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Amir congratulates Jordan's King on 27th 'versary of rule Page 2



Court delays tackled with digital overhaul

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait announced on Tuesday the completion of a comprehensive review of the judicial notifications file, which is considered one of the main reasons behind case delays and the postponement of court hearings.

Al-Sumait Counselor Al-Sumait explained to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that judicial notification is not merely a procedural formality, but

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Amir reviews ties in calls with Qatar, India



HH the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah



Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Modi backs Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, June 9, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah held separate phone calls on Tuesday with Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during which they discussed bilateral relations and key regional and international developments.

In his call with Sheikh Tamim, both leaders reviewed the strong ties between Kuwait and Qatar and exchanged views on the latest regional and global developments.

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KUWAIT TRAFFIC BLITZ CLOCKS NEARLY 20,000 VIOLATIONS

Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

The Munich Trap aided Hitler's expansion, and now we face an Iranian trap: Beware!

THE 'Munich Trap' appears to be resurfacing in the modern era. This time, Iran is involved as it negotiates with the United States of America.

This potential deal resembles Hitler's 1938 agreement with Paris and London, yet it is different, because some parties are trying to use it as leverage to gain certain concessions from the United States and Europe. Observers overlooked the fact that the Iranian administration, unlike Hitler, utilizes a strategy of gradual expansion.

The boundless Persian political ambition brings to mind the proverb, "I was eaten when the white bull was eaten," illustrating the danger of its incremental growth. The Tehran regime is currently destabilizing the international economy by blocking the Strait of Hormuz.

Furthermore, during the latest tension with Israel, it directed its Houthi subordinates to threaten to close the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, exacerbating global inflation and the economic crisis. Such actions are poised to trigger a financial depression, far more severe than the 1929 crisis, which originated in the United States and enveloped the globe.

Historically, such economic turmoil was a catalyst for World War II, which broke out in Berlin a decade later, claiming more than 70 million lives and leaving nations in ruins. The whole world was irrevocably altered and recovery was achieved only through the Marshall Plan. We revisit these historical events as a cautionary tale for the present: "A small spark can start a huge fire."

The failure to hold the Tehran regime accountable during the Iraq War, when it used the Strait of Hormuz as leverage and bombed oil tankers, emboldened it to commit atrocities in four Arab capitals and launch terrorist attacks against the Gulf states in the 1980s.

Moreover, it established cells within the Gulf states. These cells attempted to undermine the national security of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries during the last war. The GCC countries handled the issue with utmost professionalism, dismantling many of the cells and protecting their people from the catastrophes these traitors would have inflicted.

Nevertheless, the harm is not confined to the Arab world or the Gulf states, as it affects the entire world. The global economy is negatively affected by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and the threat to do the same with the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.

The whole world will experience severe recession if the direct and indirect losses to date exceed four trillion dollars, which will result in the Iranian regime controlling the global economy and granting it the ability to expand comfortably, without facing obstacles.

If a world power does not overthrow this regime, the 'Munich Trap' will be repeated today. China, Europe, East Asia and other nations affected by the Iranian economic terrorism are now under threat.

The nature of warfare has changed. Now, missiles and drones are being used with no casualties. Hitler's war between 1939 and 1945 left behind over 70 million dead.

Today, the Iranian regime's war on the world is genocide, as it causes famine to more than 350 million people.

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Four days, heavy tally

76 residency arrests

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: The General Traffic Department recorded 19,788 traffic violations during campaigns in different governorates on June 4-7, as part of its ongoing efforts to guarantee traffic safety, apprehend violators and strictly enforce the law.

The department revealed that these campaigns also resulted in 2,775 traffic reports, detention of 23 individuals for committing grave violations, arrest of 40 wanted persons, 76 Residency Law violators and six individuals who failed to present valid identification documents, and impoundment of 17 wanted vehicles.

It added that 13 juveniles were referred to the Juvenile Prosecution and one person in an abnormal condition was referred to the concerned authorities for legal action.

Regarding accidents, the department said it dealt with 986 traffic accidents and 178 collisions resulting in injuries, while 251 vehicles and 40 motorcycles were impounded.

It affirmed the continuation of security and traffic campaigns throughout the country, as well as taking legal measures against violators, to instill traffic discipline and ensure the safety of road users.

Amiri Diwan Minister hosts talks with Bangladesh, Brunei envoys

KUWAIT CITY, June 9, (KUNA): Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs, Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah, received Ambassador of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to Kuwait Syed Tariq Hossain.

During the meeting, they discussed the distinguished relations between the two friendly countries and ways to support and develop them in various fields.

They also discussed a number of topics of mutual interest, the latest regional and international developments, and the evolving situation in the region, emphasizing support for efforts aimed at enhancing security and stability.

Sheikh Hamad also received Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam to Kuwait Suleini Said.

They reviewed the strong relations between the two friendly countries and ways to enhance and develop them to broaden the horizons of bilateral cooperation in various fields.



Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs with the Ambassador of Bangladesh.



Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs with the Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam.

Day by Day

IN prison, there are many situations that bring both joy and sorrow.

A man asked his friend, who had just been released, "How was the prison you came from?"

His friend replied, "It is like the prisons in some countries, or similar to some states. The one running the cell is a murderer, the one serving the prisoners is a swindler, and the prisoners themselves are thieves. Strangely, everyone is pleading for mercy."

Such is life. There are many things we do not want, yet we continue to hold on to them. Life is not always as we wish, but we must learn to adapt to it.

Here, I am reminded of the verse by the poet Abu al-Tayyib al-Mutanabb - "In what state have you returned, O Eid?"

Have you come to remind me of painful memories, or have you brought good news?"

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Other Voices

'Russia and China: 30 years of strategic partnership and comprehensive cooperation'

Joint article by Ambassadors of Russia (H.E. Mr. Vladimir Zheltov) and China (H.E. Mr. Yang Xin)

IN 2026 Russia and China commemorate two major milestones in the history of bilateral relations - 30th anniversary of establishment of strategic partnership of coordination between our two nations and 25th anniversary of the Treaty of Good-Neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation.

Over the last three decades, the Russian-Chinese relations have reached an unprecedented level. They have become a prime example of modern long-term partnership between two great nations with centuries-old record of neighborhood. It is based on trust, equality, harmonious coexistence, respect for sovereignty and consideration of each other's core national interests. The distinctive feature of the Russian-Chinese partnership is that it is not bound with ideological tenets and pitted against other stakeholders.

Intensive high-level political dialogue between our leaders plays a central role in setting the direction for the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation. The recent summit in Beijing during the 25th visit of the President of Russian Federation to China acquired a special significance. It not only coincided with a jubilee year of the Treaty on Good-Neighborliness, but also resulted in signing 40 documents on bilateral cooperation in various fields.

One of the most notable features of harmonious Russia-China relationship has been the expansion of trade and eco-

omic ties. Since 2001, the volume of bilateral trade has expanded from modest \$10 billion to record \$240 billion. Our economic cooperation stretches across a wide range of sectors: energy, industry, agriculture, science, transport, space, and digital technologies. Its steady growth has been supported by the use of our national currencies in financial transactions, contributing to greater resilience and autonomy of bilateral trade. The alignment of the Russian Eurasian Economic Union with China's Belt and Road initiative opens up opportunities for the development of transport, logistics, trade, infrastructure and the strengthening of economic connectivity across Eurasia.

Our humanitarian ties have taken a large-scale character as well fostering mutual understanding and people-to-people connections. The Russia-China Years of Culture gave them an impetus in 2024-2025, featuring hundreds of cultural events. Recently launched bilateral Years of Education in 2026-2027 will further contribute to expanding academic exchanges and strengthening ties between universities and research centers.

Of particular importance is the shared approach to historical memory. Having made a decisive contribution to the victory over Nazism and Japanese militarism and endured an enormous losses, Russia and China stand together against any attempts to revise the outcome of World War II, falsify history or glorify military criminals and their accomplices.

Continued on Page 5



Zheltov



Xin

Trump vows response after US helicopter downed near Hormuz

DUBAI, June 9, (AP): President Donald Trump blamed Iran for downing a U.S. Army helicopter near the Strait of Hormuz on Tuesday and said the United States must respond to the attack.

A drone boat rescued two Army

aviators who were aboard the Apache attack helicopter when it went down near the waterway that Iran has effectively closed during its war with the U.S. and Israel. Trump said in a social media post that both service members "are safe and uninjured."

"Nevertheless, the United States must, of necessity, respond to this attack," Trump wrote.

The helicopter went down as the Middle East was still reeling after Iran and Israel exchanged fire the previous day in the biggest blow yet to the

strained ceasefire in the Iran war. Iranian state television reported Tuesday that the Israeli attacks killed at least two members of the country's air-defense units.

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8 National Investments Company celebrates the graduation of SHIFT Series 3



10 Gulf Bank launches beach cleanup campaign to raise awareness on plastic litter

Kuwait enforces '10-country cap' on domestic labor

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: The Ministry of Interior has issued a new circular regulating domestic worker recruitment, updating approved source countries and restricting recruitment from several others as part of revised labor procedures.

According to the circular, recruitment of domestic workers (both male and female) is now permitted from 10 countries, including South Africa, Benin, Senegal (males only), Eritrea, Ethiopia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), India, Vietnam, and Nepal. Authorities stated that recruitment procedures will be processed through governorate-level service centers to streamline applications.

At the same time, the circular includes a list of 27 countries from which recruitment is prohibited. The decision was based on assessments

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Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:13 Asr 15:21
 Sunrise .. 04:48 Maghrib .. 18:47
 Zohr 11:47 Isha 20:19



HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince



King of Jordan

Amir congratulates Jordan's King on 27th 'versary of rule

KUWAIT CITY, June 9, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Tuesday a cable of congratulations to King Abdullah II of Jordan on the 27th throne ascension anniversary.

His Highness the Amir commended the progress of Jordan during his reign and the sturdy ties between the two nations, wishing the King good health and the people of Jordan further prosperity under his wise leadership.

Crown Prince congratulates His Highness the Crown Prince

Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Tuesday to King Abdullah II of Jordan on the 27th throne ascension anniversary.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished the King good health and wellbeing and the Kingdom of Jordan further progress under his wise leadership.

PM congratulates

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent Tuesday a cable of congratulations to King Abdullah II of Jordan on the 27th throne ascension anniversary.

Improve services quality for public, says minister

Expedite transactions, cut paperwork: Dr Al-Huwailah

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: Minister of Social Affairs Dr. Amthah Al-Huwailah visited several departments and divisions of the ministry at the Government Complex on Tuesday, where she looked into the workflow, attendance and employee commitment.



Dr Al-Huwailah

During the visit, Al-Huwailah met with a number of assistant undersecretaries, department directors and other officials. She reviewed performance indicators and transaction completion rates, and discussed the challenges and obstacles that

some departments are facing and the mechanisms for overcoming them.

She stressed the need to improve the quality of services provided to the public, expedite transactions, reduce paperwork, monitor digital transformation plans, simplify administrative procedures to raise the efficiency of government work, comply with laws and regulations governing work, strengthen coordination among ministry sectors, and address the need for human resources and technical support to improve performance.

She also underscored the importance of continuous field monitoring and periodic performance assessment, supporting the work environment, and motivating employees to increase productivity.

She instructed the officials to promptly deal with feedback and complaints from the public, indicating that developing services and customer experience is the priority in the next phase to achieve high quality performance and to better serve the citizens and residents.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Social Affairs has instructed the Consumer Cooperative Societies Union to ask the cooperative societies and unions to provide a detailed list of the academic qualifica-

tions and university degrees of their employees. In a circular addressed to the union, the ministry clarified that the list must include a copy of the university certificate for each employee, whether Kuwaiti or non-Kuwaiti.

It also requested that certificates obtained outside Kuwait must be authenticated by the relevant authorities at the Ministry of Higher Education, emphasizing that this is for auditing and documentation purposes.

It then stressed the importance of cooperation in providing the required data and documents to complete the review and auditing procedures.

In another development, the ministry urged cooperative societies to adhere to the instructions and regulations governing administrative correspondence and to refrain from sending letters, requests or communications related to the work and activities of the cooperatives to the ministry or its departments except through official channels and according to the established administrative hierarchy.

It clarified in a circular addressed to the union that it had observed some cooperatives contacting various entities or sending letters and requests without following the legal and regulatory procedures.

Kuwait, US eye investments boost to up energy security

WASHINGTON, June 9, (KUNA): The chief executive of state-owned Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Sheikh Nawaf Al-Sabah and US Energy Secretary Chris Wright agreed during talks on Tuesday to ratchet up investments in energy infrastructure as part of efforts to increase security.

The talks focused on efforts to bolster the "strategic partnership" between Kuwait and Washington, particularly in the energy sector, according to a KPC statement, hailing such ties as instrumental in the "support of global market stability," it added.

It went on to emphasize the need to ensure free navigation in the Strait of Hormuz given that the waterway is among the world's largest oil transit chokepoints, while the talks also covered efforts to enhance bilateral cooperation over energy investments in a bid to keep global supply chains afloat, it said.

The Kuwaiti official described ties with Washington as a "mainstay" of the global energy market's stability, citing the talks as a demonstration of "commitment" towards energy supply and security, added the statement.



KUNA photo Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and his Omani counterpart Badr Albusaidi at the joint committee meeting.

'Kuwait-Oman stand united in current regional turmoil'

OMAN, June 9, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah said on Monday that convening the 11th session of the Kuwait-Oman Joint Committee amid unprecedented crises and conditions shows the "strength of our bilateral and Gulf ties and their firmly rooted continuity".

Delivering a speech during the 11th session, Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber added that the meeting also affirmed keenness on cooperation paths, noting that challenges and difficulties have not affected "our resolve to address and overcome through solidarity, faith, and foresight, guiding us towards integration and strengthening the capabilities of resilience and endurance".

The Kuwaiti minister expressed pride in marking the 55th anniversary of Kuwait-Oman diplomatic relations, describing their blessed and continuously developing path across all levels as an extension of deeply rooted and firmly established historical ties.

He pointed out that these relations reflect shared aspirations and common characteristics based on a unified destiny, goal, and aligned visions seeking to achieve integration and interconnection across all vital fields in a way that fulfills the hopes and aspirations of the two brotherly peoples, guided by the visions of the two wise leaderships.

He said that he looks forward to signing a Memorandum of Understanding

(MoU) and an executive program in this session to be added to the record of bilateral deals, totaling 49 deals and memos, signed between the two countries in multiple vital sectors.

He thanked the preparatory committee members for all efforts made for this session that contributed to its work, as a translation of "our shared desire" for pushing exemplary ties for new horizons, under the wise directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq.

The minister also thanked his Omani counterpart Badr Albusaidi, government and people for hospitality and warm reception as well as good arrangements for this meeting.

Meanwhile, the Omani minister said this session was held in implementation of the directives of the two countries' leaderships that call for enhancing bilateral collaboration, mainly in economic, trade, cultural and scientific fields, along with sharing expertise, for further integration and partnership between Kuwait and Oman.

Al-Busaidi noted that the regular convening of the Oman-Kuwait Joint Committee reflects attention and care paid by the leadership of both countries, and embodies their shared commitment to strengthening its role as an effective institutional framework for advanced bilateral cooperation towards more progressive and comprehensive levels.



Indian Ambassador to Kuwait, Paramita Tripathi, visits the Jaber Hospital to check on Indian nationals health who were injured in the attack on Kuwait International Airport.

Envoy checks on Indians' welfare

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: The Indian Ambassador to Kuwait, Paramita Tripathi, visited Jaber Hospital to check on Indian nationals who were injured in the attack on Kuwait International Airport on June 3.

Ambassador Tripathi inquired about their well-being and affirmed the embassy's full

support and commitment to providing all necessary assistance.

The embassy continues to maintain close contact and coordination with the hospital and the families of the injured individuals.

A total of 13 Indian nationals were admitted to various hospitals following the attack. Most have since been discharged after receiving treatment, while four remain hospitalized.

Stronger Arab economic union crucial in int'l, regional situation

RABAT, June 9, (KUNA): Director General of the Arab Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining Organization (AIDSMO) Eng. Adel Al-Saqr said global and regional developments require stronger Arab economic integration to address challenges affecting supply chains, energy markets and sustainable development.



Al-Saqr

Al-Saqr told KUNA that Arab countries need closer coordination of economic and development policies to build a more resilient regional economy capable of meeting emerging challenges.

He praised the economic coordination demonstrated by Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, noting its role in supporting market stability and ensuring the smooth flow of trade, energy and supply chains.

Al-Saqr said the Arab region possesses significant strategic advantages, including natural resources, capital, markets and a strategic geographic location. He stressed that unlocking this potential requires stronger industrial and logistics linkages and the development of Arab value chains.

He highlighted the Arab Industrial Integration Strategy adopted by Arab industry ministers, which aims to enhance economic integration, improve productivity, localize technology and increase added value.

He also underscored the role of AIDSMO'S Arab Industrial and Mining Products Supply and Demand Platform in supporting industrial integration, boosting intra-Arab trade and promoting investment opportunities.

Al-Saqr stressed the need for greater Arab cooperation to accelerate economic integration and strengthen the region's ability to address ongoing challenges.

He commended Kuwait's support for joint Arab action and its continued backing of AIDSMO'S technical programs and initiatives in industry, standardization, mining and capacity-building.

Al-Saqr said the current stage requires stronger coordination and more effective economic partnerships to transform Arab capabilities into joint productive and investment projects, reaffirming AIDSMO'S commitment to supporting competitive Arab economies.

AIDSMO, headquartered in Rabat, is affiliated with the League of Arab States and supports industrial development, standardization, mining and Arab economic integration.



Farwaniya Governorate photo Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah held a meeting with a number of officials from the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy (MEWRE).

Summer is here ... Gov., MEWRE find ways to handle power use

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah held a meeting with a number of officials from the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to coordinate preparations for the summer.

The meeting took place at the Farwaniya Governorate headquarters with acting Assistant Undersecretary for Networks and Distribution Eng. Khaled Al-Rashed,

acting Assistant Undersecretary for Distribution and Transmission Networks Eng. Faisal Abdullah Sumeit, representative of the ministry in the Farwaniya Governorate Council Eng. Sarah Al-Mutairi, Supervisor of Water Facilities Operations Eng. Faisal Al-Mukaimi, and representative of the Electricity Transmission Networks Sector Eng. Mahmoud Al-Shamari.

Other Voices

Issues & tragic stories

By Ahmad alsarraf

I HAVE worked in the contracting sector for 50 years, and I am well aware of its problems, the poor reputation of many of its practices, and the entities responsible for that reputation.

A contracting agreement is an arrangement between the government and another party to execute a consulting, architectural, or materials supply project for various government entities.

The government includes stringent clauses in all contracting agreements. If the contractor were to carefully consider them, the contract would never be signed. Some of these clauses stipulate the supplier's obligation to deliver under all circumstances, even in cases of "force majeure."

This occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic and most recently with the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, despite the impossibility of continuing supply without the supplier facing bankruptcy.

The construction contracting sector suffers from chronic problems, the most serious of which is the delay in payments to contractors, even though the contract budget is allocated and available to the ministry.

Historically, government agencies have been slow to disburse payments to contractors due to lengthy bureaucratic procedures and cumbersome payment processes, forcing contractors to repeatedly visit the ministry to request their dues.

Other methods have recently become more difficult than before, or may involve compromising the quality of the product or service. As a result, the contractor is often accused of theft. If the contractor is indeed a thief, then the responsibility lies with whoever forced him into that situation.

The entities most prone to payment delays, due to inefficiency and bureaucracy, are the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Public Works, and the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy.

In contrast, entities affiliated with the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation are among the most committed and prompt in settling payments. This indicates that the issue is not government policy itself, but rather the failure of one entity and the efficiency of another.

Perhaps officials in various ministries are unaware of the consequences of delaying payments to contractors. These payments are as vital as blood to the body. Delayed payments cause significant financial and psychological strain on contractors, sometimes pushing them to take extreme measures to obtain what is rightfully theirs.

One of the causes of obstruction is assigning weak employees or officials to decision-making positions, which leads them to delay action in order to avoid mistakes. Those who do nothing never make mistakes. Fear of consequences has become a barrier to administrative and technical expertise, particularly in the Ministry of Services, which requires practical and technical skills that keep pace with developments in technology, information systems, and modern management.

The absence of competent management has led to numerous problems and significant financial losses for the state. It has caused financial hardship for many contractors, who are unable to pay for equipment, labor, and suppliers. As a result, the smooth execution of projects has been negatively affected, leading to delays in delivery, financial disputes between contractors and the contracting ministry, and contractors becoming entangled with banks financing their projects.

All of this impacts the economy through disruptions in cash flow in the local market and delays in project implementation and completion. In turn, society is affected due to delays in the delivery of schools, hospitals, and vital road infrastructure.

The development process cannot accelerate while contractors' outstanding payments remain frozen in the Central Bank, without the relevant government agencies addressing the resulting damage and the importance of expediting payments.

We appeal to the ministers most directly responsible for payment delays, including the Minister of Public Works Noura Al-Mashaan, the Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem, and the Minister of Health Dr. Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi to resolve this issue.

I also urge the Cabinet to encourage other government entities to streamline their payment procedures and follow the example of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation and the Kuwait Oil Company.



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diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

How can a battle end if it hasn't even started ?

"THERE are many questions currently surrounding the ongoing tensions between the United States and Iran, particularly regarding acts of war and whether the statement from the US House of Representatives will affect President Donald Trump's conduct in this situation," columnist Sheikh Eng. Fahad Al-Sabah wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.



