is not quite as bright, but chances are good that someone will try to co-opt their success or failure for political purposes. Fans don't have to fall into the trap. (AP)

Some officials still await US visas

Iran's soccer team leaves for World Cup

ANTALYA, Turkey, June 6, (AP): Iran's World Cup soccer team set off from Turkey for their training base in Mexico on Saturday with some members of their entourage reportedly still without U.S. visas, ahead of three group matches in the United States later this month.

According to Iranian state television, the Iranian Football Federation secretary-general, Hedayat Mombeyni, and its vice president, Mehdi Mohammad Nabi, were among 14 backroom staff and officials without U.S. visas ahead of games in Los Angeles and Seattle.

It was unclear whether the federation's president, Mehdi Taj, had been issued a visa.

The team's participation in the World Cup has been complicated by Iran's war with Israel and the United States. Problems with processing visas had earlier led Iran to move its training base from Tucson, Arizona, to Tijuana, on Mexico's border with California.

The federation accused the U.S. of "vindictive behavior" in refusing visas for "key managerial and administrative members" of the team.

The decision had "effectively denied the Iranian national team the opportunity for a level playing field and a competition free from discrimination," said a statement on the federation's website. It added that the federation would pursue the matter through world soccer authority FIFA.

The Iranian Embassy in Ankara, meanwhile, responded to an earlier social media post from U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Tom Barrack, in which he congratulated his embassy staff for processing the Iran team's visas.

"You cannot whitewash conduct that violates FIFA regulations and breaches the United States' host obligations merely by praising yourselves," the Iranian post



Iran's Saeid Ezatollahi, right, poses for a photo with a fan after a friendly soccer match between Iran and Mali, in Antalya, southern Turkey ahead of the World Cup soccer tournament. (AP)

read. "This represents the worst possible form of politically biased interference in sport."

One U.S. official earlier told The Associated Press that all players on the Iranian team were approved for visas, while a second official said visas had been issued for players, coaches, trainers and some support staff. A third official suggested that some applicants affiliated with the team had been rejected for requesting visas "under false pretenses."

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the visas publicly.

The squad has been preparing for the World Cup at a training camp in Antalya, Turkey. The team said it has already received visas from Mexico's Embassy in Ankara.

Players to earn \$5,000 each day for clubs from FIFA fund

GENEVA, June 6, (AP): Players at this month's World Cup will earn their clubs about \$5,000 per day from a \$355 million FIFA fund.

FIFA gave details Friday on how it will allocate the clubs' share of revenue for those whose players are among the 1,248 picked for the 48-team tournament in North America and - for the first time - also those called up for the 905 qualifying games.

Soccer's ruling body said players involved in the qualifying program earned \$2,360 per game for the clubs they were registered with during that period.

Thousands of clubs worldwide should get some money because 209 national teams played games. Only Eritrea and Russia, which is suspended from interna-



In this file photo, FIFA World Cup trophy is displayed on stage for a panel on the 2026 FIFA World Cup soccer tournament halftime show at the Global Citizen NOW summit in New York. (AP)

tional competitions, did not take part.

Manchester City's 19 players picked for this World Cup is the most provided by any club. It also got the biggest share from the FIFA payment program at the 2022 edition in Qatar and for the Russia finals four years earlier.

City's previous payments were \$4.6 million and \$5 million from a fund that was \$209 million for each tournament.

The FIFA fund for clubs was agreed in 2023 to be \$355 million for this tournament. It sets \$250 million aside to reward clubs for their World Cup players, and \$100 million for clubs who sent players to qualifying games.

FIFA said the other \$5 million will cover administrative costs.

Other clubs set for multi-million

dollar payments from FIFA include Bayern Munich with 18 players selected, and Champions League finalists Paris Saint-Germain and Arsenal each with 16. Outside of Europe, Saudi Arabian club Al-Hilal is the best represented with 12 players.

Crystal Palace has outscored Liverpool and Real Madrid. The new Europa Conference League champion has 12 players involved in this World Cup while Liverpool has 11 and Madrid 10.

FIFA payments to clubs from World Cup revenues started at the 2010 edition as part of negotiations to create and recognize the influential European Club Association two years earlier. The fund was \$40 million in 2010 in South Africa and \$70 million from the 2014 tournament in Brazil.