Sheikh Dawood Al-Sabah

"To better frame the issue, the question is - how can a war end if it has not actually begun? "The military actions witnessed in the region over the past few months do not constitute a war in the strictest sense. Rather, they can be described as maneuvers, as the two parties - the United States and Iran - have not engaged in actual direct, declared warfare.

"Therefore, the concept of "ending the war" is, in practical and legal terms, misleading under US law. In precise political terms, what the region has recently witnessed is a series of escalating tensions, manifested in reciprocal drone and missile attacks, as well as actions involving armed groups supported by Tehran in Iraq and Lebanon.

"The resolution issued by the US House of Representatives is primarily a statement, even if it is formally framed as a resolution in its text.

"From a legal and constitutional perspective, Congress cannot vote to end a war that has not yet begun and has not been officially declared. The use of the phrase "end the war" is therefore misleading, as it transforms complex legislative procedures into a dramatic narrative for social media users, even if the Senate passes it.

"The purpose of the resolution is to limit the authority of the executive branch and instruct the President of the United States to withdraw US armed forces from any hostilities against Iran, or from situations in which conditions indicate an imminent risk of armed conflict, within 30 days of the resolution's passage.

"Under the War Powers Resolution of 1973, this resolution could influence the President's actions or be used to influence political debate ahead of the midterm elections.

"However, there is one exception - any military action may only continue if Congress formally declares war or grants the executive branch specific prior legislative authorization.

"Despite the resolution's narrow passage in the House of Representatives (215 votes in favor and 208 against), its impact remains largely symbolic, without the power to change the military situation on the ground.

"The underlying reason is a complete disregard for the nature of parliamentary mechanisms in Washington.

"The resolution is classified as a "Concurrent Resolution" (a joint resolution of the House and Senate). This type of resolution is generally used to express Congress's opinion or position on a particular issue or to address internal legislative rules. Most importantly, it does not have the force of law and is not submitted to the President for approval or veto.

"Therefore, the resolution serves as a message of political pressure and a statement of position intended to challenge the White House, but it does not have the authority to compel the Commander-in-Chief to withdraw troops or cancel defensive and retaliatory measures, which are typically based on the President's constitutional powers to protect US forces abroad.

"Thus, the United States and countries in the region are not engaged in an actual war with Iran. For this reason, Tehran's aggression towards Gulf states, including Kuwait, can be described as acts of terrorism."

Also:

"Kuwait marks the second anniversary of Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah's appointment as Crown Prince, following his nomination by His Highness Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the State of Kuwait," Doctor of Law and Kuwaiti lawyer Dr. Nayef Al-Adwani wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"His Highness the Amir's choice was widely welcomed by the Kuwaiti people.

"The Crown Prince is known for his humility, high morals, and cooperation with all, as well as his broad vision, extensive experience, and deep understanding of both local and international affairs.

"He possesses a wealth of practical experience gained through holding several positions, beginning with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and including his service as Kuwait's ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

"Previously, His Highness the Crown Prince served as Kuwait's representative to the United Nations and held several important positions,

including Head of the National Security Bureau and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

"He also assumed the role of Prime Minister during the COVID-19 crisis, managing the situation with notable competence until the pandemic subsided. His government secured vaccines at a time when they were scarce and costly, and carried out one of the largest evacuation operations to bring citizens home from various parts of the world.

"The selection of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled as Crown Prince was widely regarded as a wise and judicious decision by His Highness the Amir.

"The Crown Prince remains a hands-on leader, keen to monitor government performance through continuous field visits to assess living conditions and ensure food security for citizens amid the Iranian naval blockade of the Strait of Hormuz.

"His Highness the Crown Prince inspected the armed forces and ensured the availability of necessary weapons and defenses to deter and confront this aggression, contributing to providing security, safety, and reassurance to citizens and residents."



"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has achieved exceptional success in organizing and managing the Hajj season, reflecting its advanced capabilities in handling the world's largest recurring human gathering," Abdulaziz Saud Al-Maarik wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"This success underscores its leadership in serving pilgrims through an integrated system that combines organizational efficiency, advanced technologies, and high-quality infrastructure.

"The Deputy Governor of Makkah region, Prince Saud bin Mishaal bin Abdulaziz, announced the success and distinction of the Hajj season, which came after a full year of preparations and work plans implemented by various governmental, security, health, and service sectors. These efforts aimed to enable pilgrims to perform their rituals in safety, tranquility, and ease.

"Official statistics revealed that the total number of pilgrims this year reached 1,707,301, arriving from 165 countries, in a spiritual scene that reflects the universality of Islam and the unity of Muslims. The number of pilgrims coming from outside Saudi Arabia reached 1,546,655, representing approximately 90.6 percent of the total pilgrims.

"Hajj statistics showed that air travel continued to account for the largest share of incoming pilgrims. A total of 1,485,729 pilgrims arrived via airports, representing the vast majority of pilgrims arriving from outside Saudi Arabia.

"Land ports received 54,429 pilgrims, while sea-ports received 6,497, reflecting the high efficiency of Saudi Arabia's transportation and port system in receiving and managing pilgrim flows.

"Despite this massive number of pilgrims and their diverse nationalities, cultures, and languages, Saudi Arabia successfully implemented precise crowd management plans and advanced crowd control measures. These contributed to a smooth flow of movement between the holy sites, especially during the ascent to Mount Arafat, the departure to Muzdalifah, and the stoning of the Jamarat.

"The integrated security and safety system, supported by the latest technologies and monitoring and control systems, helped maintain the safety and security of pilgrims, enabling them to perform their rituals in an atmosphere of peace and tranquility.

"The Hajj season also witnessed a significant expansion in the use of artificial intelligence technologies and digital solutions, which contributed to enhancing crowd management efficiency and improving the services provided to pilgrims.

"The "Makkah Route" initiative continued its success for the eighth consecutive year by completing pilgrims' procedures in their home countries before departure through 17 international ports of entry in 10 countries, thereby facilitating their journey and reducing time and procedures upon arrival.

"The relevant authorities relied on smart mapping systems, GPS technologies, and QR codes to provide advanced guidance services in multiple languages, helping pilgrims navigate and reach their destinations with ease.

"The number of medical services provided during the season exceeded 2.5 million, with more than 114,000 pilgrims benefiting from these surgeries. A total of 410 specialized surgical procedures were performed, including open-heart surgery, catheterization, and other delicate interventions.

— Compiled by Simi K.Kutty

Loot found in probe

Gang of expats nabbed in theft of power cables

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: The General Department of Criminal Investigation apprehended five Egyptian and Bangladeshi suspects on charges of stealing electrical cables for resale and illicit profit, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Interior explained that the suspects were arrested following surveillance and investigations. They were found in possession of quantities of electrical cables of varying sizes, as well as copper and wire-cutting tools. The suspects confessed to stealing the electrical cables and selling them.

The investigation led to the identification of the location used to store the stolen goods. It was discovered to be a warehouse owned by a Kuwaiti citizen who rented it to the suspects for KD 200 per month.

An inspection revealed that the warehouse violated Kuwait Municipality regulations and the safety and security requirements of the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF). Coordination was made with the KFF, which initiated legal procedures and ordered the closure of the warehouse due to the violations.

Court – Refund money in failed savings group case

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: The Civil Court of First Instance ordered a Kuwaiti woman to refund KD 3,000 to another woman after it was proven that she had received the money as part of an agreement related to a financial savings group that was never completed, reports Al-Anba daily.

The court also ordered the defendant to pay court costs and actual attorney fees.

It rejected the claim for compensation for material and moral damages.

The plaintiff stated that she had participated in a financial savings group managed by the defendant and had regularly paid several monthly installments.

However, the group was never completed, and the plaintiff did not receive her financial dues or the amounts she had previously paid.

The court appointed a specialized expert to examine the financial relationship between the two parties and review the submitted documents.

The expert's report concluded that the plaintiff had paid sums of money to the defendant within the disputed savings group, and that the defendant had neither returned those sums nor proven that her obligation to the plaintiff had been discharged.

Attorney Haya Al-Shalabi stated that the ruling affirmed a well-established legal principle that protects individuals' financial rights and obligates anyone who receives money from another to refund it once the debt is proven.

Mol arrests 7 suspects in separate drug cases

KUWAIT CITY, June 9, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Interior announced on Tuesday that the Criminal Security Sector arrested seven suspects in separate cases involving possession of narcotics and psychotropic substances intended for trafficking and personal use, in addition to equipment used for preparing and packaging drugs.

In a statement, the ministry said authorities seized 2.55 kilograms of hashish, 150 grams of heroin and 20 grams of methamphetamine from the suspects.

It added that officers also confiscated 6,350 capsules of Lyrica, 150 tablets of Xanax, and 50 tablets of methadone, along with four precision scales and quantities of empty nylon bags. The ministry said one suspect was additionally charged with resisting law enforcement officers during the arrest operation.

All suspects and seized items were referred to authorities for legal action, it added.

The Ministry of Interior reaffirmed its commitment to continuing intensive security operations to combat drug trafficking and protect society from the dangers of narcotics and psychotropic substances.

It stressed that it will strictly enforce the law against anyone involved in trafficking, promoting, possessing or using illegal drugs and related substances.



One hurt in fire: Fire broke out in a kitchen in Al-Hitteen area on Monday morning, resulting in injuries and burns to one individual, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an official statement, the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) revealed that firefighters from the Mishref and Subhan fire stations rushed to the location and extinguished the fire within a short time. The injured person was handed over to paramedics.

MoH detects 50 salons in health rules violations

KUWAIT CITY, June 9, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Health announced Tuesday that 50 violations were issued against salons and health institutes for failing to comply with approved health regulations during joint inspection campaigns carried out across the country's governorates.

Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Dr. Al-munther Al-Hasawi said the inspections focused on verifying compliance with infection-control standards, cleaning, disinfection and sterilization procedures, as well as reviewing workers' health requirements and fitness certificates to ensure a safe environment for clients.

He added that the campaigns aim to promote adherence to best health and preventive practices, reduce the risk of disease transmission, and ensure facilities comply with regulations governing the use of equipment subject to special health requirements.

Meanwhile, Director of Public Health and head of the supervisory committee Dr. Mona Al-Khabbaz said the main committee overseeing salons and health institutes operates through six subcommittees comprising representatives from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Kuwait Municipality, covering all governorates to enhance field oversight and improve compliance with health standards.

Al-Khabbaz affirmed that inspection teams will continue conducting regular field visits across the country, stressing that the ministry will take a firm stance against violations that could affect public health and safety, while urging owners of salons and health institutes to comply with approved regulations and maintain service quality.



Farwaniya Governorate photo
Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah meets the Arab Media Forum Secretary General Madi Abdullah Al-Khamis in his office.

Media must enhance role, focus on Kuwait progress

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah met with Arab Media Forum Secretary General Madi Abdullah Al-Khamis in his office at the Farwaniya Governorate headquarters on Tuesday.

The meeting was held within the framework of improving communication with media leaders and discussing prospects for joint action in the media and cultural sectors.

During the meeting, the two sides touched on a number of topics of common interest, especially the role of the

media in shedding light on development and service initiatives, as well as the importance of strengthening cooperation between official institutions and media outlets to convey the national message and raise public awareness.

Sheikh Athbi Al-Sabah affirmed that the governorate is keen on maintaining openness and communication with various media institutions and influential media figures. He also praised the role of the Arab Media Forum in fostering media dialogue and facilitating the exchange of expertise among Arab media professionals.

Top co-op men jailed for bribe

2 held, 2 flee in drugs hunt

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: The Court of Cassation upheld the ruling of the Criminal Court, which sentenced the manager of a cooperative society and the head of its purchasing department to two-year imprisonment each with hard labor, after they were convicted of soliciting and accepting a bribe from a vegetable trading company in exchange for allowing it to continue operating within the cooperative society and ensuring the disbursement of its financial dues, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

A vegetable supplier reported that the defendants had demanded money from him in order to facilitate his business and avoid obstructing his commercial activities.

The General Department of Criminal Investigation conducted the necessary investigations and confirmed the accuracy of the information in the report.

The investigations revealed that the defendants had demanded an amount equivalent to 10 percent of the total monthly vegetable sales from the informant in exchange for allowing him to display his goods for sale within the cooperative society and for ensuring the payment of his dues.

After obtaining the necessary legal warrants, the Criminal Investigation Department set a trap for the defendants. Meetings and conversations with the informant were recorded in audio and video, confirming that the defendants had solicited and received the bribe.



2 held, 2 flee: A security force from the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) raided a farm in Kabad suspected of being used as a site for storing and distributing drugs, reports Al-Anba daily.


The raid followed intensive surveillance and investigations that led to the identification of the location. Two people were arrested inside the farm, while two others managed to escape.


Descriptions of the two fugitives have been circulated, and they have been added to the list of wanted persons.

According to security sources, the raid resulted in the seizure of quantities of drugs prepared for distribution, along with equipment used for weighing, processing, and packaging.

All seized items were confiscated and referred to the relevant technical authorities for examination and precise determination of their types and weights.


Initial investigations revealed that the four-member gang was active in trafficking and distributing drugs to users and dealers. Each member had a specific role within the criminal network, including storage, transportation, distribution, or collecting payments.



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Kuwait rolls out elite commercial arbitration certification program

Bridging Sharia compliance and global best practices



KUWAIT CITY, June 9: The specialized training program for the 'Certified Commercial Arbitrator and Mediator Certificate and Arbitration in Islamic Financial Institutions Disputes' commenced on Monday.

This program is the result of a strategic collaboration between the Kuwait Center for Commercial Arbitration, which is affiliated with the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Institute of Banking Studies.

This month-long program aims to prepare and qualify national professionals and experts capable of resolving commercial and financial disputes according to the highest international and Sharia standards, thereby, enhancing the investment and legal environment in the State of Kuwait.

The training program includes a comprehensive package of theoretical materials and practical applications as follows:

- A course for preparing mediators and arbitrators: equips participants with the essential skills for managing mediation and arbitration sessions and drafting rulings.
- Arbitration in Islamic Financial Institutions Disputes: focusing on Sharia-compliant contracts and financial transactions and the mechanisms for resolving disputes arising from them.
- Workshops and legal applications: enable trainees to simulate real-world cases and gain the necessary practical experience.

This program is in line with the commitment of the Kuwait Center for Commercial Arbitration and the Institute of Banking Studies to cover the growing needs of the financial and business sectors, particularly, the rapidly expanding Islamic banking sector.

Through this program, both parties aim to provide high-level academic and professional content that grants participants accredited certificates, qualifying them to practice arbitration efficiently.

The need to implement alternative dispute resolution mechanisms arises from the importance of resolving commercial disputes quickly and fairly, saving time and effort—the most crucial factors in the capital cycle – and protecting local and national commercial transactions and investments.

It also helps remove obstacles imposed by each country's laws that impede the flow of investments and trade in general.

The program features a select group of specialists, legal professionals, and banking and financial sector employees, in addition to certified experts and arbitrators who shall oversee the delivery of the academic material throughout the program.



KCCI photo

Top & above: Photos during the commencement of the specialized training program for the 'Certified Commercial Arbitrator and Mediator Certificate and Arbitration in Islamic Financial Institutions Disputes.'



Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs photo
Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Dr. Muhammad Al-Wasmi, with the Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the State of Kuwait, Dr. Saeed Mohammad Jibril.

Kuwait, Ethiopia aim to boost cooperation in Islamic affairs

KUWAIT CITY, June 9, (KUNA): Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi met on Tuesday with Ethiopian Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Saeed Mohammad Jibril to discuss ways of strengthening cooperation in areas of mutual interest and advancing the interests of the two friendly countries.

In a statement to KUNA, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs

said both sides underscored the importance of continuing coordination in matters related to Islamic affairs, cooperation and the exchange of expertise.

The ministry added that such cooperation would contribute to further strengthening the distinguished relations between the two countries and support the achievement of their shared objectives.

New avenues of cooperation explored

Kuwait and Serbia pledge to strengthen bilateral relations

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Ministry of Finance Undersecretary Aseel Sulaiman Al-Saad Al-Munaifi had a meeting with Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of the Republic of Serbia in the State of Kuwait Filip Katić on Monday.

During the meeting, they discussed several topics of mutual concern in light of the recent regional developments.

They commended the Republic of Serbia's solidarity with the State of Kuwait following the Iranian attacks on Kuwait and reaffirmed the strength of bilateral relations between the two countries.

Both parties also expressed their desire to further solidify these relations in the coming period through several proposals, including institutional cooperation through the Kuwaiti-Serbian Joint Ministerial Committee.

Also present at the meeting were Assistant Undersecretary for Technical Services Saad Al-Alati, Director of the International Economic Cooperation



MoF photo

Ministry of Finance Undersecretary Aseel Sulaiman Al-Saad Al-Munaifi with Filip Katić, Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of the Republic of Serbia in Kuwait.

Department and acting Director General for Economic Affairs Saad Al-Rashidi and other ministry officials.

Technical Committee approves key infrastructure amendments

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: The Technical Committee in the Municipal Council, chaired by Munira Al-Amir, approved five of seven items on its agenda during its 35th meeting for the fourth session.

The most important decision of the committee was the approval of amendments to the road network and infrastructure services associated with the subdivision project issued through the resolution of the council.

The committee also approved the following:

- Requests of the Ministry of Elec-

tricity, Water and Renewable Energy to amend Municipal Council Resolution No. 4/2/1963 to facilitate the development of the site of the main freshwater and saltwater reservoirs located in the central region, and allocation of a site for the main transformer station in Mutlaa, adjacent to the tent market.

- Inclusion of a state-owned land near Plot No. 43 in Block Seven in Salmiya,
- Request to re-subdivide a property located in Block Nine in Fintas,

Moreover, the committee decided to file a letter from the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) about the invitation to attend its 34th meeting.

Unified procedural framework issued

Fatwa process on divorce standardized

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: The acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs Dr. Sulaiman Al-Suwailem issued an administrative circular regulating procedures for issuing fatwas (religious opinions) on divorce-related inquiries, reports Al-Rai daily.

The circular aims to unify the relevant Sharia authorities and ensure that such matters are reviewed by the appropriate institutions.

The Ministry of Islamic Affairs issued Administrative Circular No. 26/2026, mandating that all imams, preachers, and muezzins refrain from issuing fatwas on various issues related to divorce.

The circular also stipulates that those seeking fatwas on divorce must visit the

Fatwa Department in person on the fifth floor of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs headquarters in Al-Riggaa, where they will be referred to the relevant Personal Status Committee.

It clarified that the Personal Status Committee holds its weekly meetings every Monday at 10:00 am to review fatwas and cases related to divorce and personal status.

The circular also stated that those seeking religious consultations can contact the department directly via the hotline number 149 during official working hours, from 8:00 am to 1:30 pm and from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

The circular further called on all mosque administrations in the governorates to implement its regulations immediately.

Grade 11 Math marks redistributed

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: Instructions have been issued to the science section exam grading committees to redistribute marks for the Grade 11 mathematics exam after students described a question as extremely difficult, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to informed sources, the

ministry decided to award all students full marks for question No. 4, item "a", and redistribute marks across the remaining sections of the exam to compensate students.

This decision was made based on a consensus that the question was overly difficult.

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Emergency management

Fatwa and AMAN review crisis system framework

KUWAIT CITY, June 9, (KUNA): Head of the Fatwa and Legislation Department Counselor Salah Al-Majed discussed on Tuesday with the National Center for Emergency, Crisis, and Disaster Management (AMAN) the necessary procedures related to establishing the center.

A team under the AMAN center stated that during the meeting, both sides reviewed the draft decree-law, the main objectives, and the legal and legislative aspects to establish a national system for managing emergencies.

In addition, the meeting reviewed the efforts made during the past phase, as well as the next steps to complete the legal procedures to increase the efficiency of dealing with various emergency situations and crises.



Al-Majed



INVITATION TO TENDER United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) UNAMI Headquarters – Kheitan, Kuwait

1.0 The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) invites local and companies/individuals to tender an offer for the Sales of Vehicles, Forklift, Computers and Supply Miscellaneous, Items, Equipment and Tools at UNAMI Compound in Kuwait, "on as is Where is basis". All items will be sold on "as is where is" basis. Prospective buyers shall be responsible for all clearances and costs associated with the sale and removal of the items from UNAMI premises in Kuwait which should be organized in compliance with the applicable rules and regulations of the State of Kuwait and completed within 5 days from receipt of UNAMI Bills of Sale fully paid by the successful bidder.

2.0 REQUIREMENTS:

a) Items will be grouped in LOTS and UNAMI reserves the right to sell the items to the highest bidders by lot or by line item;

b) Prospective Bidders will be required to attend a mandatory site visit in UNAMI Headquarters – Kheitan, Kuwait in order to inspect the equipment prior to bidding.

c) Prospective bidders will be required to mandatory include in their bid a 10% bid deposit in the form of a certified bank cheque, bank guarantee or equivalent instrument acceptable to the UN with their bid;

3.0 Interested Vendors can send their Expression of Interest (Subject: "Sale Tender/Kuwait/UNAMI/2026/01") to UNAMI Procurement via Email: arenas@un.org; gurungu@un.org; and alan1@un.org; on or before COB 21 June 2026

Note: This Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) does not constitute a solicitation. The UN reserves the right to change or cancel the requirement at any time during the REOI and/or solicitation process. Thus, submitting a reply to an REOI does not automatically guarantee that your firm will be considered for receipt of the solicitation when issued. Only prospective vendors/buyers that respond, and are deemed qualified, upon completion of an objective evaluation of their application, will receive the final solicitation document.

'Russia and

Russian-Chinese cooperation is important not only for our two nations, but also for the International system as a whole. Amidst rising global instability and profound geopolitical challenges Moscow and Beijing advocate the formation of a more just multipolar world order, upholding the central role of the UN, primacy of International law, equal and indivisible security, while rejecting unilateral sanctions, policies of pressure and interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states. These approaches are reflected in our close bilateral coordination within the framework of International and regional organizations such as the UN, BRICS, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, G20, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation and others.

A quarter of a century on, we can say with confidence that the Treaty of Good-Neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation has successfully withstood the test of time. It has become a reliable foundation for development of the strategic partnership between Russia and China in a new century. Its 25th anniversary is not only a memorable date, but also a testament for maturity and resilience of the Russian-Chinese relations aimed at fulfilling the common aspiration of our peoples and contributing to global stability and universal prosperity.

Court delays

it constitutes the foundation for initiating litigation and ensuring the proper commencement of legal proceedings. Litigation cannot proceed without proper notification and that any defect in the notification process may prevent the court from even considering the subject of the dispute.

He stressed that approximately 36 percent of judgments dismissing cases as though they had never been filed were the result of incomplete notification procedures, highlighting the direct impact of notification issues on case progress, access to justice, and the timely resolution of disputes.

Counselor Al-Sumait affirmed that one of the most prominent practical challenges in this area has been the lack of updated contact information for companies, which has often made it difficult to serve notifications and has led to the postponement of related cases.

He explained that the electronic linkage with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI), completed on March 29, has significantly improved the availability of company contact information. The coverage rate increased from approximately 0.8 percent, representing about 1,900 companies, to nearly 67 percent, with contact details now available for around 162,000 of the country's 242,000 registered companies.

This number continues to grow daily, and mobile phone numbers and email addresses have become mandatory requirements for the issuance and renewal of commercial licenses.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has begun taking action against companies that have failed to update their information, including suspending the renewal of their commercial licenses.

Serving notifications to companies through the "Sahel Aamal" application represents a significant advancement in commercial and civil litigation, as it links judicial notices to updated official records and places responsibility on companies to ensure the accuracy of their data.

Counselor Al-Sumait further explained that the Ministry of Justice has addressed the duration of notifications issued through the "Sahl Aamal" application by extending their validity from three months to two years. The ministry is

Continued from Page 1

coordinating with relevant authorities to resolve issues related to the cancellation of digital identities in the "Kuwait Mobile ID" application, ensuring that judicial notifications are not disrupted and that parties cannot evade their legal consequences.

This step also includes enhancing the data of users of the "Kuwait Mobile ID" application by incorporating their phone numbers and email addresses, drawing on a vast digital database comprising approximately 3.5 million users.

The Ministry of Justice has developed a new mechanism for the work of process servers through electronic tools that enable the faster and more accurate issuance of judicial notifications. The system links each notification to case details, the parties involved, and the relevant legal procedures.

Counselor Al-Sumait affirmed that the adoption of the official electronic seal for documents issued by the Ministry of Justice strengthens the credibility of electronic documents and ensures their protection against alteration or tampering.

He noted that the electronic seal will be applied to judicial notifications, electronic court judgments, electronic powers of attorney, and other digital documents issued by the ministry.

Counselor Al-Sumait said expanding the electronic notification of criminal judgments marks an important step forward, particularly in cases involving default judgments and difficulties in notifying convicted individuals.

He stressed that electronic notification enables convicted persons to be informed of court rulings and exercise their right to appeal within the legally prescribed deadlines.

Counselor Al-Sumait noted that the process was implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI), the Ministry of State for Communications Affairs, the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT), and Microsoft.

He emphasized that the Ministry of Justice's objective is not merely to replace paper-based notifications with digital alternatives, but to establish a more reliable, faster, and sustainable judicial notification system, adding that such a system would reduce adjourned hearings, accelerate case resolution, and ease the burden on the courts, the Ministry of Justice, lawyers, and litigants.

Amir reviews

During a separate call, Prime Minister Modi and His Highness the Amir discussed the close relations between Kuwait and India and ways to further enhance cooperation. The Indian premier reiterated his country's condemnation of the "criminal and blatant" Iranian attacks targeting Kuwaiti territory and airspace, including a recent strike affecting civilians and Kuwait International Airport.

The Indian premier said the attack resulted in the death of a member of the Indian community and injuries to others, describing the attacks as a "flagrant violation" of Kuwait's sovereignty, international law, and the Charter of the United Nations, as well as an act of intimidation against innocent citizens and residents in the country.

He affirmed India's solidarity with Kuwait and its people, reiterating support for all measures undertaken by the Gulf state to safeguard its sovereignty, security, and stability.

His Highness the Amir expressed his sincere condolences and sympathy over the death of the Indian national who was killed in the Iranian attack targeting civilians and Kuwait International Airport, praying for mercy upon the deceased and a speedy recovery for the injured.

His Highness also voiced deep appreciation to Prime Minister Modi for India's supportive stance toward Kuwait and its backing of all measures aimed at preserving the country's

security and stability, wishing the Indian premier continued health and wellness and the friendly people of India further progress and prosperity.

Kuwait enforces

and recommendations from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health, and the Public Authority for Manpower, with restrictions in some cases applying only to female domestic workers.

The list of 27 countries comprises the Asian countries of Madagascar and Bhutan, and the African nations of Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Togo, Malawi, Chad, Djibouti, Niger, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Cabo Verde, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Mali, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, the Central African Republic, the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Burundi and Angola.

Officials noted that the updated policy takes into account diplomatic and administrative factors, as some listed countries have representation in Kuwait while others do not. The directive has been circulated to residency affairs departments and relevant service centers and is already in effect as of the latest update.

Trump vows

Since the U.S. and Israel began striking Iran on Feb. 28, the war has shaken the global economy, driven up energy prices around the world and made many basics, including food, more expensive.

Officials have been unable to turn the April ceasefire into a deal to permanently end the conflict, particularly as Israel intensifies and expands its military campaign in Lebanon against the Iranian-backed militia Hezbollah.

The crash happened about 3:30 a.m. local time Tuesday off the coast of Oman while the helicopter was on a patrol, U.S. Central Command said.

An unmanned boat located the two aviators after they spent about two hours in the water, said Capt. Tim Hawkins, a spokesman for U.S. Central Command. He said it was the first known drone rescue at sea by the U.S. military.

Military officials did not say what caused the Apache helicopter to go down, saying the crash was under investigation. Trump said he had just learned Iran was responsible before posting his accusation Tuesday.

AH-64 Apache helicopters have been a key asset for the American military as it enforces a blockade on Iranian crude oil shipments and tankers, seeking to pressure Tehran into a deal. The helicopters have also been used by the United Arab Emirates to shoot down Iranian drones.

The drone used to perform the rescue was a 24-foot (7.3-meter) vessel called a Corsair, Hawkins said. It's manufactured by Saronic Technologies.

The drone was assigned to the Navy's Task Force 59, established in 2021 as the Navy's first uncrewed and artificial intelligence unit that focuses on maritime security in the Middle East, including the Strait of Hormuz and the Suez Canal.

Before he accused Iran of downing the U.S. helicopter, Trump had expressed renewed optimism over negotiations with Iran.

"We have a good chance" of signing a deal in "two or three days," Trump said. But he didn't provide any details on why there was reason for new optimism. In the two months since the U.S. and Iran agreed to an initial ceasefire, Trump has repeatedly predicted that a deal is near.

"We're very close to having a very, very good, strong, powerful deal," the president said. "If we go and bomb - which we could do very easily if we want, and we spend another two or three weeks bombing - they'll have nothing left whatsoever. But you won't have the strait open for months."

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America faces real threats from foreign adversaries, terrorists: Hegseth

GOP senators warn surveillance program may lapse after Trump intel pick backlash

WASHINGTON, June 9, (AP): US Republicans are warning the White House that a critical surveillance authority is likely to lapse this week amid bipartisan backlash over President Donald Trump's pick to lead the nation's intelligence community.

Sen Tom Cotton, the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, and Sen Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, sounded the alarm over the weekend after a failed procedural vote to extend the program.

The senators in a letter urged Secretary of State Marco Rubio to prepare "for a potential significant gap in foreign intelligence collection" if the authority expires. Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, set to lapse June 12, allows agencies including the CIA, National Security Agency and FBI to collect communications from foreign targets overseas without a warrant.

Efforts to secure a long-term extension of the program already faced hurdles because of bipartisan

concerns that the program can incidentally collect Americans' communications. Privacy advocates and some lawmakers have been pushing to create a new warrant requirement before those communications can be searched.

Senate leaders from both parties appeared to be nearing agreement on a long-term extension. But the effort collapsed after Trump selected federal housing finance regulator Bill Pulte to serve as acting director of national intelligence.

"I know how important this tool is. Why the president would throw this live hand grenade of Bill Pulte in 10 days before this is due to expire, I'm not sure," Sen. Mark Warner, the top Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Committee, said on ABC's "This Week."

Early Friday morning, after senators spent the night debating separate immigration legislation, seven Republicans joined nearly all Democrats in blocking a long-term extension of the surveillance authority.



The US Capitol is photographed on June 8, 2026, in Washington. (AP)

Democrats and several Republicans registered their opposition to Trump's selection of Pulte, arguing the federal housing finance regulator lacks the experience needed to oversee the nation's 18 intelligence

agencies.

"The naming of Pulte to that position, although the timing arguably wasn't the best, I still don't think it ought to derail something that's this important," Senate Majority Leader

John Thune said.

Thune has expressed concern over Pulte's pick, saying the nation's top intelligence post should not be "weaponized" and that the job should be filled by "professionals." Cotton, who rarely strays from supporting Trump and a leading advocate for the surveillance authority, declined to endorse Pulte, saying only that he had "no observations on the matter."

"He's not qualified for the long-term position," Republican Sen. James Lankford, another member of the Intelligence Committee, told "Fox News Sunday." "That's been clear on this. He has no national security background."

Both Republican and Democratic senators skeptical of Pulte pointed to his record at the Federal Housing Finance Agency. In the role, he's been linked with criminal referrals over allegations of mortgage fraud by public officials Trump sought to punish, including New York Attorney General Letitia James, a Democrat; Sen. Adam Schiff, D-Calif.; and

Lisa Cook, a board member of the Federal Reserve.

Republicans will need to garner some Democratic support to pass any extension of the surveillance authority in the Senate. But a breakthrough appears difficult so long as Pulte remains in the position, which Trump said last week would only be temporary.

"I don't see any path to convincing enough Democrats," Warner said on CNN's "State of the Union" when asked if renewal was possible with Pulte in the position.

"America faces real threats from foreign adversaries, terrorists, cyber actors, and hostile intelligence services," Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said on social media Sunday. "Section 702 remains one of our nation's most effective tools for identifying and disrupting those threats before they reach our shores." Cotton and Grassley said they believed Democratic leaders would not support another short-term extension of the surveillance authority and urged Rubio to prepare contingency plans.

US federal judge strikes down Trump's \$100,000 fee on new H-1B visas

BOSTON, June 9, (AP): A federal judge on Monday struck down the Trump administration's \$100,000 fee on new H-1B visas, contradicting an earlier federal court ruling upholding the fee hike.

The administration announced the much-higher fee as a way of preventing foreign workers from taking American jobs.

But U.S. District Court Judge Leo Sorokin in Boston sided with 20 states and struck down the visa policy, concluding that the executive branch exceeded its authority and violated the Administrative Procedure Act, which governs how federal agencies develop and issue regulations.

"The Court finds that the Policy imposes a tax on H-1B petitions without the requisite delegation by Congress," Sorokin wrote.

H-1B visas are meant for high-skilled jobs that are difficult to find American workers to fill. Deep-pocketed technology companies are the biggest users, with nearly three-quarters of approvals going to workers from India. The states argued that using the H-1B program to fill vacancies for much-needed doctors and teachers was already difficult before the higher fee.

Most H-1B visa applications cost several thousand dollars be-



In this Aug 17, 2018 file photo, people arrive before the start of a naturalization ceremony at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Miami Field Office in Miami. (AP)

fore the announced increase set off a wave of panic among confused employers, students and workers in the United States and abroad and led to several lawsuits, including in Boston.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce also sued, in federal court in Washington, D.C., and has appealed a denial of a summary judgment against the fee hike. That left the higher fee in effect, at least until September 2026, when it is scheduled to expire. Monday's ruling is also a summary

judgment, to the opposite effect. Still another lawsuit was filed in federal court in San Francisco, by religious groups and labor organizations, setting up the possibility of divided rulings in three appellate court circuits.

In the Boston case, the states argued that the policy impedes their ability to hire primary and secondary school educators and to staff public colleges and universities, will stymie academic research and will lead to a decline in medical workers.

Rahm Emanuel's uphill climb in New Hampshire tests 2028 US presidential bid

WARNER, N.H., June 9, (AP): For Rahm Emanuel, the road to the White House runs through the uphill climbs of rural New Hampshire.

The onetime Democratic congressman, White House chief of staff, Chicago mayor and US ambassador to Japan hasn't formally announced his ambition to return to power in Washington. But his weekend trip through the state that typically holds the first presidential primary was hardly subtle.

There were the union hall visits and intimate house parties, staples of New Hampshire political rituals. At one event in the backyard of a handsome home in Concord, Emanuel greeted voters and practiced a stump speech that highlighted strains on the middle class and the excesses of the tax system.

And then there was the bike tour. Over the course of three days, Emanuel pedaled 117 miles across New Hampshire from Portsmouth on the coast to Hanover on the Vermont border in what he dubbed the "Spin-Free Tour," a nod to his blunt demeanor that he sees as an asset for a Democratic Party trying to move beyond its devastating losses in 2024.

"Tough times require a tough leader," Emanuel told The Associated Press during a break at a coffee shop in Warner. "I don't think this is just about learning the words to 'Kumbaya.'"



Rahm Emanuel speaks at a house party in Concord, NH, on June 6. (AP)

For someone who has spent the better part of three decades in the highest orbits of political power, the 66-year-old Emanuel is in the unusual position of lacking a natural platform. His likely rivals in a Democratic presidential contest are mostly younger and, as governors, senators or a recently departed vice president, can more easily attract attention.

And despite his thick resume, Emanuel isn't especially well known outside political circles, as demonstrated by a woman who asked who he was after he left the coffee shop.

When informed that it was Emanuel and that he was considering a campaign, she responded, "A campaign for what?"

Emanuel is tapping into his hard-wired tenacity in hopes of overcoming such challenges.

As many prominent Democrats focus on castigating President Donald Trump, Emanuel has released a flurry of policy proposals addressing everything from social media bans for children to prediction markets and a mandatory retirement age of 75 for those in public office.

Ex-Supreme Court justice becomes Canada's gov general, representing King Charles III

TORONTO, June 9, (AP): Retired Supreme Court Justice Louise Arbour was installed as Canada's next governor general Monday after a swearing-in ceremony.

The governor general is the representative of Britain's King Charles III. The king is the head of state in Canada, a member of the Commonwealth of former colonies.

Arbour, 79, replaces Mary Simon, who became Canada's first Indigenous governor general in 2021. The governor general has important constitutional duties, but the job is mostly ceremonial and symbolic. Prime Minister Mark Carney picked a Francophone for the job.

The Central Band of the Canadian Armed Forces played "God Save the King" and the Governor General's Flag was raised on Parliament Hill to mark the moment.

Arbour is a world-renowned legal scholar, judge and leader in human rights and justice. She was appointed as a judge to the Supreme Court



Governor General Louise Arbour smiles as she takes the throne after her oath in the Senate as she is installed as Canada's 31st Governor General in Ottawa on June 8. (AP)

of Ontario, the Court of Appeal for Ontario, and the Supreme Court of Canada.

In 1996, the United Nations selected her as Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. She led efforts that resulted in the first conviction for genocide since the 1948 Genocide Convention and the first indictment for war crimes of a sitting head of state.

She later served as a U.N. Special Representative for International Migration from 2017 to 2018.

In her first speech today as the King's representative in Canada, she said the ability to coexist peacefully despite differences was critical to maintaining a lawful, rules-based society.

Arbour also discussed the rapid growth of artificial intelligence and cautioned against overreliance on the technology. She said that with instant access to vast amounts of information, it is very tempting to pay little attention to the reliability of sources.



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Services on June 9, a damaged building burns after a Russian strike in Kharkiv, Ukraine. (AP)

Ukraine president arrives in Estonia to attend Nordic-Baltic summit

TALLINN, Estonia, June 9, (AP): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy arrived in Estonia on Tuesday to attend a summit of Nordic and Baltic leaders, a visit that comes amid friction over Ukrainian drones straying into the region in recent months.

The drones have crashed into the chimney of a power plant in Estonia, hit empty fuel tanks in Latvia and been shot down by Romanian fighter jets stationed in Lithuania. Ukrainian officials apologized, saying the drones had been aimed at military targets inside Russia but were sent

off course by Russian electronic interference.

Estonia is hosting the summit in its capital, Tallinn. The country holds the rotating presidency of the NB8, a regional grouping of the five Nordic countries and the three Baltic states. It brought together the bloc's prime ministers, along with Zelenskyy.

Zelenskyy and Estonian President Alar Karis agreed to work on cheaper ways to shoot down drones that have flown over Estonia, including one that a NATO fighter jet shot down over the south of the country in May.

"We have shown that we can shoot the drones down with the planes," Karis said Tuesday during a joint news conference in Tallinn. But using fighter jets to shoot down the drones is very expensive, Karis said, so he hopes to partner with Ukraine for its technology and expertise to do so more cheaply.

Zelenskyy said Ukraine was ready to do so, drawing on experience it had built up helping countries in the Middle East shoot down drones, where it had sent expert teams to train local forces.

Montenegro 'within reach' of joining European Union by '28: Von der Leyen

TIVAT, Montenegro, June 9, (AP): Montenegro is on track to become a member of the European Union by 2028, the bloc's leaders and the Balkan country's president said on Friday following a summit focused on expanding the EU to include other countries in the region.

Leaders from across the EU were joined by their Western Balkan counterparts in Montenegro's Adriatic Sea coastal town of Tivat, where they discussed the bloc's enlargement into a region seen as a key area in countering security and economic threats posed by Russia and China.

The summit brought together leaders including President Emmanuel Macron of France and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen as well as the heads of Balkan candidate countries.

High on the agenda was Montenegro's EU accession, a process that is approaching its final stages and which von der Leyen said Friday was "within reach."

"If I had to sum up this summit in two words, they would be determina-



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen talks to the media after the EU-Western Balkans summit in the Montenegrin coastal town of Tivat on June 5. (AP)

tion and confidence," von der Leyen told a news conference. "Confidence that our union will grow in the years ahead."

The EU has already formed a working group to draft an accession treaty for Montenegro, whose

president, Jakov Milatovic, said the summit had given him "even greater confidence" that his country will fulfill its aim of joining the EU by 2028.

"This goal is realistic and achievable. It is strongly supported by all our European partners," Milatovic said.

Europe

Man arrested after Belfast stabbing: Police in

Northern Ireland said Tuesday they arrested a man on suspicion of attempted murder after another man was stabbed in a violent knife attack in a Belfast residential area.

Police said the victim was taken to the hospital with serious wounds to his face, neck and back late Monday. They said the arrested man, who is in his 30s, was in police custody.

The attack has drawn national attention because graphic videos of the in-



Starmer

cident were circulated online. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer condemned the attack, saying it was "sickening" and that he had "no tolerance for abhorrent scenes of violence like this on our streets." (AP)

☐ ☐ ☐
'Kurti's party won most votes': Prime Minister Albin Kurti's party won the most votes in an early parliamentary election in Kosovo on Sunday, early results showed. But it remained unclear whether the outcome will bring an end to a political impasse in the small Balkan nation seeking to move closer to the European Union and NATO.

The vote was Kosovo's third in less than 18 months. It was scheduled after the main political parties failed to agree by a March deadline on who should replace former President Vjosa Osmani. (AP)



A building is damaged after an earthquake in General Santos, Philippines on June 8. (AP)

32,000 displaced by Philippine quake as rescuers search for survivors

GENERAL SANTOS, Philippines, June 9. (AP) Rescuers searched ruined buildings in the southern Philippines on Tuesday to ensure no one was still trapped a day after one of the strongest earthquakes to hit the country in a half-century killed at least 37 people and displaced more than 32,000.

Only four people were considered missing on official records in the southern provinces near where the 7.8 magnitude quake struck Monday morning, but the Office of Civil Defense acknowledged several collapsed and heavily damaged buildings must be thoroughly inspected for possible survivors or casualties.

The earthquake centered off Mindanao, the second most populous Philippine island, injured nearly 500 people and displaced more than 32,000, most of whom fled to emer-

gency shelters.

Many people who left their homes feared a tsunami. Waves up to 1.4-meters (4.6-feet) above tide level were measured in the Philippines, but the only tsunami damage reported was to six shanties on stilts in a coastal village. Smaller waves washed ashore in Indonesia and Palau and as far away as southern Japan.

The earthquake left a trail of destruction, including in General Santos, a lively coastal city of more than 700,000 people known as the country's tuna capital, where at least 13 people were killed in collapsed buildings and due to falling debris.

At least 18 died in Sarangani province, mostly in a landslide that buried houses in the mountainside town of Glan, according to Rafaelito Alejandro of the Office of Civil Defense.