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San Antonio Spurs forward Keldon Johnson (3) looks to pass as New York Knicks guard Miles McBride (2) defends during the second half of Game 2 of the NBA Finals basketball series in San Antonio. (AP) - See Page 14

Sports

Andreeva wins French Open for historic major title

Russian teen ends Chwalinska run

PARIS, June 6, (AP): Russian teenager Mirra Andreeva was already a tennis phenom at age 15.

At 19, she's a Grand Slam champion.

The eighth-ranked Andreeva ended the run of 114th-ranked Polish qualifier Maja Chwalinska by 6-3, 6-2 in the French Open final on Saturday.

Andreeva became the youngest player to win the women's singles title since Monica Seles, who was 18 when she landed her third straight French Open in 1992.

When Andreeva executed a backhand cross-court winner on her first match point, the Russian celebrated on her knees to the clay to celebrate.

"You're so young and talented. It's so annoying," Chwalinska told Andreeva during the awards ceremony.



Poland's Maja Chwalinska returns to Russia's Mirra Andreeva during their final women's tennis match at the French Open in Paris. (AP)

During the trophy presentation, Andreeva took the unusual step of thanking herself "for believing in myself, always giving my 100%, even when it's tough, trying every day to be better as a person and as a player, believing that I can do this, fighting so many demons inside of me."

"Only I know how tough it was for me," Andreeva added. "How nervous I was throughout these two weeks."

Chwalinska was attempting to become the first qualifier to capture the Roland Garros title.

Alexander Zverev plays Flavio Cobolli in the men's final on Sunday to conclude the wildest Grand Slam in recent memory.

Andreeva has been considered a Grand Slam contender since she burst onto the scene as a 15-year-old at the 2023 Madrid Open, where she became the third youngest player to win a main draw match at a WTA 1000 tournament and made the quarterfinals.

Lately, Andreeva has had to contend with playing under neutral status and without her country's flag due to the war with Ukraine.

When she beat Marta Kostyuk in the semifinals, Kostyuk refused to shake her hand, as has been the custom for Ukrainian players facing Russians ever since the war started in 2022.

Andreeva has gone a step further than her coach, Conchita Martinez, who lost the 2000 French Open final to Mary Pierce.

Pierce was due to present the winner's trophy to Andreeva.

The final was played under mostly sunny skies but wind was a factor in the first Grand Slam final for both players.



Russia's Mirra Andreeva holds the trophy after winning the final tennis match against Poland's Maja Chwalinska at the French Open in Paris. (AP)

Chwalinska double-faulted on the opening point of the match but she was the first player to hold serve in the fifth game.

Eventually, though, Andreeva found a way to hit through the wind

and answer Chwalinska's array of spins and drop shots.

There was a strong Polish presence in the Court Philippe-Chatrier crowd.

When Chwalinska was intro-

duced, fans held aloft red-and-white Polish flags and chanted her name: "Ma-ja, Ma-ja."

Andreeva had little support from the crowd, although there was a shout of "Davai Mirra!" ("Go Mir-

ra") in Russian late in the match.

In men's doubles, top-seeded Marcel Granollers and Horacio Zeballos retained their title with a 6-4, 6-2 win against Harri Heliövaara and Henry Patten.

Stadium workers vote to authorize strike days before World Cup begins

INGLEWOOD, Calif., June 6, (AP): Stadium workers near Los Angeles have voted to authorize a strike as the venue prepares to host the U.S. men's soccer team's opening World Cup match.

It doesn't guarantee that the 2,000 bartenders, servers, cooks and dishwashers at SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, California, will walk off the job. But it gives them the option to do so after contract talks have stalled with the stadium's food service provider.

The vote comes days before the stadium near Los Angeles will host the U.S. team's opening World Cup match against Paraguay. Union member Yolanda Fierro said that unless a deal is reached workers could go on strike for the June 12 match.

Fierro said workers are concerned about pay and security on the job amid ramped-up immigration enforcement under President Donald Trump's administration. Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna said this week the U.S. Department of Homeland Security told him federal authorities would be at the matches to assist with security but not civil immigration enforcement.

"What good is the World Cup for Los Angeles when workers don't earn enough to pay the rent and must choose between showing up and being kidnapped by ICE?" said Kurt Petersen, co-president of UNITE HERE Local 11. "If we're forced to strike, those \$100,000 FIFA suites will have nothing but bottled water and Doritos."

Legends Global, which handles hospitality at SoFi, said the company has a longstanding relationship with the union and is committed to reaching an agreement through contract negotiations.