The other deaths were reported in

the southern provinces of South Cotabato and Davao Occidental, and on Balut Island, disaster response officials said.

About 2,500 houses and 117 government buildings and facilities were damaged in several provinces, according to an initial government damage assessment. The international airport in General Santos remained shut for a second day, forcing the cancellation of 63 domestic flights except for those on humanitarian missions.

About 6,000 public school buildings in quake-hit provinces must be assessed before classes can resume. The quake struck on the first day of classes nationwide after a two-month summer break, and many who sustained injuries were young students who had gathered with excitement for morning flag-raising ceremonies.

'Chinese, S.African militaries continue to deepen all-round substantive cooperation'

Xi, Kim pledge to carry forward great traditional friendship through generations

PYONGYANG, June 9. (Agencies) Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and Chinese president, and Kim Jong Un, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and president of the State Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), agreed on Tuesday that the two countries should carry forward their great traditional friendship from generation to generation.

Xi made the remarks while paying homage to the China-DPRK Friendship Tower with his wife Peng Liyuan, in the company of Kim and his wife Ri Sol Ju.

Xi said on Tuesday that he reached important consensus with Kim on developing relations between China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in the new era.

The two sides also had in-depth discussions on safeguarding peace and stability in the region and the world, Xi said when attending the luncheon hosted by Kim, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and president of the State Affairs of the DPRK.

Chinese president returned home on Tuesday following a rare trip to North Korea that included a bilateral

meeting and public appearances with leader Kim underscoring a joint push to reestablish the alliance between their countries.

Xi flew to the capital Pyongyang on Monday in his first visit there in seven years. During their summit later in the day, Xi expressed China's willingness to expand cooperation in a wide range of areas including trade, agriculture, construction and technology, while Kim said the two countries will maintain their friendship as "the most important top-priority strategic work," according to Chinese and North Korean state media reports.

Xi and Kim on Tuesday visited a North Korea-China friendship tower honoring Chinese soldiers who fought alongside North Korea during the 1950-53 Korean War. They stressed the importance of carrying forward the countries' traditional friendship and spirit of resistance against the United States, Chinese state media reported.

The leaders, who last met in Beijing in September, also toured a ruling Workers' Party training school and planted a fir tree symbolizing bilateral ties. Xi later attended a luncheon and farewell ceremony before returning to Beijing, Chinese state



In this photo provided by the North Korean government, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, right, and Chinese President Xi Jinping, (left), shake hands ahead of their talk at Kumsusan State Guesthouse in Pyongyang on June 8. (AP)

media said.

Experts say Xi likely aimed to restore his country's exclusive influence on North Korea, whose foreign policy priority has shifted to Russia in recent years. They assess Kim needs more economic and political benefits in return.

Reports from the two countries'

region. During his 2019 trip to Pyongyang, Xi said Beijing was willing play a constructive role in the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

This could be seen as a diplomatic win for Kim, who is eager to win an international recognition as a nuclear weapons state, a status that experts say he would use to call for international economic sanctions to be lifted.

By not mentioning the denuclearization issue, China leaves a room for the interpretation that it appears to accept North Korea's possible status as a nuclear state, moving beyond just overlooking it, according to a report by Ban Kil Joo, assistant professor at the Korea National Diplomatic Academy in Seoul.

In a strategic give-and-take, North Korea reaffirmed its support of China over the Taiwan issue, Ban said.

Kim Gyubeom, an analyst at the Institute for National Security Strategy in Seoul, said China appears to be pursuing a "managerial approach" that neither fully supports nor strongly pressures Pyongyang, while maintaining strategic communication with North Korea and prioritizing regional stability.

Restoring an exclusive influence over North Korea would give Xi le-

verage in dealings with US President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly expressed his desire to restart diplomacy with Kim.

Also:

BEIJING: Chinese and South African militaries had reached a consensus on continuously deepening all-round substantive cooperation, a Chinese defense ministry spokesperson said on Tuesday.

The consensus was made by China's Minister of National Defense Dong Jun and South Africa's minister of defense and military veterans during Dong's visit to South Africa upon invitation, Zhang Xiaogang, a spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defense, made the remarks at a press conference.

The defining nature of China-South Africa relationship is "comrades plus brothers," Zhang said.

Under the strategic guidance of the two heads of states, the two militaries will strengthen strategic communication, refine cooperation mechanisms, promote exchanges in specialized areas, and deepen education and training cooperation, setting an example for military cooperation among Global South countries, he added.

Lat/Am

6.1 quake shakes Cuba: A 6.1 magnitude earthquake struck near western Cuba on Monday afternoon, shaking buildings in Havana and Florida as far north as Orlando. No injuries or damage was reported.

The quake struck at a depth of 26 kilometers (16 miles) in waters just west of the capital, according to the US Geological Survey.

Flavia Pupo, a manager at the Pinar del Rio hotel in western Cuba, described how the building shook and caused some fear. "Everyone here is OK," she said by telephone. "The people on the street are a little bit scared."

William Barnhart, a geophysicist with the US Geological Survey, described Monday's earthquake as extremely rare. It's the largest earthquake ever recorded in the Gulf of Mexico with modern instruments, which date to the 1950s. (AP)



Barnhart

Fujimori, Sánchez virtually tied: A razor-thin presidential runoff left Peruvians without a clear winner Monday, with conservative politician Keiko Fujimori and nationalist congressman Roberto Sánchez virtu-

ally tied.

With 94% of ballots tallied, the figures showed Sánchez earned 8.79 million votes, or 50.015%, while Fujimori received 8.78 million votes, or 49.985%.

The winner will be the South American country's ninth president in 10 years. Fujimori, daughter of a disgraced former president, and Sánchez, an ally of an imprisoned ex-president, were on the runoff's ballot after beating 33 other candidates in the vote in April, but neither earned even 20% of support. Electoral authorities took more than a month to declare them winners of that contest. (AP)

Dominican Republic plane crash kills 2: A pilot and co-pilot from the United States have died in a fiery plane crash as they attempted an emergency landing in the Dominican Republic, authorities said.

The incident occurred Sunday near the southern coastal town of La Romana, according to a statement by the Dominican Institute of Civil Aviation, which identified the pilot and co-pilot as U.S. citizens. It wasn't immediately known what caused the crash. No passengers were aboard.

MLB All-Star former catcher Yadier Molina said on social media that the plane was bound for Texas to pick him up, along with family and friends. (AP)

US sanctions over 100 Nicaraguan officials and relatives with travel ban

WASHINGTON, June 9. (AP) The United States has placed travel bans on more than 100 Nicaraguan officials and their family members as part of a broader campaign to punish the current government for human rights abuses.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a statement on Monday that the new sanctions were imposed in part because of the death last month of an imprisoned activist, Brooklyn Rivera, who criticized the policies of Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega and his wife and co-president Rosario Murillo.

"The United States stands with the Nicaraguan people who, like Rivera, aspire to see a free Nicaragua," Rubio said. Nicaragua's government did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The US has now barred more than 2,350 Nicaraguan officials and family members from entering. The identities of the most recent ones were not released.

In a post on X, the US Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs noted that six of Rivera's family members and friends had gone missing, and condemned their disappearance.

In April, the Trump administration slapped sanctions on two sons of Nicaragua's husband-and-wife co-presidents. Rivera was a renowned Indigenous leader who spent years fight-



Nicaragua's President Daniel Ortega speaks to supporters as his wife and Vice President Rosario Murillo applauds, in Managua, Nicaragua on Aug. 29, 2018. (AP)

ing for the rights of his community and was imprisoned by the government in September 2023. His arrest came during a yearlong crackdown on civil society and dissent, which began following mass protests in 2018 that the government violently repressed.

Also:

MIAMI: Tropical Storm Cristina formed Monday in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Nicaragua, forecasters said.

The National Hurricane Center in Miami said Cristina had maximum

sustained winds of 45 mph (75 kph). It was centered 105 miles (170 kilometers) west-northwest of Managua, Nicaragua, and about 125 miles (200 kilometers) southeast of San Salvador, El Salvador.

A tropical storm warning was in effect from Puerto Sandino to the Guatemala/El Salvador border.

Cristina was forecast to bring rainfall of 4 to 8 inches, with maximum totals of about 12 inches (30 centimeters), across coastal Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala through Thursday.



Anti-government protesters blocking a highway sling stones at military police during clashes in Vinto, Bolivia on June 8. (AP)

Protesters and police clash in Bolivia

Protesters in Bolivia demanding the resignation of conservative President Rodrigo Paz hurled firecrackers, stones and sticks at police who responded with tear gas on Monday, leading to dozens of arrests as road blockades continue to paralyze the Andean nation.

The renewed clashes in the central city of Cochabamba erupted after President Paz signed a measure that

could pave the way for a hard-line government crackdown on the demonstrations that have roiled Bolivia over the past five weeks, disrupting transportation and causing shortages of food, fuel and medical supplies.

Bolivia's national workers' union, peasant farmers and Indigenous groups from the highlands - outraged over Paz's scrapping of fuel subsidies and frustrated with his fail-

ure in the last seven months to resolve Bolivia's persistent economic problems - have set up 90 blockades on key routes nationwide, effectively isolating major cities, especially La Paz, the seat of government and neighboring El Alto. Battered by rising inflation and low wages, many protesters accuse Paz of neglecting them since they helped vote him into office. (AP)

Africa

Kenya's ex-chief justice Maraga arrested: Kenya's former chief justice David Maraga said he was arrested Monday alongside other activists protesting planned construction inside Nairobi National Park.

Police fired tear gas canisters at the protesters who were marching outside the park while carrying banners with messages denouncing land grabs.

Maraga was detained and later released while staging a sit-in on a major road outside the national park's main gate. He was wearing a green T-shirt similar to those worn by other activists.

The police have yet to comment on the reason for his arrest.

Maraga wrote on X that he was arrested while heading to present a petition to the Kenya Wildlife Service.

"Our national heritage and environment must be safeguarded from greed and unnecessary destruction without public participation," he said.

Hundreds of activists joined the protest against the planned construction inside the park and the relocation of an orphanage, calling it an attempt to grab public land.



Maraga

Kenya has experienced incidents of land grabbing in the past, and environmentalists have often spoken out when parks and other green spaces are encroached upon.

Amnesty International in Kenya expressed solidarity with the protesters and called for members of the public to be included in decisions affecting the country's environmental heritage.

The Kenya Wildlife Service on Sunday defended the construction as part of a plan to expand the orphanage and improve the visitor experience, effectively dismissing claims of land grabbing. (AP)

Armed group kidnaps 39 in Nigeria: Gunmen have abducted 39 people in northwest Nigeria who were meeting with the family of a bandit leader, the police said Monday.

Some 47 residents were meeting with the parents of the suspected kidnap kingpin for "reconciliation and peace engagement" when the bandit leader arrived and abducted most of them, police spokesperson Yazid Abubakar said in a statement.

The mass abduction occurred on Sunday in Magamin Diddi community in the Maradun area of Zamfara State in the northeastern region.

Communities who feel the military does not protect them from constant attacks in northern Nigeria often negotiate with the groups. (AP)

Boursa Kuwait ends higher

KUWAIT CITY, June 9, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Tuesday's trading session higher, with the General Index rising by 103.76 points, or 1.21 percent, to settle at 8,714.25 points. A total of 477.5 million shares were traded across 26,692 transactions, with a combined value of KD 118 million (approximately USD 384.7

million).

The Main Market Index also recorded gains, advancing 91.62 points, or 1.07 percent, to reach 8,684 points. Trading activity in this segment amounted to 287.7 million shares through 15,144 transactions, valued at KD 40.9 million (around USD 133.3 million).

Business

National Investments Company celebrates the graduation of SHIFT Series 3



Maryam Saif

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: National Investments Company (NIC) celebrated the graduation of the third cohort of SHIFT, its flagship graduate development program dedicated to introducing young Kuwaiti women to the investment sector through structured learning, practical exposure and cross-division engagement.

The graduation marked the conclusion of a six-week program that combined technical sessions with hands-on experience across NIC's business and support functions. Participants engaged with teams across

the company, took part in practical assignments and developed a stronger understanding of how different areas of the investment industry operate in practice.

This year's cohort was selected through a highly competitive process that began with 427 applicants and culminated in the graduation of 19 participants. This reflects the strength of the talent pipeline and the growing interest among young Kuwaiti women in exploring careers within the investment industry.

As part of the program, participants also visited the Capital Markets Authority and Boursa Kuwait, adding valuable depth to the cohort's understanding of Kuwait's broader capital markets ecosystem. These engagements helped connect participants' learning at NIC with the wider regulatory and market environment, offering a more complete view of the sector and its key institutions.

Commenting on the occasion, Maryam Saif, Managing Director, Human Capital, said:

"What excites me most is not just where these women are starting, it is where they are going. This is SHIFT's third cohort, and with each edition we raise the bar. We designed SHIFT to be a launchpad, not a landing point.

The career paths opening up across Human Capital, Finance, Risk, Real Estate and Asset Management are a direct reflection of what they have demonstrated they are capable of."

The graduation ceremony brought together participants, their families, NIC executive management, members of the Board of Directors, mentors and program contributors to celebrate the cohort's development and achievements. During the ceremony, participants presented their final tasks, reflect-

ing the knowledge, confidence and professional maturity gained throughout the program.

Following the evaluation process, several participants will have the opportunity to continue their journey with NIC across different divisions. This outcome reflects not only the calibre of the cohort, but also the strength of the program's selection, learning and assessment framework.

NIC also expressed its appreciation to the internal teams who contributed to the program through

mentorship, technical sessions and ongoing guidance, as well as to the external stakeholders and partners who supported SHIFT 3 and helped enrich the participants' experience.

SHIFT continues to evolve as a platform for professional development, knowledge sharing and national talent advancement. Through the program, NIC reaffirms its commitment to supporting young Kuwaiti women and contributing to the development of the country's future workforce.

As one of the leading invest-

ment institutions locally and regionally, NIC remains committed to delivering integrated and innovative investment solutions built on a deep understanding of markets and client needs. Through this approach, NIC aims to drive sustainable growth and create long-term value. The Company is also committed to upholding the highest standards of governance and transparency, reinforcing its position as a trusted partner in supporting and advancing the investment sector.



Group photo during the graduation ceremony.

'Trust is key at checkout'

Stay Secure study: 86% in Kuwait use AI to shop

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: Visa, a world leader in digital payments, today released the annual Stay Secure study in Kuwait, which assesses consumer awareness and behaviors around digital commerce and fraud. This year's edition, conducted by Wakefield Research, highlights how AI-enabled shopping and social commerce are changing consumer behavior even as expectations around trust and protection remain firmly in place.

Consumers Embrace AI-Assisted Shopping

Consumers are embracing artificial intelligence as part of their shopping journeys. Eighty-six percent (86%) in Kuwait have used AI tools to assist with shopping, including comparing prices (55%), finding gift ideas (51%), and checking reviews or product ratings (46%).

The appeal is clear: 94% feel new technologies, including AI-powered tools, are making online shopping faster and easier than before. AI is also influencing discovery, with 53% typically discovering new brands or retailers while shopping online.

However, consumers remain more cautious when it comes to AI handling transactions on their behalf. Today, only 23% would trust AI agents to complete checkout, reinforcing the importance of earning consumer trust in the age of agentic commerce.

As AI adoption grows, consumers increasingly view the technology as part of the solution to fraud. Fifty-five percent (55%) feel AI has made scams easier to recognize today and 84% believe AI will play a critical role in protecting consumers from fraud in the future.

Social Commerce is Growing but so are Scam Risks

Shopping through social platforms has become mainstream, with 78% of consumers in Kuwait having purchased products directly through social media platforms. As commerce expands across new channels, fraud risks continue to follow consumers online. Forty percent (40%) have experienced a financial scam in the past 12 months. Among those who have experienced a scam, 45% report the incident occurred on social media, more than those who encounter scams on other platforms such as websites, online marketplaces, or shopping apps.

Children are Increasingly Exposed to Scams While Shopping and Gaming Online

The study also highlights growing concern around how children encounter scams online, with 83% of consumers reporting that children in their lives struggle to recognize scams. A significant 76% have seen a child fall victim to a scam while gaming or shopping online.

That concern comes as children gain greater access to digital commerce. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of parents in Kuwait have children who can access mobile payment apps or digital wallets.

Consumers Expect Institutions to Lead on Fraud Protection

When it comes to protecting against fraud while shopping online, consumers look first to in-

- 86% of consumers in Kuwait have used AI to assist with shopping, while 94% feel AI-powered tools make online shopping faster and easier.
- 84% believe AI will play a critical role in protecting consumers from fraud in the future, but only 23% today trust AI agents to complete checkout.
- 78% have purchased directly through social commerce, while 45% of consumers who experienced scams report it happened on social media.
- 83% are concerned children struggle to recognize scams, and 76% have seen a child fall victim while gaming or shopping online.
- Only 12% believe consumers should be primarily responsible for protection against fraud when shopping online. Separately, 53% say alerts when something looks suspicious would help them feel more secure paying online.

stitutions rather than themselves. Forty-seven percent (47%) believe banks or financial institutions should be primarily responsible, followed by government authorities or regulators (39%) and payment providers and online marketplaces (28%). Only 12% believe consumers themselves should hold primary responsibility.

They also want more proactive reassurance. Fifty-three percent (53%) would feel secure receiving real-time alerts from their bank or payment app when something looks suspicious, while 28% would feel more comfortable seeing a familiar, trusted logo at checkout.

"Visa's Stay Secure study reveals that as online shopping and social commerce continue to accelerate, fraud and scams are becoming increasingly sophisticated. Consumers perceive fraud protection as a shared responsibility but expect banks and payment providers to take the lead, highlighting the importance of secure-by-design payment systems," said Dibyajyoti Sen, Head of Risk, GCC, Visa.

He continued, "As commerce moves toward more AI-powered and agentic experiences, consumers are embracing the convenience AI can bring to shopping but remain sceptical about AI completing purchases on their behalf. With Visa Intelligent Commerce, we are enabling the next era of commerce built on trust, control and confidence."

Kuwait oil gain \$2.42 to \$106.24 pb

KUWAIT CITY, June 9, (KUNA): Kuwait crude oil gained USD 2.42 during Monday's trading to reach USD 106.24 per barrel compared with USD 103.82 pb last Friday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said

Tuesday.

Brent futures rose USD 1.16 to USD 94.25 pb and West Texas Intermediate (WTI) edged 76 cents higher to USD 91.30 pb.

Oman seals major Duqm deals spanning energy, industry

Duqm secures \$7.5 bln in new investment deals

MUSCAT, June 9, (KUNA): Oman's Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones signed 10 investment agreements and cooperation memoranda to establish new projects in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm worth OMR 2.9 billion (approx. USD 7.5 billion).

The authority said Tuesday the agreements were signed with companies from Oman, India, China, Germany, the Philippines and Egypt for projects spanning power generation, ammonia production, electric vehicle battery

materials, chemicals, and industrial, tourism and residential developments.

Key projects include a green hydrogen development valued at OMR 1.6 billion (USD 4.2 billion), a power plant project worth OMR 350 million (USD 910 million), and an electric vehicle battery anode materials facility valued at OMR 192 million (USD 500 million).

Other projects include a 500-unit residential city, a chemical products factory, a steel structures plant and a precast concrete

manufacturing facility.

The authority also signed three cooperation memoranda, including a natural gas liquids processing project with Oman's OQ Group worth OMR 288 million (USD 750 million), an integrated industrial complex valued at OMR 192 million (USD 500 million), and an integrated tourism and technology complex with worth OMR 184.5 million (USD 480 million).

Authority Chairman Qais Al-Yousef said the agreements reinforce Oman's investment environment and reflect grow-

ing confidence among local and international investors in Duqm.

Chief Executive Officer of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm Ahmad Akaak said the projects align with the zone's strategy to attract high-value investments and support advanced industrial and economic growth.

Located in Oman's Al-Wusta Governorate, Duqm is one of the region's largest economic zones and hosts major industrial, logistics, tourism and energy projects, including the joint Kuwaiti-Omani Duqm Refinery.

Jazeera Airways launches 50% off Europe sale

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: As part of its summer campaign, "Don't Just See the World. Feel It.", Jazeera Airways, Kuwait's leading low-cost carrier, has launched a special promotion offering 50% off fares to all of the airline's most popular European destinations.

Passengers can choose to fly direct from Kuwait to Antalya, Batumi, Budapest, Krakow, Larnaca, London Luton, Milan Bergamo, Prague, Sarajevo, Sochi, Tivat and Trabzon and back as a part of this offer.

Available from 10 June to 14 June 2026, the promotion can be accessed using the promo code J9SUMMER across all booking channels, with travel valid between 10 June and 31 July 2026.

The limited-time offer builds on Jazeera Airways' expanding European network and growing summer schedule, providing travelers from Kuwait with great-



Jazeera Airways big summer sale 'J9SUMMER' adds 50% off on European flights.

er access to some of Europe's most exciting city-break and leisure destinations.

Two of the newest destinations in the Jazeera network are London Luton and Milan Bergamo. Jazeera starts flying to Luton on 8 July, offering

convenient access to the United Kingdom's capital, and beyond. Milan Bergamo serves as a gateway to Italy, giving travelers easy access to Milan's fashion and lifestyle scene, as well as the country's food, culture, and scenic landscapes.

Paul Carroll, Chief Commercial Officer at Jazeera Airways, said:

"Our summer campaign is all about inspiring travelers to discover new experiences and create memorable journeys. With the addition of this special 50% promotion to Europe, we are making some of the regions most sought-after destinations even more accessible, while continuing to offer our customers great value and more travel choices from Kuwait."

The promotion complements Jazeera Airways' wider summer offering, which includes an expanded network of leisure destinations across Central and South Asia, and the Middle East.

With limited seats on offer, passengers are encouraged to book early through the Jazeera Airways website: jazeeraairways.com or app using the promo code J9SUMMER.

Global profit forecast is cut nearly in half

US carriers spent \$6.5 billion on fuel in April

WASHINGTON, June 9, (AP): U.S. airlines spent more than \$6 billion on jet fuel in April, up 78% from a year earlier despite using slightly less fuel, government data released Monday showed. Meanwhile, the airline industry's top global trade group warned that soaring energy costs could nearly halve profits in 2026.

Since conflict erupted in the Middle East earlier this year after the U.S. and Israel launched strikes on Iran, much of the shipping traffic through the Strait of Hormuz - a critical oil transit route bordering Iran - has remained effectively halted, pushing up the price of oil and jet fuel.

In an effort to contain costs, airlines around the world have raised airfares and fees, cut other perks and canceled flights or trimmed schedules.

U.S. carriers spent nearly \$6.5 billion on fuel in April, compared with about \$3.6 billion a year earlier, according to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics. Fuel consumption in April totaled 1.573 billion gallons, down slightly from 1.575 billion gallons a year earlier.

The latest figures came as the International Air Transport Association released a report on Sunday saying it now expects airlines worldwide to earn a combined \$23 billion in net profit in 2026, far below its previous forecast of \$41 billion and down from \$45 billion in 2025.

"Airlines are bearing the brunt of the fuel price shock," said Willie Walsh, director general of IATA, which represents most of the world's carriers. "While airfares are rising, airlines are still absorbing part of the hike in their bottom lines."

The group said jet fuel prices are expected to average \$152 a barrel in 2026, nearly 70% higher than in 2025, pushing the global airline fuel bill to about \$350 billion from \$252 billion a year earlier. IATA said that fuel is forecast to account for more than 31% of airline operating expenses in 2026, up from about 25% last year.

In the U.S., the cost of a gallon of jet fuel in April was \$4.11, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics said. Last April, it cost \$2.31.

In a sign of the conflict's ongoing repercussions for travel, American Airlines said last week it was suspending some of its routes this summer. In April, Lufthansa Group said it would cut 20,000 short-haul flights through October and Air Canada announced it was suspending its service to New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport from June until late October.

Other airlines, ranging from U.S. carriers like United and Delta to Air France-KLM, Philippine Airlines and Cathay Pacific in Europe and Asia, have either cut flights, readjusted their schedules or halted plans to add more seats and routes this year.

Highlights SELECT card at AASU event

Weyay strengthens collaboration with AASU to support students at The Avenues

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: As part of its strategic partnership with Abdullah Al Salem University (AASU), Weyay Bank continues its commitment to supporting youth by engaging with high school graduates at the university's booth in The Avenues from June 8 to 10. This initiative coincides with the start of the university's summer semester, offering students a timely opportunity to explore their academic and financial options.

The initiative aims to empower students by introducing them to the academic programs offered by AASU, while also raising awareness of Weyay's innovative digital banking services designed to meet their needs. These include simplified digital payment solutions through the app and prepaid cards tailored to different lifestyles—most notably the SELECT prepaid card, created specifically for students receiving academic allowances.

The SELECT card offers exclusive benefits that support students' day-to-day lifestyles, helping them manage their expenses more easily. Designed with a digital-first approach, the card can be issued instantly through the app and used immediately, giving users full control over their spending, budgeting, and savings. Additionally, Weyay provides smart saving tools within its saving pots, enabling students to build better financial habits with ease and transparency.



Weyay connects with high school graduates at The Avenues.

The activation was attended by representatives from both Weyay Bank and Abdullah Al Salem University and featured a range of activities including introducing students to digital banking features, offering simple financial guidance, and distributing valuable giveaways.

Commenting on the initiative, Amal Al-Duwaisan, Head of Weyay Bank, said: "At Weyay, we believe that empowering youth starts with financial empowerment. Initiatives like this allow us to be present at key milestones in students' lives, especially as they begin their university journey. Through our digital solutions, including the SELECT prepaid card, we aim to deliver a banking experience that is simple, flexible, and truly built around their lifestyle."

In turn, Professor Mona Sulaiman Al-Ahmad, President of Abdullah Al Salem University, expressed her appreciation for the partnership, stating: "At Abdullah Al Salem University, we are committed to supporting our students not only academically, but also by equipping them with essential life skills—particularly financial awareness. Our collaboration with Weyay Bank represents an important step in helping students gain practical tools that enable them to manage their finances with confidence and independence."

Judge seeks clarity on \$166 bln

US faces pressure to expand tariff refunds

NEW YORK, June 9, (AP): A U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency official is set to testify in federal court Tuesday about the U.S. government's plans for refunding billions of dollars that importers paid before the Supreme Court ruled that President Donald Trump illegally imposed certain tariffs on goods from most other countries.

Court of International Trade Judge Richard Eaton said he wanted to hear details that would help him decide whether to order the government to speed up and expand its system for issuing tariff refunds. The Justice Department subsequently appealed an earlier order by Eaton to make all businesses that paid the now-defunct import taxes eligible for refunds plus interest.

The Justice Department argued in a court document that only companies that were parties in any of the more than 2,500 lawsuits that challenged the tariffs were legally entitled to seek refunds.

With the dispute now in the hands of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, Tuesday's hearing may provide more clarity about the next phase of the refund process.

Eaton ordered Customs and Border Protection in March to create a system by which "all importers of record" could apply for their share of the \$166 billion CBP estimated it had collected before the Supreme Court struck down the global tariffs.

The agency launched the online system April 20, saying it would first review applications from importers whose tax bills had not been finalized.

Claims for refunds totaling \$89.6 billion had been accepted for processing as of June 1, according to CBP, and the agency reported last month that it had so far directed the Treasury Department to issue \$20.6 billion in refunds.

The pace and scope of the process became a contentious matter, however, when Eaton directed CBP Commissioner Rodney Scott to appear in court to discuss the agency's timeline for complying with the judge's "universal" order. The Justice Department objected and asked if one of Scott's deputies could attend the hearing instead.

When Eaton insisted on hearing directly from the head of the agency, Justice Department lawyers appealed both that mandate and the judge's broader ruling on refund eligibility. On Thursday, the Federal Circuit agreed to temporarily suspend the requirement for Scott to testify.

Eaton agreed to hear from Susan Thomas, the agency's executive assistant commissioner for trade.

The hearing is expected to focus

on CBP's capability and willingness to open the refund process to companies with tariff payments that date back the farthest.

So far, the agency has limited applications to businesses that either did not have their tax bills finalized by the time the Supreme Court struck down Trump's "reciprocal" tariffs in late February or whose bills had been settled within the preceding 80 days.

In a court declaration ahead of the hearing, Thomas said CBP was developing a way to handle refunds involving older shipments but would not process cases beyond the 80-day window while Eaton's order requiring for all duty payers was on appeal. "Should the court's order become final and require reliquidation of entries of all importers, CBP intends to fully comply with the court's final decision as expeditiously as possible," she wrote.

At issue is the agency's detailed and deadline-driven process for reviewing and clearing customs declarations on new imports.

When foreign goods enter the U.S., importers or customs brokers acting on their behalf estimate the amount of tariffs owed and make a deposit toward the final bill. CBP then has 314 days - and up to four years, if necessary - to review the declared goods, determine the actual amount owed, and either require more or less than the deposit.

The taxed merchandise then is pronounced "liquidated." Importers have 180 days to protest CBP's determination. Goods typically can't be reassessed after that point.

Eaton has said he is holding Tuesday's hearing "to ascertain if it is the government's policy to return all of the unlawfully collected duties either by complying with the court's order, or by some other means."

Lawyers for the five companies behind the lawsuit that produced the judge's order said it would be unconstitutional for them to pay less tariffs than other companies that also paid the invalidated duties, which the Supreme Court held Trump improperly imposed by citing an emergency powers law to usurp Congress' tax-making authority.

The companies have asked Eaton to certify their case as a class action on behalf of "potentially tens of thousands of identically situated importers."

Meghann Supino, a partner at the law firm Ice Miller, said she thinks CBP will continue to build out the technology needed to refund all tariffs, but "whether they open it up to non-litigants and importers that do not have orders for their own sake is going to continue to be an issue with the appeal."

China exports jump 19.4%

HONG KONG, June 9, (AP): China's exports picked up pace in May, rising 19.4% from a year earlier, its customs agency said Tuesday, as technology-related shipments remained robust despite impacts from the Iran war.

The stronger than expected performance was an improvement from April's 14.1% year-on-year increase.

Imports in May jumped 27.4%, also at a faster pace compared with April's 25.3% year-on-year expansion.

Exports to the U.S. in May surged more than 35% from the year before - the strongest pace since early 2021 - after an 11% increase in April.

China's shipments to the U.S. had fallen sharply for most of the months since U.S. President Donald Trump returned to the White House last year, as shipments to regions like Southeast Asia and Europe surged.

The strength in exports has been supported by shipments of autos and technology and artificial intelligence-related products such as semiconductors and computing equipment.

Exports are a "shock-absorber" for China, helping its economy weather a spike in global energy prices that have driven inflation worldwide,

said Wei Li, Head of Multi-Asset Investments at BNP Paribas Securities (China).

The global AI boom and a rising worldwide shift to green technology are also helping.

"Ships, chips, autos, and batteries continue to find strong demand amid the global tech boom, and higher prices along the tech supply chain have helped support the value growth for trade," said Lynn Song, chief economist for Greater China at Dutch bank ING.

By product categories, overall exports of semiconductors in May more than doubled year-on-year by value while autos were up almost 40%. China's biggest electric vehicle maker BYD said it sold more than 160,600 vehicles abroad in May, up 80% from a year earlier.

Advanced semiconductors and EV shipments are likely to help power China's export growth for the rest of this year, Li of BNP Paribas said. Trump's visit to Beijing in May and his meetings there with Chinese President Xi Jinping in mid-May have raised hopes for improved relations between the world's two largest economies after the two leaders agreed to set up boards of trade and investment.

By National Bank of Kuwait

US equity markets entered the week riding a nine-session winning streak, with the S&P 500 pushing to all-time highs on the back of AI-driven earnings momentum and cautious optimism around a potential 60-day US-Iran ceasefire extension. That streak broke on Wednesday when fresh US-Iran military exchanges in the Strait of Hormuz sent oil surging nearly 8%, the 10-year Treasury yield pushed higher, and the Dow falling lower, a reminder that geopolitical fragility remains the market's central vulnerability. Equities closed on Friday marginally lower as the NFP beat with 172,000 jobs against an 85,000 forecast weighs on sentiment by reinforcing the "higher for longer" rate narrative and lifting December Fed hike odds toward a full hike. Both ISM surveys confirmed the US economy is expanding at pace, manufacturing at a four-year high of 54.0% and services accelerating to 54.5%, but price pressures remain deeply embedded in both sectors, with Prices Paid indexes above 70-80%, eliminating any near-term case for Fed easing. Outside the US, the picture is considerably darker: Eurozone CPI surged to 3.2% against GDP growth of just 0.1% in Q1, Australia's economy expanded only 0.3% in Q1 as three consecutive RBA hikes bite, and Japan's Ueda confirmed the BoJ will look through the energy shock while USD/JPY sits stubbornly above well 158 despite nearly \$70 billion in intervention. Oil's Brent-WTI spread and the oscillation between \$92-98 on peace and conflict headlines encapsulates the week: no resolution, no catastrophe, sustained structural pressure. The week closes with equities retreating from highs, yields elevated, the dollar firm, and markets pricing in a Federal Reserve that is more likely to hike before it cuts, a posture that would have seemed unthinkable at the start of 2026.

North America

US Factories Rebound, Inputs Costs Remain Elevated

The ISM Manufacturing PMI surged to 54.0% in May, its highest reading since May 2022, marking the fifth consecutive month of expansion and a clear acceleration in US factory activity. New orders rose to 56.8%, production climbed to 54.3%, and export orders returned to expansion at 50.6% for the first time in several months, pointing to broad-based demand improvement with no evidence of the front-loading that distorted earlier reads. Price pressures remain the dominant concern: the Prices Paid index stood at 82.1%, the second consecutive month above 80, reflecting the ongoing impact of energy costs on manufacturing input inflation, with supplier delivery times also remaining severely extended. Employment improved to 48.6% but stayed in contraction for a 32nd consecutive month, suggesting firms are absorbing higher output through productivity rather than headcount. For the Fed, stronger growth and deeply entrenched input inflation reinforces the case for staying on hold.

US Services Strengthen While Price Pressure Broadens

The ISM Services PMI accelerated to 54.5% in May, above the

Markets retreat as oil spike, yields test rally

Hawkish trends support elevated rates

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.1655	1.1516	1.1665	1.1519	1.1400	1.1600	1.1563
GBP	1.3458	1.3327	1.3483	1.3339	1.3210	1.3550	1.3337
JPY	159.30	159.21	160.34	160.29	159.10	161.50	159.15
CHF	0.7804	0.7798	0.7967	0.7962	0.7870	0.8045	0.7886

53.7% consensus and marking the 23rd consecutive month of expansion in the dominant US economic sector. Business activity jumped to 57.7% and new orders surged to 57.3%, the highest since early 2025, reflecting solid underlying consumer and business demand despite the energy shock. Companies boosted inventories to a near-record high, signaling confidence in sustained demand. The Prices Index intensified to 71.3%, its highest since August 2022, with diesel, gasoline, oil, and petroleum-related products cited as the primary inflationary contributors, and no commodities reported as down in price for the second straight month. Employment contracted for a third consecutive month at 47.9%, with respondents citing hiring freezes and AI-driven efficiency as contributing factors. The combination of accelerating activity and intensifying price pressures in the services sector significantly complicates any near-term Fed pivot, it is the clearest signal yet that inflation in the US is broadening beyond energy into services, which historically is the stickiest form.

Jobs Surprise Firms US Dollar, Reinforces "Higher for Longer"

May Non-Farm Payrolls delivered another powerful upside surprise, with 172,000 jobs added against a consensus of just 85,000, more than double expectations and nearly matching April's upwardly revised 179,000. Critically, the BLS revised March up by 29,000 to 214,000 and April up by an extraordinary 64,000 to 179,000, leaving the two months combined 93,000 higher than previously reported. This means the three-month rolling average now stands at approximately 188,000, a pace that reflects a US labor market in genuinely robust health, not the gradual softening many forecasters had anticipated. Job gains were led by leisure and hospitality, local government, and healthcare, while financial activities declined. The unemployment rate held steady at 4.3% and the participation rate remained stable at 61.8%. Average hourly earnings rose 0.3% month-on-month, keeping the annual pace at 3.4%, contained enough to avoid immediate alarm but not declining fast enough to remove the wage-inflation concern entirely. The cumulative picture that emerges from the past three months of US employment data is one of an economy that has absorbed the Iran war's energy shock without meaningful job losses, a result that simultaneously undermines the case for rate cuts and amplifies the case for the Fed staying on hold well into 2027. Markets immediately repriced on the print: Fed hike odds for December moved up, Treasury yields pushed higher, and the dollar firmed across the

board.

The Greenback was last seen trading at 100.069

Europe

Euro Inflation Reignites the ECB's Dilemma

Eurozone headline inflation surged to 3.2% year-on-year in May, a significant acceleration from January's 1.7% low and the highest reading in over a year, as energy prices driven by the Iran war conflict continued to feed through into consumer prices across the bloc. Core inflation also rose to 2.5%, above the ECB's 2% target, reflecting emerging second-round effects as energy costs ripple into transport, services, and food prices. The reading underscores the acute stagflationary challenge facing the ECB: inflation is rising sharply while Q1 GDP grew just 0.1% quarter-on-quarter, leaving the Eurozone economy simultaneously overheating on prices and stalling on growth. Markets are watching the ECB's June 11 meeting closely, the Bank had been on a cutting cycle before the conflict disrupted the path, and this CPI print makes any resumption of easing highly unlikely in the near term, while simultaneously making a hike economically dangerous given the fragile growth backdrop.

The EUR/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.1519

Modest Inflation Keeps the Franc in Demand

Swiss consumer prices rose a modest 0.2% month-on-month in May, keeping the annual rate at 0.6%, confirming Switzerland's continued status as one of the lowest-inflation major economies in the developed world despite the global energy shock. The monthly increase was driven by higher housing rentals and hotel sector prices, with partial offsets from lower air transport fares and heating oil. Crucially, Switzerland's structural characteristics, its significant proportion of domestically produced electricity from hydro and nuclear, its CHF strength limiting import inflation, and its tight social contracts limiting wage-push inflation, continue to insulate the economy from the inflationary forces battering its European neighbors. For the Swiss National Bank, the benign print means there is no pressure to tighten policy; the SNB is expected to hold in Q2 but will likely revise inflation forecasts modestly higher given global energy dynamics. CHF remains a favored safe-haven currency in the current environment because of this stability.

The USD/CHF currency pair was last seen trading at 0.7962

Asia-Pacific

Australia's Growth Puts the RBA in a Bind

Australia's economy expanded just 0.3% in the first quarter of 2026,

below the 0.5% forecast and a sharp deceleration from Q4 2025's 0.9% growth, signaling that the energy shock and three consecutive RBA rate hikes are beginning to constrain economic momentum. Building approvals also fell 3.4% month-on-month in April and company operating profits declined 1.3%, painting a picture of a domestic economy losing traction even as exports benefit from elevated commodity prices. For the RBA, the growth miss creates a genuine dilemma: inflation is running well above target at 4.6% (driven largely by energy), justifying continued tightening, but economic growth is now clearly slowing, the classic stagflation scenario the RBA warned about. Markets are currently pricing very little additional tightening, with consensus building that the RBA may pause after its third hike even as Westpac's forecast of two further increases through August remains a tail risk. AUD has been responding to the competing pulls of higher commodity prices and slowing growth, trading with elevated volatility relative to its longer-term range.

The AUD/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 0.7045

BoJ Stays Cautious as Energy Risks Complicate Normalization

Bank of Japan Governor Kazuo Ueda delivered a closely watched address at the Kisaragi-kai meeting in Tokyo, addressing both Japan's current economic conditions and crucially the BoJ's policy framework for responding to supply shocks, including the energy shock stemming from the Iran conflict. Ueda acknowledged that higher global energy prices have created a complex dual challenge for Japan: pushing up import costs and consumer prices in the near term while simultaneously weighing on real household incomes and growth momentum. He outlined the BoJ's thinking on the appropriate policy response to supply shocks, emphasizing that the central bank looks through temporary, externally driven inflation rather than responding mechanically, while reinforcing that sustainable achievement of the 2% inflation target through domestic demand and wage growth remains the prerequisite for further normalization. The speech was interpreted as broadly cautious and status quo-confirming: no signal of imminent tightening, continued acknowledgment of upside inflation risks from energy, and an emphasis on monitoring how the conflict resolves before adjusting the policy path.

The USD/JPY currency pair was last seen trading at 160.29

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30695.

US home sales surge to the fastest pace this year despite rising mortgage rates & prices

WASHINGTON, June 9, (AP): Sales of previously occupied U.S. homes accelerated last month to their fastest pace since December, a sharp turnaround in demand for after a lackluster start to the spring homebuying season.

Existing home sales rose 3.2% in May from the previous month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.17 million units, the National Association of Realtors said Tuesday. Sales also rose 3.2% compared with May last year.

Home sales increased from a year earlier in the Midwest, South and West, but fell in the Northeast, NAR said.

The latest sales figure topped the roughly 4.07 million pace economists were expecting, according to FactSet.

Home sales have been mostly hovering close to a 4-million annual pace

going back to 2023, far short of the historic norm that is closer to 5.2-million.

Sales rose last month even as mortgage rates have continued to mostly trend higher this spring, although they remain below where they were a year ago.

Home prices continued to rise nationally last month. The U.S. median sales price increased 1.3% in May from a year earlier to \$429,300, NAR said. Home prices have risen on an annual basis for 35 months in a row.

The U.S. housing market has been in a slump since 2022, when mortgage rates began to climb from pandemic-era lows. Sales of previously occupied U.S. homes were essentially flat last year, stuck at a 30-year low. They have remained sluggish so far this year. They were flat in April after declining from a year earlier through the first three months of this year.

In celebration of World Ocean Day, in collaboration with National Geographic Ultimate Explorer

Gulf Bank launches beach cleanup campaign to raise awareness on plastic litter

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: In line with its ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability and raising community awareness about the importance of protecting natural resources, Gulf Bank launched a beach cleanup campaign near Kuwait Towers to mark World Oceans Day, in collaboration with National Geographic Ultimate Explorer and with active participation from the Sawaaed Al Khaleej Volunteer Team and the "Green Hands Environmental Team."

This campaign is part of a series of continuous initiatives organized by the bank to raise awareness of the dangers of plastic waste and its harmful impact on beaches, marine life, and the environment in general. It encourages all segments of society to actively participate in protecting Kuwait's coasts and maintaining the cleanliness of public spaces.

Plastic pollution is one of the most pressing environmental challenges facing the world today. Global plastic production amounts to nearly 400 million tons annually, with only a small percentage being recycled. A significant portion ends up in landfills or leaks into the natural environment. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, between 19 and 23 million tons of plastic waste enter lakes, rivers, and seas each year, making awareness and participation essential components of any long-term environmental solution.