"We look forward to delivering an outstanding hospitality experience for fans at the FIFA World Cup matches at SoFi Stadium," the company said in a statement Wednesday.

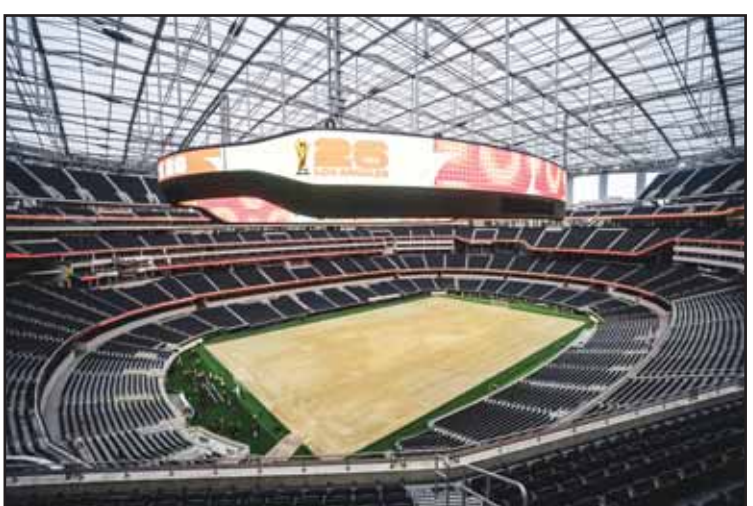
Petersen said contract talks have been moving at a "glacial" pace. He said Legends has agreed to minimal wage increases for cooks and dishwashers and freezes for some suite attendants and bartenders even as the World Cup is expected to reel in ample revenue. The union is also asking Legends for protections from subcontracting and potential federal immigration raids.

Cesar Zamora, a bartender at the stadium, said he is a lifelong soccer fan and is heartbroken to see his employer not making the needed changes before this major event.

"The FIFA World Cup will generate enormous profits, but we are still fighting for basic respect and security," he said in a statement. "We deserve better, and if that means going on strike, I'm ready."

Community groups in other World Cup host cities such as Atlanta and Miami also have called for a halt on U.S. immigration enforcement during the matches, fearing arrests near stadiums and watch parties could damp the festivities.

The World Cup is expected to draw millions of fans to soccer games played in June and July in 11 U.S. host cities as well as in Canada and Mexico.



In this file photo, a general view shows SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, Calif., during a media event for the upcoming FIFA World Cup soccer tournament. (AP)

Mercedes aiming to continue winning run at Monaco Grand Prix

Antonelli stuns Max with sensational pole-winning lap

MONACO, June 6, (AP): Kimi Antonelli mastered one of Formula 1's most intense challenges to take pole position for Formula 1's Monaco Grand Prix and bolster his credentials as the title favorite on Saturday.

Maximizing pace on the narrow streets without clipping the ever-present barriers means the 19-year-old Italian goes into Sunday's race with a chance to extend his and Mercedes' winning streaks and stretch his already-impressive 43-point standings lead.

Antonelli saved his best for last to beat Max Verstappen of Red Bull by just 0.043 of a second and extend Mercedes' streak of qualifying on pole for every grand prix this season. Lewis Hamilton was third for Ferrari.

"It was one of those laps that we call a magic lap. I was able to put it all together," Antonelli said.

Antonelli's teammate and title rival George Russell was only sixth and told broadcaster Sky Sports he was "bamboozled" why the Mercedes car suited Antonelli's style better than his.

Qualifying is typically more important in Monaco than any other track in F1 because it is almost impossible to overtake on the narrow, twisty street circuit. "I just need to get a clean start, don't try to do the magic start," Antonelli said.



Pole position Mercedes driver Andrea Kimi Antonelli of Italy, celebrates after the qualifying session for the Monaco F1 Grand Prix, at the Monaco racetrack. (AP)

Verstappen said he was surprised to be starting second and Hamilton suggested his chances of winning might rest on the remote chance of rain.

Antonelli will now be favorite for a fifth grand prix win in a row on Sunday. That's a feat that only Verstappen and Hamilton have achieved among current drivers. Mercedes is aiming

to continue its run of winning every grand prix so far this season, though Lando Norris won one sprint race in Miami for McLaren.