Commenting on the campaign, Najla Aleisa, Chief Marketing Officer at Gulf Bank stated: "Sustainability at Gulf Bank is not tied to a single initiative or occasion; it is a continuous commitment that requires cooperation, education, and action. Our beaches are an important part of Kuwait's natural identity, and protecting them is a shared responsibility. Through this campaign, we aim to go beyond a single cleanup activity by creating an ongoing platform to raise awareness of plastic waste, encourage behavioral change, and unite the community around an issue that affects us all."

Gulf Bank seeks to contribute to changing daily habits and encouraging society to reduce plastic use, dispose of waste responsibly, participate in cleanup efforts, and adopt more sustainable practices. This aligns with Kuwait Vision 2035 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those related to Responsible Consumption and Production, Climate



A group photo of the participants, with Najla Aleisa in the center.



Active participation from the Gulf volunteer team.



Part of the beach cleanup.



Teaching children the importance of preserving the environment.

mate Action, Life Below Water, Sustainable Cities and Communities, and Partnerships for the Goals.

The campaign also reflects Gulf Bank's belief that environmental protection begins with collective responsibility. While beach cleanups help remove visible waste from public spaces, the broader goal is to address the root causes of plastic pollution by raising awareness, educating younger generations, and encouraging individuals to reconsider their daily consumption habits.

Additionally, the campaign aims to promote a culture of volunteerism across different segments of society, especially children and youth, by engaging them in interactive and educational activities that highlight the importance of keeping beaches clean and preserving the natural balance of the

marine ecosystem.

The event included competitions, recreational activities, and educational programs for children, designed in a simple and engaging way to teach them about reducing plastic waste, protecting marine environments, and adopting more sustainable practices in their daily lives. These activities also emphasized the vital role oceans play in maintaining ecological balance and supporting life on Earth.

National Geographic's participation underscored its important role in spreading environmental awareness and enhancing public knowledge about nature, wildlife, and marine ecosystems. Meanwhile, the Sawaaed Al Khaleej Volunteer Team played an active role in organizing and implementing the campaign's activities, reflecting its ongoing commitment to supporting community initiatives and fostering a culture of volunteerism and teamwork within the bank, while contributing to causes that positively impact society and the environment.

This campaign extends Gulf Bank's broader efforts in environmental sustainability, highlighted in its annual ESG report, which reflects the bank's commitment to integrating sustainability into its operations and community programs. These include converting street advertisements into reusable bags, safe disposal of operational waste such as paper, plastic, e-waste, and general office waste, as well as environmental awareness activities and training sessions at Sadeer Farm – all contributing to greater environmental awareness and more sustainable behaviors among employees and the wider community.

Among the key environmental achievements highlighted in the report is the development of a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory for 2025, serving as a unified technical reference for measuring and monitoring the bank's emissions in the future. The year 2025 has been adopted as the baseline for emissions tracking and performance monitoring. These efforts reflect Gulf Bank's broader commitment to responsible banking, operational efficiency, and environmental protection, reinforcing its belief that sustainability must be addressed through both internal practices and community engagement – combining responsible operations, public awareness, volunteerism, and long-term behavioral change.

'First step toward public listing'

OpenAI files for potential IPO amid AI race

NEW YORK, June 9, (AP) — ChatGPT maker OpenAI filed preliminary paperwork that would open the door to it becoming a publicly traded company, the third in a powerhouse trio of artificial intelligence companies racing to Wall Street debuts.

The San Francisco-based company said Monday it has filed confidential paperwork with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

"We expect it to leak so we're just announcing it," the company said in a statement. "We have not decided on timing yet; it may be a while because there are things we want to do that are likely easier as a private company. But it's a complicated set of tradeoffs and this gives us the option to go public sooner if that ends up being best."

OpenAI's move follows its rival Anthropic's June 1 disclosure that it is also moving toward an initial public offering of shares. Both are now following Elon Musk's rocket company SpaceX, which has started an IPO roadshow pitching itself as an AI-focused space company.

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman first publicly floated the possibility of an IPO last fall, describing it as the "most likely path" for the company given its size and the need for vast amounts of capital to advance its technology.

OpenAI began in 2015 as a nonprofit dedicated to developing AI for the common good and is now a company valued at \$852 billion.

The filing comes at a "precarious moment" for OpenAI as it appears to be losing ChatGPT's strong early leads with consumers and businesses to Google and Anthropic, said Emarketer analyst Nate Elliott.

"But OpenAI doesn't have a lot of other places to look for the enormous capital required to support its costs," Elliott said.

Paving the way for going public was OpenAI's decision last year to reorganize its business structure and convert itself into a public benefit corporation even as it remains technically under the control of a nonprofit.

OpenAI cleared another obstacle last month with its victory against Musk in a federal jury trial. Musk, an OpenAI co-founder and early donor, had sued the company seeking to oust Altman from its leadership and unravel its conversion to a for-profit business. A judge dismissed the case after the jury found Musk filed his lawsuit too late.

OpenAI has not yet publicly disclosed how much money it is making or when it plans to turn a profit. Much like Anthropic and SpaceX, the company has been losing more money than it makes because of the huge costs of building out the venture. OpenAI faces fierce competition from Anthropic, maker of the increasingly popular chatbot Claude, and Google's AI assistant Gemini.

In an April interview, OpenAI's chief financial officer Sarah Friar declined to give a timeline for a potential IPO but said the company was already "acting with the good hygiene of a public company," such as by measuring its revenue in the way a publicly traded firm would have to report earnings to the SEC.

"I want us to be ready," she told The Associated Press. "I think it's good to be able to tap the public markets. They're much bigger than the private markets."

She said OpenAI's current valuation would make it one of the 15 biggest companies in the S&P 500.

She also said there is a "credentializing moment of being a public company."

"At that point, people are checking your balance sheet, the SEC is governing you and so on," she said.

In a separate statement Monday published around the same time as the announcement of the confidential filing, Altman outlined a broad vision for OpenAI including three big goals: building an automated AI researcher, accelerating economic growth and giving "everyone on Earth a personal AGI," which stands for artificial general intelligence or a form of AI that surpasses humans at many tasks.

Altman said OpenAI started out in AI research and moved into commercial product development but is now moving into its third phase involving a "broad distribution of power" as the economy reshapes around AI technology.

He said OpenAI is "working to ensure the gains are widely shared. Everyone should have an opportunity for a meaningful share in the prosperity AI creates."

The remarks follow Altman's visit last week with Sen. Bernie Sanders, who is pushing a plan for the public to take a 50% ownership stake in AI companies such as OpenAI, as well as comments from President Donald Trump embracing giving the public a stake in AI's growth.

Showcasing AI upgrades ahead of CEO transition

Apple steps up AI race with smarter Siri

CUPERTINO, June 9, (AP) — Apple on Monday unveiled new artificial intelligence advances including upgrades to its Siri assistant, emphasizing a focus on privacy and day-to-day use as the iPhone maker tries to catch up to rivals when it comes to AI.

Siri AI, which was introduced at the start of Apple's annual World Wide Developers Conference, has been highly anticipated by users and developers. While Siri was launched in 2011, it fell behind other voice assistants and was derided even by Apple fans.

It is the last WWDC featuring CEO Tim Cook before he turns his post over to John Ternus in September. Cook received an extended standing ovation and told the audience he is "deeply grateful to have been on this journey with you" and said "the energy around Apple platforms has never been stronger."

The conference, which drew developers from some 65 countries to Apple's Silicon Valley headquarters, focuses on software, in contrast to the fall unveiling of the latest iPhones.

Apple has sought to distinguish itself from its peers by stressing a privacy-centered approach and integrating AI across its devices and apps. There was no mention of AI superintelligence or companion chatbots. Rather, Apple sought to demonstrate how its AI tools can make life easier.

Apple software chief Craig Federighi took some swipes at AI companies - without naming them - that seem to be "pursuing AI for the sake of AI" without clear regard for the people it is supposed to serve. At Apple, he said, "we believe that truly helpful AI should be centered around you and your needs," which means integrating AI into the products people use every day, with a focus on privacy.

The conference unveiled updates to Apple Intelligence, which was first announced in 2024. It now uses Google's Gemini AI model to help power its features and processes users' requests and interactions on their own device and privately on the cloud, making them inaccessible to anyone else.

At the center of it is the new Siri, which Apple said is now a "much more capable assistant" that can help users

find what they need and get things done across various Apple devices. For instance, it can create a menu and gather recipes from the web or from your own text messages for a World Cup viewing party and invite friends from a group chat. Siri mode on your camera, meanwhile, can tell you what you are looking at and give you relevant information, such as the nutritional details of a plate of food.

Siri's visual intelligence also works with images on your screen. For example, it can tell you whether a backpack you are thinking of getting will work as a carry-on for a flight or whether a pair of bulky hiking boots will fit inside it.

Apple also announced improvements to its popular AI photo editing tools, including spatial reframing that lets you adjust how a photo is framed after it was taken - as if you had moved the camera to a better position while you were snapping the picture.

A standalone Siri AI app will launch later this year, though Apple said it will not initially be available in Europe and it won't be available in China while the company works out regulatory issues.

Cook announced his retirement in April, ending a 15-year run that saw the company's market value soar by more than \$4 trillion during an iPhone-fueled era of prosperity. Ternus has been with Apple for the past quarter century, including the past five years overseeing the engineering underlying the iPhone, iPad and Mac - a role that made him a prime candidate to succeed Cook.

Ternus did not take the main stage during Monday's event.

The transition to a new CEO comes at a pivotal time for Apple. Artificial intelligence has unleashed the most upheaval within the industry since Jobs unveiled the first iPhone in 2007. Apple has gotten off to a rough start in AI after stumbling in its efforts to deliver new features built on the technology, as promised nearly two years ago.

Cook called his time at Apple "the honor of a lifetime."

"I truly believe the best is still ahead."

China can build humanoid robots at scale. The hard part is finding enough buyers

HONG KONG, June 9, (AP) — Chinese-made humanoid robots are making waves with their ability to do backflips, direct traffic, and even make coffee as the companies developing them seek ways to expand and dominate the market.

Robot makers in China say they have thousands of orders from both the government and private businesses for humanoid robots that can do such things as sort parcels at postal centers, as the country finds ways to cope with an aging population and rising labor costs. However, some experts believe demand for humanoid robots lags the capacity to build them.

China and the United States dominate research for what Morgan Stanley estimates is a \$5 trillion humanoid robot market.

By some measures, the U.S. holds an upper hand in developing the artificial intelligence for such robots' high-level computing power, or "brains." But as the world's factory floor, China leads in mass production capacity, supplies of hardware and harvesting of data for training robots.

The Shanghai-based startup Matrix Robotics makes humanoid robots that employ AI. Its flagship humanoid robot, the "MATRIX-3," stands nearly 5.6 feet (1.7 meters) tall and is equipped with hands able to make finely controlled movements. They are priced at around \$99,000 per unit.

Customers for the roughly 1,000 orders it has received include coffee chains and hotels, its founder and CEO Allen Zhang, who formerly worked for Tesla, said at a recent robotics expo in Macao.

So far, Matrix has made only a few hundred of the robots, though it said it will be capable of delivering 5,000 units within this year, depending on the number of orders.

EngineAI, a startup based in southern China's Shenzhen, says its full-sized humanoid robots could be used as security guards and museum guides. They also perform, with dancing and boxing.

A basic edition of its humanoid costs 180,000 yuan (\$26,600). "The next step will be to move into more real-life scenarios," said Issac Li, EngineAI's head of brand and marketing.

Most humanoid robots are still performative rather than functional, falling short of working in messy, unpredictable environments, said Samm Sacks, a senior fellow at the New America think tank focused on Chinese technology.

"The use cases of these robots are still so limited," said Chibo Tang of the

venture capital firm Gobi Partners, which invests in technology startups including robotics companies. "Without the demand and without that scale from the market, these companies are not able to really go into mass production."

China had more than 140 humanoid robot manufacturers and more than 330 models in 2025, according to the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology. Last year, the Chinese government even publicly warned about the risk of a bubble in the industry given the lagging state of commercialization and applications.

Corporate and academic labs are buying humanoid robots for research. And in China, many of the more than 2 billion yuan (\$295 million) worth of orders in 2025 came from state-owned enterprises for use in places such as power plants, data centers or for entertainment, Morgan Stanley said.

"The economics are tough: humanoid robots remain expensive to produce, fragile in operation, and dependent on highly structured environments to function," Sacks explained. There's "a long way to go to get to a level of functionality where people will actually feel comfortable having them in their homes providing care for elderly or children," she said.

The more viable commercial path will more likely be through industrial and logistics settings, Sacks said. But many factories in China and elsewhere already are equipped with non-humanoid robotic arms that perform repetitive single functions and may not need many humanoid robots.

In Japan and in the U.S., humanoid robot startups are also struggling to find buyers in industrial and other work settings.

Yet over the past year, real-world deployment of humanoid robots in China has accelerated.

Chinese people are relatively "used to this rapid change in terms of technology," said Ye Tian, an ex-Apple engineer and founder and CEO of the Chinese startup RoboScience, which focuses on developing the systems behind AI-powered robots.

As the technology matures, humanoids could perform heavy-lifting and mundane tasks in warehouses, factories and ports, said Lian Jye Su, with the technology research group Omdia.

Humanoid robots also can fill in gaps where work is dangerous or repetitive, Matrix's Zhang said. There's also a "very large household market" for

handling chores in hundreds of millions of homes in China, he believes.

In Beijing, freelance social media content creator Yang Ning recently tried out a cleaning service with a helper robot with mechanical arms and hands. It can do simple tasks like organizing shoes, folding clothes and changing garbage bags, but it's accompanied by a human cleaner.

Watching the robot sort shoes at her doorway was "amazing," she said. Still, she thought the helper robot was not that efficient and was "a bit too big and difficult to move around in a small house."

Last year, Chinese humanoid robots accounted for around 85% globally, according to a recent research report by Barclays.

Startups in China have the advantage of massive state support, in line with the ruling Communist Party's 2026-2030 five-year plan targeting the frontiers of technology, including advancements of humanoid robots.

Of the more than 13,000 humanoid robots shipped in 2025, AGIBOT and Unitree, two of China's leading robotics companies, each shipped over 5,000, while U.S. rivals like Figure AI and Tesla each shipped a few hundred or less, according to Omdia.

Morgan Stanley expects China's humanoid sales to more than double this year to around 28,000 units. Omdia forecasts that annual shipments of advanced robots could surpass 1 million units by the early 2030s.

Some robot makers say they are already profitable. Unitree said it made 1.7 billion yuan (around \$250 million) in revenue last year, with a profit of over 278 million yuan (\$41 million).

Robot makers argue that as production of humanoid robots increases, costs will drop. Using more locally made parts also helped make Chinese robots 20% or more cheaper than foreign models on average, Morgan Stanley said. It estimates the average price could fall to about \$21,000 by 2050, from \$46,000 last year.

Some humanoid robots in China were priced at below \$6,000. A report by the Mercator Institute for China Studies said while China's humanoids are already cheaper than those made elsewhere, they are still "far too expensive for widespread deployment."

Another challenge for manufacturers is to accumulate enough good data to train more robots.



KPNS honorary member Sheikh Hala Badr Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah poses for a group photo during the opening of the Third International Paper and Coin Currency Exhibition at the Kuwait National Museum.



Collectors showcase rare collections from Kuwait and around the world

Kuwait Nat'l Museum hosts 3rd int'l paper, coin currency exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, June 9, (KUNA): The Third International Paper and Coin Currency Exhibition kicked off Monday at the Kuwait National Museum, under the patronage and attendance of the society's honorary member Sheikh Hala Badr Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Organized by the Kuwaiti Philatelic and Numismatic Society (KPNS), the event features the participation of ten currency collectors showcasing rare collections of Kuwaiti and international paper and coin currencies.

cies.

In a statement to KUNA, KPNS chairman Adel Abdelraziq said the first exhibition was held in 2019 and the second one in 2023, while the third edition is building on the success of the two previous ones, adding that every session attracts more participants.

This year's exhibition is characterized by displaying some rare currencies being presented to the public for the first time, giving the event significant

historical and cultural value.

He noted that the society includes 300 members inside Kuwait and beyond and it welcomes more members.

Meanwhile, KPNS secretary general Isa Al-Dashti told KUNA that the exhibition contains a large collection of Kuwaiti and international gold and silver currencies, along with Islamic ones and world cup currency collections.



Sheikha Hala Badr Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah tours the exhibits during the opening of the Third International Paper and Coin Currency Exhibition at the Kuwait National Museum. Photos by Rezk Tawfiq

'Rehearsal No. 1' begins July 1

Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre announces new theatre talent initiative

KUWAIT CITY, June 9, (KUNA): Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre declared on Monday the launch of its new initiative, "Rehearsal No. 1", one of its qualitative projects seeking to discover and develop theatrical talents.

The step is part of the center's ongoing efforts aiming to empower emerging creative talents and prepare a new generation of gifted theatre artists, Khaled Al-Failakawi, a center supervisor, said in a press statement.

Al-Failakawi added that the program, which is available for registration through the center's official platforms, represents a new step to discover theatrical talent,

empower it, and refine its artistic skills.

He pointed out that the program comes within the center's vision seeking to provide a professional environment to embrace talents in various fields of performing arts, including actor training, theatre production, and the professional management of backstage operations to help prepare technical and production personnel with the necessary skills to participate in future theatre projects.

The 12-week program will start on July 1, and participants will be interviewed before moving on to the training and rehearsal phase, leading up to the final theatrical performance, he noted.



Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre photo
A group photo of the participants in the previous session.

Diners explore traditions beyond plate

From cuisine to culture: Chinese dining sparks curiosity in Jordan

AMMAN, June 9, (Xinhua): "People here are no longer going only to try noodles or fried rice. They want to experience something authentic, and learn more about China itself," 27-year-old Huda Ameen told Xinhua at a Chinese restaurant in the capital Amman.

In Jordan, what started decades ago as a quiet curiosity about Chinese cuisine has evolved into a wider cultural interest in China, with Chinese restaurants now serving as spaces for cultural discovery rather than mere dining venues. This shift is especially pronounced among younger generations, whose perceptions of China are being reshaped one meal at a time.

"When I first tried Chinese food years ago, it felt very different from what we usually eat in Jordan. But over time, I became curious about the culture behind the dishes -- the meaning of sharing food, even the way meals are prepared and served," Ameen said.

University student Lamar Tayseer Haddad shared a similar journey.

"Honestly, I used to think Chinese food was strange and far from our taste," Haddad said. "Now I see it completely differently -- balanced, diverse. It made me more interested in Chinese traditions and daily life."

She and her friends often discuss Chinese culture after visiting restaurants, from tea traditions to cities they hope to visit in the future.

Restaurant owners have been firsthand witnesses to this evolution.

Walid Bashir, who has worked in Amman's Chinese dining sector since the early 1990s, recalled how different the scene was, decades ago. The first Chinese restaurant in Jordan opened in 1975, he said, when the cuisine was largely unknown and patronage limited to niche groups.



A student competes in the 2026 'Chinese Bridge' Chinese proficiency competition in Amman, Jordan, June 3, 2026. (Xinhua)

ited to niche groups.

Over the years, new investment, culinary expertise, and refined cooking techniques have helped Chinese cuisine gain recognition across Jordanian society.

"The market today is very different from what it was decades ago," Bashir said. "Chinese food has become widely known, and people are far more familiar with it than in the past."

He noted that Chinese restaurants have maintained a loyal customer base over the years, with some customers visiting his restaurant since the 1990s. While some dishes are adapted to local tastes, his menu also serves authentic Chinese cuisine for Asian expatriates, foreign companies, and international tourists.

Eliana Janineh, general manager of the Jordan Restaurant Association,

said that around 70 Chinese restaurants now operate across Jordan, most in Amman.

Raed Hamadah, head of the Tourism, Services, and Restaurants Committee at the Amman Chamber of Industry, said the spread of Chinese restaurants benefits Jordan's tourism and hospitality sectors, "meeting the needs of tourists of various nationalities."

In essence, food reflects lifestyle and cultural elements. As Chinese restaurants have multiplied, local understanding of China has gradually deepened.

"Food is one of the easiest ways to understand another culture," Ameen said. "Through Chinese cuisine, many Jordanians became more curious about China and more open to learning about its people and traditions."

A fading Andean tradition

The last weavers of Guangopolo: Fighting to save Ecuador's horsehair sieves

GUANGOPOLO, Ecuador, June 9, (AP): In her modest home in Guangopolo, east of Ecuador's capital, Ligia Ipiales carefully separates strands from a horse's tail, weaving a mesh as fine as gauze for a "cedazo," a traditional sieve clinging to survival.

The craft that once made the village famous is now fading. Only nine "cedacero" artisans remain. The youngest is 51-year-old Guido Paucar, the only man in the group, while the oldest is Ipiales, at 76.

"This is our village's identity. If it disappears, Guangopolo loses a part of who it is," said Paucar. "We are the last generation making these sieves."

Fifty years ago, recalled Paucar, around 500 Indigenous families made a living by crafting and selling sieves, moving up to 600 units every month, with prices ranging from \$6 to \$30 depending on the size. But the emergence of cheaper plastic sieves and synthetic fabrics meant that sieves were reduced to display crafts with no presence in everyday life. "Now we only sell up to 10 each week," he added.

Local records show that 1,500 residents of Guangopolo have been weaving sieves for 200 years. Crafted



Ligia Ipiales weaves horsehair sieves, a mesh known as a 'cedazo,' in Guangopolo, Ecuador, Wednesday, June 3, 2026. (AP)

like a drum, each sieve features a thin, 15-centimeter (6 inches) high wooden rim that secures the traditional horsetail fabric. Until the turn of the past century, the tools were indispensable in Ecuadorian kitchens,



Alicia Columbe weaves horsehair sieves, a mesh known as a 'cedazo,' in Guangopolo, Ecuador, Wednesday, June 3, 2026. (AP)

where they were primarily used to sift flour.

Industrial growth and environmental shifts have made it increasingly difficult to source horsehair and the wood of the native Pumamaqui tree.

Until recently, horses were indispensable companions for agricultural work in the Andean fields. Today, however, farmers prefer motorcycles and tractors. This shift has forced artisans to look elsewhere, making southern Colombia and central Ecuador the primary sources for horsehair. But the material comes at a steep price, with 100 pounds (about 45 kilograms) costing around \$1,000.

After being washed and dried, horsehair is sorted by length and stretched onto a simple wooden frame known as a guanga. Seated cross-legged on the floor, the artisans work with such speed that their fingers blur, selecting, stretching and knotting individual strands into an intricate mesh.

Making cedazos once provided women with extra income and sometimes helped pay for their children's education.

At the El Cedacero craft center, home to Guangopolo's remaining weavers, efforts to train a new generation through workshops and classes have repeatedly fallen short.

"From the age of 6 or 7 our mothers taught us how to weave sieves," said Leonor Cuje, 57, gesturing toward a table lined with sieves, bracelets and brushes made from horsehair. "Now they are professionals and they don't want to do this anymore."

Stage

Tony-nominated revival reflects America's past and present

'Ragtime' still resonates 30 years after its Broadway debut

NEW YORK, June 9, (AP): It's been nearly 30 years since Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens wrote the music and lyrics for the musical "Ragtime," an American epic tracking the intertwining lives of three families in New York at the turn of the 20th century.

Staged at Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, the musical is in its third run on Broadway - and earned 11 Tony nominations, including for best revival. It's resonating the most with audiences this time, they said. "Three is the charm," Ahrens said.

"When we originally did it on Broadway, which was 1998, I think a lot of people, if not most people, were thinking about this piece as a period piece," Flaherty said. "I think now, people are responding to it as a contemporary story."

Adapted from the 1975 novel by E.L. Doctorow, the show's book is by the late playwright Terrence McNally. It depicts a wide swath of the American experience in New York at the turn of the 20th century, from Black Americans in Harlem to Jewish immigrants on the Lower East Side to the white upper-class residents of the suburbs of Westchester County.

The story that unfolds is fiction, but features historical figures like activist Emma Goldman, educator and leader Booker T. Washington, banker J.P. Morgan, auto founder Henry Ford and illusionist Harry Houdini. The show's breadth - encompassing immense tragedy as well as great optimism - and the depth of the actors' performances has been bringing Broadway audiences to their feet, often mid-act.

It also has people returning. "They're like, 'I'm coming back with my parents,' 'I'm coming back with my grandchildren,' 'I'm coming back with my grandparents,'" and it's not even like they have to see it. They want to experience it with them," said Brandon Uranowitz, who had his own return to the show, decades after he acted as a child in the pre-Broadway production.

Now, he's nominated for best lead actor in a musical for playing the role of Tateh, a Jewish immigrant from Latvia. "I think it's sort of speaking to this generational reckoning that we're having with America and our national identity."

The original production lost the best new musical Tony Award to "The Lion King," but Ahrens and Flaherty took home the prize for best original score, McNally best book and William David Brohn best orchestrations in a competitive year. It also won Audra McDonald, the Tonys'



Nick Barrington, from left, Caissie Levy, Colin Donnell, Ben Levi Ross and the cast of 'Ragtime' perform a number during the 79th Tony Awards on Sunday, June 7, 2026, at Radio City Music Hall in New York. (AP)

most decorated performer, her third award. A 2009 revival received six nominations, but lost best revival to "La Cage aux Folles."

This could be the year it finally wins a best show award: "Ragtime" is a front-runner for best musical revival, against strong competition from "Cats: The Jellicle Ball" and "The Rocky Horror Show." Among its other nods are nominations for all three leads, and for featured performers Nichelle Lewis and Ben Levi Ross.

Joshua Henry, nominated alongside his costar for best lead actor, plays Coalhouse Walker Jr., a celebrated Black pianist at the center of his community in Harlem. Caissie Levy, nominated for her role of Mother, is the matriarch of a wealthy white family in a suburb outside New York City.

A cast of supporting characters, and a large ensemble, flesh out the lead trio's lives, relationships and eventual connections: Lewis plays Sarah, Coalhouse's beloved; Ross is Mother's Younger Brother and Colin Donnell her husband, Father; Shaina Taub is Goldman, the real-life activist.

Emotions in the first act peak during "Wheels of a Dream," Lewis' iconic duet with Henry, which draws

standing ovations, mid-song, nearly every night.

"She is a person who represents women - especially women of color - who don't have a voice, women of color who are fighting to have a voice, women of color who find strength in other ways because we weren't allowed to have it," Lewis said of Sarah. But above all, she said, the character represents the power of trust, love and hope as a buoying force.

That hope is also what propels Uranowitz's Tateh. "Despite everything he goes through, despite the rejection, despite the oppression, despite the othering, despite antisemitism," it's what persists.

In the song "Journey On," his character arrives in New York with his young daughter just as Mother's husband, Father, leaves on an expedition to the North Pole.

"You depart on a ship from a country like this," Tateh sings, watching Father leave. "Why on Earth would you want to be leaving?" The two men are perched on separate, moving staircases on a sparsely furnished stage, but sing from the same height, emphasizing the valley between their experiences.

Like many of the characters, Father and Tateh (also

"father," in Yiddish) are nameless. The intention, Uranowitz said, is for aspects of Tateh's journey - from immigrant artist to successful moviemaker - to reflect the experience of Jewish Americans, and to resonate with people from other backgrounds as well. "If you pan out, which 'Ragtime' does so beautifully, it also holds just a capital 'I' immigration experience. And I think that's really important for people to see right now."

The musical feels so relevant to 2026 that audience members have asked director Lear deBessonet, also Tony-nominated, if the creative team rewrote the script for this production. Lyrics by Ahrens and dialogue by McNally about the discrimination and brutality that Black Americans and immigrants face can seem straight out of the current moment. There are also references to keeping the country "great," and commentary on celebrity culture and the power of industry leaders.

But the text hasn't changed. "We, in the audience, are hearing it differently," deBessonet said. "There's something that actually, I think is very unifying about coming together with a community of our time to look at this other time, and to look at the promise and the wound of America right next to each other."

A 2027 tour, with deBessonet and the Broadway run's creative team at the helm, will bring the show to a wider audience around the country.

"It does not feel like we're looking back. It feels like we're looking in a mirror at ourselves," Flaherty said.

There is one small change, however. When "Wheels of a Dream" is reprised in the final number, the ensemble sings "Our son will ride on the wheels of a," and then takes a long pause before a final, resonant, "dream." The goal is not to prescribe a particular emotional response, but to allow viewers - and the actors themselves - space for their own interpretations.

"In that moment, every single actor, every artist on that stage is invited to fill that moment with whatever feels honest to them that night," deBessonet said. "Sometimes you can really feel that there is exuberant hope in the air. And sometimes there is grief or rage or confusion," she added.

Ahrens said it's been a "revelation" to see how audiences have responded to the production, before and after the 2024 presidential election - and throughout this Broadway run, which concludes on Aug. 2. "It's such a visceral thing," she said. "I don't think we've ever experienced anything like it."

Music

KMA celebrates extraordinary student achievements at summer concerts

The magic of music: Powerful voices of young musical talents

By Cezary Owerkowicz
Special to the Arab Times

On June 5, at the Chamber Hall of Kuwait Music Academy in Salwa (KMA), a multitude of young musical talents, together with their relatives and friends, proved that their passion and love for music are stronger than circumstances.

For the past quarter-century, every school has been crowned with the Festival Treasure of Talents. This event soon became a widely recognized platform for talented youths.

It is important to note with gratitude the support of the Arab Times, which has followed and promoted the festival since its inception.

When cannons roar, the muses fall silent (Cicero, anc. Roman philosopher)

Unfortunately, due to prevailing circumstances this year, we were unable to gather on the festival stage. Nevertheless, our young talents deserve the opportunity to receive public recognition for. Among the participants, 20 students obtained grades of the London Royal Schools International Examinations, most of them earned Distinctions or Merits. Some of them received honors in international competitions. Such accomplishments boost the confidence, inspire peers, and highlight the excellence that can be achieved through cooperation.

Sharing Thoughts, Dreams and Feelings

At the Kuwait Music Academy, we teach not only music but also the art of public performance. While performances provide an opportunity to celebrate achievements and participate in healthy competition, they serve a far more important purpose, as they allow students to proudly and joyfully share their thoughts, dreams, emotions and personal messages with others. Through music, they offer something valuable and deeply personal—something that comes directly from their minds and hearts. For this reason, we decided to hold our Summer Concerts regardless of the circumstances.

The Muses Took the Floor / The Muses Found Their Voice

The performances began at



Danah Rabeea in her singing performance accompanied by Mr. Kamil



KMA Orchestra and conductor Viktor Shramko



Elisey Kon playing Turkish March



Laura Haider Fairouz in violin



Kholoud Salman - flute with Dmitri Krasnikov - piano



Shaun Thomas - as guest performer



Young talents shine at KMA Summer Concerts despite challenges.

11:30 am with presentations by the youngest students (five- or six-year olds). The youngest pianist is five-year-old Ani Kawyani, the youngest singers are Natalia Al-Otaibi and Charlotte Hayner, the youngest violinists are Chaechee Lim and Laura Haider Fairouz. Six-year-old pianist Mila Khodr even passed Grade One of the London Royal Schools Examinations.

Youth Has No Limits
Music is one of the attributes of youth. KMA is open for 'young musicians of all ages'. Yes, because we are young as long as we continue learning and sharing our passions.

On the stage, we enjoyed performances by singers, pianists, violinists, as well as adult players of the

flute, clarinet and saxophone. The age of participants ranged from the 20s, 30s and even over 60s. They

performed with vigor and success. Music and youth have no limits.

Majority of the participants are teenagers. They performed concert repertoire by Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt and Debussy. These performers are 11- and 12-year-olds, such as Elisey Kon and Witold Masternak, and teenagers like Lea Al-Khudary, Keisha Mokashi and Danah Ahmed Rabeea. Many of the pianists were laureates of the Seventh International Gulf Chopin Competition and recipients of other prestigious honors. Particularly noteworthy were Danah's performance of Karol Szymanowski's Concert Etude and Keisha's inter-

pretation of A. Khachaturian's virtuosic Toccata. The audience also enjoyed a surprise (from Mr. Karol) when KMA graduate Shaun Thomas, who recently returned from university studies in Hyderabad, delivered a brilliant performance during the Gala Concert. In 2025, he was awarded the Grand Prix of the Seventh International Gulf Chopin Competition.

Family Concert

Young talents performed not only as soloists but also in duos, trios and even a quartet (Nada Amr, Jessica Fam, Joanna Marafie and Lareen Khashawi). Many students appeared alongside their teachers (Karol Masternak, Kamil Derylo, Dmitri Kolesnikov and Viktor Shramko) who fully supported them. There were many sibling and family performances, including members of the Dashti, Marafie, Bakhit, Khashawi, Fairouz, Thomas, Derathe, Kawyani, Al-Qallaf, Saleh, Gill and Karagodina families. Together, they created a family-oriented atmosphere within our musical home.

To Build Bonds between People

The final highlight of the day-long presentation was the performance of the KMA Orchestra under the baton of its conductor, Viktor Shramko, together with outstanding soloists. They performed Antonio Vivaldi's Violin Concerto 'Grosso Mogul' with Dmitri Krasnikov, H. I. Baermann's Adagio for Clarinet with Jessica Fam, A. Webber's internationally renowned 'Don't Cry for Me Argentina' with acclaimed soprano Kinga Masternak, and Lauffey's 'Let You Break My Heart Again' with vocalist Amira Karagodina and Danah Ahmed Rabeea's own outstanding piano improvisation.

The applause and congratulations seemed endless.

Children from various nations, even those experiencing conflict, performed in harmony on the Kuwaiti stage. This is the triumph of music. By sharing something meaningful with others, we discover our own value and realize that we are appreciated and needed. This is one of music's greatest social contributions: its ability to build bonds between people.

Cicero was wrong. It is the success of music.



Top & above: Young musicians after a powerful performance.



Survivors share experiences and lessons

Congo's Ebola outbreak rises to 100 deaths out of 550 cases as conflict slows response

BUNIA, Congo, June 9, (AP): At least 100 people have died from Ebola less than a month after authorities declared an outbreak of the disease in eastern Congo, authorities said, a grim toll as officials intensify efforts to slow the disease discovered weeks late.

Attacks on health workers from angry residents, skepticism among some locals and armed conflict in hot spots continue to challenge efforts to stop the outbreak declared on May 15, which has been caused by a severe form of Ebola disease.

Out of the 550 cases of the disease confirmed as of Sunday, there have been 101 deaths and 19 recoveries, according to the latest situation report late Monday. The outbreak is concentrated in Congo's eastern province of Ituri, which accounts for more than 90% of the cases. Cases have also been recorded in the North Kivu and South Kivu provinces, and has spread across the border to Uganda.

The number of cases in Congo is believed to be higher because the outbreak was confirmed weeks late and the contact tracing coverage rate, which has improved in recent days, is still at 64%.

The latest Ebola disease outbreak is caused by the rare Bundibugyo virus,

which does not have an approved vaccine or treatment unlike the "Zaire virus," another name for the Ebola virus, responsible for most of Congo's past 16 outbreaks of the disease.

The rapid increase in the number of cases is in part due to the scale up of diagnostic capacities, enabling testing of the backlog of previously collected samples, authorities said.

Health measures put in place to limit the spread of Ebola have disrupted daily life in Bunia, the bustling capital of Ituri province.

"The authorities have asked us not to carry two customers on the same motorbike anymore. We are now only allowed to carry one customer per motorbike," motorcyclist Justin Abekani said.

There is still widespread skepticism and disregard for health protocols in some parts of the province. Survivors of Congo's 2018 Ebola outbreak, the second-biggest in history, have warned that a repeat of past mistakes could lead to a high number of preventable deaths.

Front line health workers, with little pay or rest, have been attacked multiple times by angry residents and have not been able to reach some communities due to conflict involving armed rebel groups.

Eastern Congo has for years seen



Dr. Babah Mutuza Lusungu, right, a doctor at 'Dieu Est Grand' Medical Center, attends to a woman in his office in Beni, Congo on June 1. (AP)

attacks by dozens of separate rebel and militant groups, some of them with links to foreign countries or to the extremist Islamic State group.

Conflict is "constraining access for the response, disrupting surveillance and response activities, and increasing the risk of undetected transmission," the World Health Organization said Monday. "Such incidents underline the challenges of the

context and the importance of working closely with local leaders and communities," WHO added.

Nearly a million people have been displaced by conflict in Ituri, according to the U.N. humanitarian office, making contact tracing difficult as people flee attacks or move frequently in the vast province with dense forests, poor roads and remote villages that can take days to reach.

Tracing also is difficult among the thousands of artisanal miners who regularly move between remote sites in the mineral-rich region.

WHO currently assesses the risk of spread for the rest of Africa and at the global level as low.

"(Ebola) patients can recover if they get the medical support they need," WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Monday during a visit to Uganda.

The memories come flooding back whenever Vianney Kambale Kombi hears the word Ebola.

He remembers the pain and fear in his community in the eastern Congo city of Beni during the 2018-2020 Ebola outbreak, history's second-biggest with more than 3,400 reported cases and over 2,200 deaths. It was stopped with the aid of vaccines.

Kombi also remembers the broad skepticism over the disease, attacks on health workers and inaction from patients that he blames for the speed in which the disease spread.

"We thought it was witchcraft," said Kombi. "The community had not accepted that this disease existed and it had not accepted that we could recover from it."

In Beni, a bustling commercial hub near the borders with Uganda

and Rwanda, some fear that a repeat of mistakes made during Congo's past outbreaks and the lack of an approved vaccine this time around might make the response to the latest outbreak more challenging.

Kombi recalled how he contracted the virus after being exposed to others who had it. He said they had little information about the disease at the time, and that while many thought it was witchcraft, others described it as a "Western conspiracy for funding reasons."

"The community had not accepted that we could recover from this disease, that's why reintegrating into the community at first was a bit difficult," he said.

"When a pandemic hits here in Congo, we initially think it's a political issue," said Bienfait Wanzire, who also recovered after contracting Ebola during the 2018 outbreak.

"At first, we thought it was a spiritual illness," he said. "Then because there were election campaigns, we believed it was political."

Dr. Babah Mutuza Lusungu, a physician at "Dieu Est Grand" Medical Center in Beni, remembered losing his uncle and two colleagues even as he tried to convince people the outbreak was real.

Pack reusable water bottle, bring breathable clothing

How to stay safe while traveling during extreme heat

WASHINGTON, June 9, (AP): As travelers prepare to set off on summer trips, scorching temperatures lie in wait.

Above-average temperatures could be on the books this summer, according to forecasters, and a developing El Nino event could spell out warmer weather later in the year or next summer. Sizzling temperatures are more than an inconvenience: They can cause heat exhaustion and life-threatening heat stroke.

Travelers can take precautions to have fun with heat preparedness in mind.

"The same way that we prepare for more extreme travel in the cold, we should start to consider those tips to keep us safe in the summer months," said Dr. Alexander Azan with NYU Langone Health, who co-directs the Project HEATWAVE initiative.

Before taking off, check the air temperatures for both day and night as well as the heat index, which takes humidity into account, Azan said.

If temperatures look scorching, stay flexible. Relocate to cooler regions along the coast or at higher elevations. Plan more strenuous outdoor activities like hiking or long walks during early morning or late

evening hours, outside of peak heat windows. A midday movie, museum visit or coffee shop break may be more suitable.

Check whether your lodging will have reliable conditioning and whether the region has had recent power blackouts or brownouts. You can also search for public facilities like cooling centers, and note key phone numbers to report medical emergencies.

In addition to what you're bringing, think about who you're bringing. People with certain medical conditions or medications may be more vulnerable to heat while traveling.

"A lot of the prescription drugs that we take for common conditions like high blood pressure, anxiety, depression, they actually interrupt our body's ability to thermoregulate," said Ashley Ward, director of the Heat Policy Innovation Hub at Duke University.

Older adults, those who may be pregnant, young children and infants are also especially susceptible - so adjust plans accordingly. Carrying a baby against your body can transfer additional heat, for example.

Pack a reusable water bottle and bring light-colored, breathable cloth-

ing that will keep you cool. Don't forget sunscreen, sunglasses, a wide-brimmed hat and a cooling towel. A portable fan can be useful too, but avoid using it during particularly high temperatures since it'll just blow hot air back at you.

If you're planning a road trip, get your vehicle inspected a few weeks before to make sure everything is in good condition, especially the engine cooling system and the car battery. If you'll be driving abroad, ask whether the rental car will have air conditioning.

Pack water and snacks to keep passengers and pets energized during the drive and take breaks to hydrate and stretch - but don't leave young children, pets or older adults alone in the car even for a few minutes.

Keep the car as cool as possible by parking in shaded areas and using a windshield protector. When entering a steamy car, turn on the air conditioning but turn off recirculation to keep stale air from cycling. Roll down the windows a bit, then close them and turn recirculation on once the car starts to chill.

To avoid getting stuck in the heat, don't drive on less than a quarter tank of gas, said AAA senior auto-

motive manager David Bennett. If you do get stuck and the engine is still running, you can cycle it on and off every few minutes so AC can still cool the car. Don't walk along the side of the road in searing temperatures to search for help: Instead, stay in the car or nearby shade and put reflectors or cones in front of the vehicle. Bring an extra charger that plugs into the car so you can call for help if needed.

Travelers should be mindful of how their behavior changes on vacation. Spending long hours outdoors, participating in intense activities or consuming more alcohol than usual can increase heat-related risks.

People often get into trouble when they ignore both environmental conditions and the warning signals their bodies are giving them. "They think they can push through. That is a mistake," Ward said.

During the day's exploring, employ the buddy system and look out for signs of heat illness like feeling dizzy, experiencing nausea or muscle cramps and sweating with cool and clammy skin. If you or a travel partner start to feel sick, get to a shaded area and take sips of water while loosening tight clothing.



Tourists visit the 5th century BC Propylaea on the Acropolis Hill during a hot day in Athens, Greece, May 28. (AP)

Flesh-eating cattle parasite spreads beyond Texas as new screwworm cases found

LOS ANGELES, June 9, (AP): Three more cases of the New World screwworm have been confirmed, including one outside the main cluster in Texas, demonstrating the difficulty of stopping a resurgent pest that could devastate the nation's cattle industry, the US Department of Agriculture announced Monday.

The screwworm is actually a fly larva that eats living flesh instead of dead material. The flies lay their eggs in open wounds of animals like cattle, but wildlife, pets and occasionally even humans can be infested. The government has a program to breed sterile male flies and drop swarms of them from planes to mate with wild females, which kept screwworm contained at the southern end of Panama for decades.