Antonelli leads by 43 points from Russell after a tense wheel-to-wheel battle between them at the last race in Canada ended abruptly with an engine failure for Russell. If he can keep it up,

he'd be the youngest F1 world champion in history.

Antonelli praised Mercedes for improving the car's setup after Ferrari led both Friday practice sessions.

"The team did a incredibly big turnaround compared to yesterday in terms of setup. Yesterday, I'm not going to lie, we were struggling," he said.

Ferrari's pace in Friday practice raised hopes of a first win since October 2024 for the Italian team, but it ended up with neither car on the front row of the grid as Hamilton said he didn't understand why the car felt "drastically different." Ferrari was without team principal Fred Vasseur, who missed qualifying for medical reasons.

"It's very, very difficult" to challenge Antonelli and Verstappen, Hamilton said. "I don't think there's over-taking. I hope that we can get a really good start and maybe apply some pressure to the two and need rain, probably."

Charles Leclerc starts his home race fourth and gave Ferrari work to do before the race to fix damage after he clipped a barrier on his final attempt.

McLaren is off the pace of the top three teams with Oscar Piastri seventh and defending champion Lando Norris eighth.

Pérez faces first election for Real leadership in 20 years

BARCELONA, Spain, June 6, (AP): For the first time in 20 years, Florentino Pérez's Real Madrid reign will be challenged at the ballot box.

The world's most valuable and most successful soccer club will hold elections on Sunday.

Pérez, the 79-year-old executive who for the past two-and-a-half-decades has made Madrid the global powerhouse to beat, will face an upstart rival half his age who is making big promises to convince the club's 98,000 members to consider a change.

Enrique Riquelme, 37, was still a boy when Pérez first took over. He remained unknown to most Madrid fans until he stepped forward as a rival candidate after the incumbent called early elections last month in a press conference dominated by Pérez's claims the Spanish media is trying to "kill" his presidency.

"Why do they want to kill me?" an agitated Pérez told reporters on May 12. "Why? Because there are some kids out there saying they want to run? Well, let them. I would love them to."

Riquelme, a renewable energy executive, has surprisingly been able to mount a credible threat. That's thanks to the backing of former Madrid players like Raúl González and promising huge, and arguably far-fetched, signings like that of Manchester City star Erling Haaland.

Riquelme got a big boost when Madrid great Raúl, its record holder for games played, former goalkeeper Iker Casillas and ex-defender Fernando Hierro joined his campaign.

Raúl would be Riquelme's sports director, a role that doesn't exist now, while Hierro would oversee its



In this file photo, Real Madrid President Florentino Perez reacts before a La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Athletic in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

youth academy. Casillas's exact role was not defined.

Riquelme also said he wanted to sign Spain midfielder Rodri, who has one year left on his contract with City.

But Riquelme's big lure dangled to voters this week, his claim that "Haaland wants to come to Madrid," prompted City to dismiss any chance of negotiating for the sale of its top-scoring striker who is under contract until 2034.

That didn't stop Riquelme going on Spain's state broadcaster TVE and doubling down on his pledge.

"If I am made president of Real Madrid on Sunday, Haaland will play for Real Madrid," he said on Thursday.

Then it was the turn of Haaland's entourage to shoot it down.

"All very entertaining but not true. We wish all the best for both candidates in the Madrid elections," Haaland's agent, Rafaela Pimenta, told the AP in a short statement on Friday.

"It must be a bluff," was Pérez's opinion.

Not to be outdone, Pérez said Thursday that next week - after the election - he would announce the "most expensive transfer in the history of Real Madrid," worth, he said, at least 150 million euros (\$173 million).

He knows a thing or two about promising apparently impossible signings - and then making them come true. He won his first elections in 2000 when he swore he would sign then-Barcelona forward Luis Figo. And that he did.

Now, Pérez has promised to bring back José Mourinho, Madrid's coach from 2010-13, and sign Liverpool defender Ibrahima Konaté, a free agent, and Inter Milan's Denzel Dumfries, if he is given another four years.

While those names are unlikely to thrill all of Madrid's members, Mourinho's abrasive style left the fanbase divided, Pérez's pledges do have the value of being completely credible.

Besides Figo, he has consistently delivered on his transfer targets, from Zinedine Zidane and David Beckham, to Cristiano Ronaldo and, most recently, after years of trying, Kylian Mbappé.

And, regardless of his plans, Pérez's wildly successful record is his best pitch.