So far, there are five confirmed cases: three calves and a goat in Texas and a dog from neighboring Lea County, New Mexico. The small dog, which the USDA initially reported as a Texas case, lives in New Mexico and was reclassified as the first in that state.

The dog had not traveled to Mexico or Texas, so authorities were investigating around the property where the pet lived. If they find infected flies, animal inspections in the area will increase, New Mexico State Veterinarian Samantha Holeck said during a virtual news conference Monday.

The first two screwworm cases were discovered last week in calves a few miles apart in south Texas. A



Officials work at the State Operations Center during Texas' response to the New World Screwworm in Austin on Friday, June 5, 2026. (AP)

case was announced Monday in a calf in La Salle County, southwest of San Antonio, and in a goat in Gillespie County, west of Austin.

In each case, officials have set up a 12-mile (20-kilometer) quarantine zone to try to slow the parasite's advance.

Along with cattle and other warm-blooded livestock, scientists worry screwworms could devastate the millions of wild white-tailed deer in Texas.

Scientists expect new cases could pop up in the coming days and weeks, but it doesn't mean screwworm is spreading rapidly, said Edward Burgess, a University of Flor-

ida entomologist who studies the fly. "When that first case is seen, everyone is being vigilant and their eyes are on it more intensely," Burgess said. "And when you are looking for something, you are more likely to see it."

Screwworm gets its name from the maggots' habit of burrowing - or screwing - into a wound, according to the USDA. The pest eats the flesh of the animal, further opening wounds and increasing the risk of deadly bacterial infections. Animals can die within a few weeks if not treated. There are a dozen government-approved medications to treat livestock.

United States seeing stronger storms, so why droughts getting worse?

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

By David Boutt
UMass Amherst

About two-thirds of the US is in some stage of drought in late spring 2026, yet at the same time the country has been seeing more intense downpours. It might seem contradictory, but both are symptoms of rising global temperatures.

The reason has to do with the water cycle.

Water influences every aspect of our lives through a delicate cycle that transforms liquid water into vapor and back again.

As the Earth warms, more of that precipitation is arriving in intense storms that deliver more water than the landscape can handle. When storms drop a few inches of rain over a few days, the water sinks into the soil, nourishing plants and replenishing groundwater. But during heavy downpours, the rain can't sink in fast

enough, and much of the water runs off instead, often fueling flooding.

Water also evaporates faster in warmer temperatures. So, despite an increase in total annual precipitation nationally, the landscape is drying out more rapidly as temperatures rise, resulting in more severe and frequent droughts.

I'm a hydrologist at UMass Amherst. My colleagues and I are documenting these broad shifts and what they mean for the future of the terrestrial hydrological cycle - the water cycle on land - and the people and ecosystems that depend on it. The effects are occurring across climates around the world.

Fundamentally, the terrestrial hydrological cycle is controlled by two things: precipitation that adds moisture to the ground and evapotranspiration, meaning water that evaporates either from the land back into the atmosphere or from plants releasing it through their leaves.

Over the long term, the total amount of precipitation that falls, minus the total evapotranspiration sending moisture back into the atmosphere, determines how much

water moves through the hydrologic system. That affects stream flow, soil moisture and the amount of water sinking into the ground and recharging aquifers.

When this balance shifts or becomes out of sync with its natural state, it affects how water moves through the landscape. And that directly influences where water is available and how much is there.

These shifts in precipitation are occurring alongside longer growing seasons that allow the land to accumulate more heat. As temperatures rise, drier air also pulls more water from the landscape, increasing the risk of drought.

The changing timing of precipitation can result in counterintuitive feedbacks, as recent studies in the Northeast have shown.

In one study, scientists at Harvard Forest found that more intense storms are delivering greater amounts of water at rates exceeding the soil's capacity to retain it. For example, in 2023 they found that high-intensity events in their research area made up about 42% of the year's total precipitation. (AP)



A koala named Ellin sits inside a habitat at Palm Beach Zoo Conservation Society in West Palm Beach, Fla., on April 22, 2026. (AP)

Koala decline began long before human arrival: study

SYDNEY, June 9, (Xinhua): A new genomic study has found that koala populations experienced a severe decline around 100,000 years ago, long before humans arrived in Australia, overturning previous assumptions.

The study suggests environmental change, rather than early human activity, was the main driver of the species' population decline, according to a statement of Australia's University of Sydney released Tuesday.

All modern koalas descended from "a single, struggling ancestral population" that survived harsh climate upheavals, such as glacial periods, and fluctuating cold and dry periods as the Australian tectonic plate moved, it said.

As Australia became drier, koala habitats contracted, isolating populations and leading to the extinction of western groups, while a small eastern population "persisted through the harshest glacial conditions," said researchers from the University of Sydney and Texas A&M University in the United States.



A Zhuque-2E Y6 carrier rocket carrying two satellites named Spacesail DTC 01 and China Mobile 02 blasts off from the Dongfeng commercial space innovation pilot zone in northwest China on June 9. (Xinhua)

China's Zhuque-2E Y6 carrier rocket sends 2 new sats into space

China on Tuesday successfully launched a Zhuque-2E Y6 carrier rocket to transport two new satellites into space.

The carrier rocket blasted off at 4:23 p.m. (Beijing

Time) from the Dongfeng commercial space innovation pilot zone in northwest China.

The two satellites are named Spacesail DTC 01 and China Mobile 02, respectively. (Xinhua)

SPORTS

Clark's deep 3 lifts Fever past Washington

Stewart delivers dagger as Liberty edges Sun in thriller

UNCASVILLE, Conn., June 9, (AP): Breanna Stewart scored 28 points, including a key putback with 24.8 seconds left, Han Xu had 14 points in her first career WNBA start, and the New York Liberty beat the Connecticut Sun 89-80.

Xu started in place of Jonquel Jones, who was a late scratch because of an illness. Jones, who spent six years with the Sun before coming to New York in 2023, had her No. 35 jersey retired by Connecticut before the game.

Connecticut got within 85-80 with 45.9 seconds remaining - the closest the Sun had been in the fourth quarter. Then, Pauline Astier drove into the lane at the other end for a layup attempt that didn't hit the rim, but Stewart got the offensive rebound and putback.

Betnijah Laney-Hamilton scored

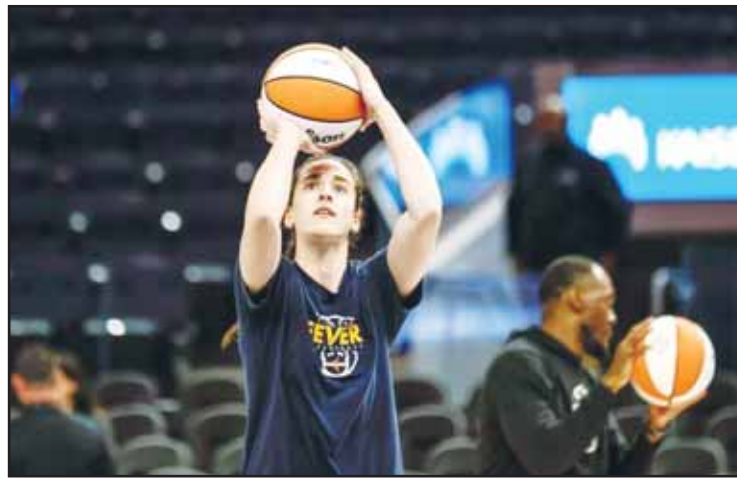
11 points off the bench for New York (8-4), which has won five straight games.

Olivia Nelson-Ododa and Aaliyah Edwards each scored 15 points - both season highs - for Connecticut (2-11), which has lost three straight games. Saniya Rivers scored 12 and Diamond Miller had 10.

Fever 78, Mystics 76

In Washington, Caitlin Clark's 3-pointer with 1.2 seconds left gave Indiana a victory over Washington.

Washington rallied from a 17-point deficit and led by one after Sonia Citron's two free throws with 4.3 seconds remaining, but after a timeout, Clark caught a crosscourt pass and was all alone after Cotie McMahon went for the steal and missed.



In this file photo, Indiana Fever's Caitlin Clark warms up before the Golden State Valkyries played the Indiana Fever at Chase Center in San Francisco. (AP)

From just in front of the logo on the left wing, Clark's shot hit nothing but net. After Washington advanced the ball to midcourt, Aliyah Boston broke up the inbound pass and the Fever held on.

Clark finished with 19 points. She scored 10 in the first quarter, and although she picked up her third foul in the second, Indiana made it to halftime with a 43-29 lead. A four-point play by Clark pushed the advantage to 17 in the third.

Aces 101, Storm 91

In Las Vegas, A'ja Wilson had 34 points, 12 rebounds, nine assists and three blocks, Jackie Young added 29 points, and Las Vegas beat Seattle.

Wilson became the fastest player in WNBA history to reach 6,000 career points, doing so in 278 games

to top Diana Taurasi's mark of 291. Wilson grabbed an offensive rebound with just over five minutes to play to secure a double-double and she sank a jumper from the free-throw line at the other end to reach the milestone.

Wilson finished 10 of 19 from the field, including three 3-pointers, and 11 of 13 at the free-throw line.

Dominique Malonga scored 19 points and Natisha Hiedeman added 17 for Seattle (3-10), which dropped to 1-6 on the road. Awa Fam scored 16 and Flau'jae Johnson added 13.

NaLyssa Smith had 16 points and nine rebounds, and Chelsea Gray added 12 points and eight assists for Las Vegas (8-3), which won its second home game of the season. Jewell Loyd had just five points on 2-of-7 shooting against her former team.

Bangladesh stuns Australia for second-ever ODI victory



Bangladesh's Mosaddek Hossain Saikat plays a shot during the first one day international cricket match between Australia and Bangladesh in Mirpur, Bangladesh, Tuesday, June 9, 2026. (AP)

Al-Khaleej's strong Asian run reflects Saudi handball growth

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: Al-Khaleej Club's participation in the Asian Men's Handball Championship in Kuwait underscores the remarkable progress of Saudi handball on the continental stage and reflects the growing stature of Saudi clubs and national teams in recent years.

The Saudi side entered the tournament carrying a wealth of experience and a distinguished record in Asian competitions. Having previously claimed continental honors and produced several memorable campaigns, Al-Khaleej has firmly established itself among Asia's leading handball clubs. In the current edition, the team has once again demonstrated its quality through disciplined performances and a strong competitive spirit.

Despite facing a demanding schedule and a series of high-caliber opponents, Al-Khaleej maintained a consistent level throughout the tournament. The combination of tactical organization, physical readiness, and accumulated experience enabled the team to compete effectively against some of the strongest contenders for the title.

Among the standout fixtures was the clash with Kuwait SC, the host club and one of the championship favorites. Al-Khaleej's display in that encounter highlighted the team's maturity, composure, and ability to rise to the occasion against elite opposition.

The club's continued success is the product of a well-structured sporting model supported by dedicated administrative and technical efforts. It also reflects the ongoing work of the Saudi Handball Federation, led by Hassan Nasr Hilal, in strengthening the competitiveness of Saudi clubs and creating an environment that supports sustained continental success.

Equally deserving of praise is Kuwait for its outstanding organization of the championship. The warm hospitality, excellent facilities, and seamless management of the event have showcased Kuwait's proven capabilities in hosting major sporting competitions and contributed to a successful tournament that further enhances the profile of Gulf sport across Asia.

FIFA confirms referee removal

Historic dream crushed as Omar denied US visa for World Cup '26

MOGADISHU, Somalia, June 9, (AP): The World Cup referee from Somalia who was denied entry to the United States after arriving in Miami and subsequently cut from the tournament by FIFA was set to make history for his country.

Omar Artan was going to be the first referee from Somalia to officiate at a World Cup after making FIFA's final list for the tournament, which was announced two months ago. He is one of Africa's top referees and was named the continent's best male referee in 2025.

He was denied entry at Miami International Airport on Saturday over "vetting concerns," U.S. Customs and Border Protection said in a statement without giving details of those concerns. Artan was issued a visa to travel to the U.S. last week, according to the Somalia Embassy in Kenya that processed it.

The move to deny a FIFA-appointed match official permission to enter a World Cup host country is highly unusual. Artan was due to meet up with other World Cup referees at their training base in Miami.

The Somalia Youth and Sports Ministry said on Tuesday that it had not been told why Artan was denied entry and its embassy in the U.S. was making diplomatic efforts to resolve the problem and still allow Artan to referee at the World Cup, which opens on Thursday.

Somalia was one of the countries subjected to new travel restrictions last year under the Trump administration's crackdown on immigration. That raised concerns that fans, players and officials from those countries - most of which are African - might be denied entry for the World Cup due to the larger crackdown despite having valid visas.

"When Customs and Border Protection said Omar Artan was found inadmissible because of vetting concerns without specifying the reason, it may be related to those broader screening measures rather than any specific allegation against him," Issa Aden Abshir, a senior adviser at the Somalia sports ministry and a former national team captain, told The Associated Press.

"During processing, the traveler underwent additional inspection, a routine part of CBP's inspection process when officers need to verify information or determine admissibility," CBP said in its statement on Monday. "Following inspection, the traveler, a referee for the FIFA World Cup, was determined to be inadmissible due to vetting concerns and was denied entry."

It didn't name Artan and referred only to a Somali national who is a World Cup referee. Artan is the only Somali referee selected for the tournament.

CBP said all travelers seeking entry into the U.S. - including World Cup players, coaches and staff - were subject to CBP inspection and vetting.

"Admissibility determinations are made on a case-by-case basis using law enforcement, national security, and immigration information available at the time of inspection," the CBP statement said. "CBP officers have the authority to question travelers, conduct inspections, and determine admissibility consistent with U.S. law."

FIFA said it was not involved in the immigration processes and was informed by U.S. authorities that Artan's "status will not be changed at present." It said Artan wouldn't be able to train and officiate at the World Cup.

"In line with previous FIFA events, a host government ultimately determines who receives a visa and who is admitted into their country," FIFA said.

Still, FIFA and its president Gianni Infantino built close ties to U.S. President Donald Trump's government as the U.S. prepared to co-host with Mexico and Canada, and had publicly stressed how that would help the World Cup run smoothly.

Infantino did not immediately comment on the issue, while FIFA released a statement on behalf of Artan.



In this file photo, referee Omar Artan, center, signals a penalty during the CAF Champions League final soccer match between AS FAR Rabat and Mamelodi Sundowns, in Rabat, Morocco. (AP)

Sri Lanka clinch series in rain-hit tour

off 66 balls.

Australia lost to Pakistan 2-1 in ODIs last week and its playing its first bilateral ODIs with Bangladesh in 15 years. Bangladesh's only previous win over the six-time world champion was in 2005. Mirpur is scheduled to also host the remaining two ODIs on Thursday and Sunday.

Australia had a dismal start its run chase when Matthew Short was clean-bowled by Taskin Ahmed to the very first ball. Marnus Labuschagne struggled on Pakistan's tailor-made slow tracks and scored 0, 5 and 19, and on a seam-friendly Mirpur pitch he fell for 1 to Mustafizur Rahman.

Opener Cooper Connolly made 35 and shared a 49-run stand with captain Josh Inglis (19) and a 40-run stand with Alex Carey (47), but Mosaddek removed Connolly and Rana claimed three wickets in three overs of his return spell and the game got away from Australia.

Mosaddek's tidy 10-over spell of off-spin finished with 2-37 followed his half-century in an impressive return since his last ODI in 2022.

Mosaddek was dropped three times while hitting seven fours and three sixes in his comeback game. Connolly and Oliver Peake dropped Mosaddek before the half-century and Adam Zampa missed a simple catch on 73.

Shanto also got a life on 9 to score his 12th ODI half-century.

Fast bowler Nathan Ellis led with 3-38 after impressing in Pakistan with his variations.

The third one-day cricket international between West Indies and Sri Lanka went the same way as the second and was washed out Monday without a ball being bowled.

Umpires made the decision just after 6 p.m. local time to call off the match because the outfield couldn't be made ready for play even if the rain abated.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka won the first match of the series by 41 runs for its first ODI win in the Caribbean in 13 years. The two subsequent washouts have given Sri Lanka a 1-0 series victory.

"We're very happy to win the series," Sri Lanka captain Kusal Mendis said. "We did really well in that one game in all three departments."

"There's not a lot of matches ahead of next year's World Cup and I'm happy with my first series victory as captain."

The series win was also the first for Sri Lanka's new coach, former South Africa star Gary Kirsten.

"You can't control mother nature," West Indies captain Shai Hope said. "Credit must be given to the Sri Lankan team for the way they played in the first game."

The series continues with three Twenty20 internationals, the first of which will be played at Kingston on Thursday.

Official banned for seven months

English rugby official resigns after discriminatory post about Women's World Cup winner Alphonsi

LONDON, June 9, (AP): A council member for England's Rugby Football Union has resigned after making discriminatory comments on social media about Maggie Alphonsi, a Women's World Cup-winning former England star.

In a post on Facebook, Matt Smith questioned what Alphonsi knows "about men's rugby" while she was working as a TV pundit for the men's Six Nations game between France and England in March.

Smith, who represents Warwickshire RFU, was handed a seven-month ban by an independent disciplinary panel, a sanction that meant his RFU council privileges - including match tickets and travel expenses - were removed as well as access to RFU premises.

He still held his voting rights and stayed on as a council member in the 62-person governing body, however, and Alphonsi called for him to be replaced, saying there was "no room for sexism, misogyny, or



In this file photo, England's Maggie Alphonsi, center, is tackled by a New Zealand player as she tries to grab the ball in the second half of the Women's Rugby World Cup gold medal final at Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton Alberta. (AP)

any form of discrimination in our game."

On Monday, Warwickshire RFU said in a statement that Smith has quit "in light of a recent disciplinary process."

"We recognise that this situation has raised important concerns and as a constituent body, we want to be clear that we take issues of sexism and misogyny seriously," it said. "Creating a respectful, inclusive environment across our game remains a priority for us all." Alphonsi won 74 caps, seven Six Nations titles, and the World Cup with England in 2014 before retiring that year.

She was honored by the late Queen Elizabeth II in 2012 for services to rugby and inducted into World Rugby's Hall of Fame in 2016 - with the world body describing her as the "First Lady" of English women's rugby.

Alphonsi first commented on men's international rugby when she was signed up by broadcaster ITV during the Rugby World Cup in 2015.

Flexible subscription options to watch the most popular football tournament in the world

stc partners with TOD to provide customers with FIFA World Cup 2026 live streaming

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, a strategic partnership with TOD, the leading sports and entertainment streaming platform in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2026. Through this partnership, stc customers will be able to enjoy access to the live streaming of all matches from one of the world's most anticipated sporting events through a range of flexible subscription options tailored to different customer needs and requirements.

The partnership reflects stc's ongoing commitment to enhancing its portfolio of digital lifestyle services and delivering added value to customers through strategic collaborations with leading content providers. As global sporting events continue to attract widespread interest, stc actively focuses on offering convenient and accessible solutions that allow customers to stay connected to the moments and experiences that matter most to them.

Customers can subscribe to the TOD FIFA World Cup 2026 package as an add-on service in easy monthly installments of just KD 2 per month. The service is also available with zeed in which customers can add a device to their plan and get a subscription included, allowing customers to enjoy seamless access to premium sports content and 12 months entertainment content as part of their existing subscription. In addition, stc and non stc customers may choose to access the service through the TOD gift card subscriptions valued at KD 46, providing further flexibility based on their individual needs and viewing preferences.



A flyer of the partnership.

The FIFA World Cup remains one of the most watched sporting events globally, bringing together millions of fans from around the world to follow every stage of the tournament. Through its collaboration with TOD, stc aims to ensure that customers have easy access to comprehensive tournament coverage, enabling them to follow every match, key moment, and memorable highlight throughout the competition.

In a statement, stc highlighted that its partnership with TOD will enable customers to conveniently stream live matches on their phones, smart TV, or desktops. This initiative builds on the Company's commitment to enriching its customers' lifestyle choices by offering innovative services that align with their evolving interests and lifestyles. Through flexible subscription options, customers can simply add the streaming service to one of their plans and enjoy access to the most anticipated football tournament in the world.

stc added that the partnership forms part of the Company's long-term strategy to expand its portfolio of digital services and introduce offerings that enhance the overall customer experience. The Company continues to pursue opportunities that bring globally recognized platforms and services closer to its customers, supporting its vision of delivering integrated digital solutions across multiple touchpoints.

To find out more about stc's events, promotions, and sponsorships, follow stc's official social media platforms, visit one of stc's branches, download mystc mobile application, visit www.stc.com.kw or contact the customer service center by dialing 102 for around the clock assistance.

Expanded World Cup faces scrutiny, high expectations



The Japan national team jogs around the pitch during a training session in Nashville, Tenn., ahead of the World Cup soccer tournament. (AP)

This will be the biggest, the most inclusive: Infantino

WASHINGTON, June 9, (AP): The wait is over for the biggest World Cup ever with 48 teams, 104 matches, three host nations, and a slew of questions and controversies swirling around the highly scrutinized event that will last for nearly six weeks.

The tournament kicks off in Mexico City on Thursday amid concerns about soaring ticket prices and political tensions. There are unprecedented logistical challenges to staging a three-country event across the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

All of that is separate from the on-field drama that will play out through the July 19 final as soccer's top stars battle for the sport's biggest prize.

"This will be the biggest, the most inclusive, the greatest FIFA World Cup ever," declared FIFA president Gianni Infantino, who has predicted 7 million fans will pack the stadiums and 6 billion more will be watching from afar. "FIFA is the official happiness provider for humanity."

That remains to be seen. The tournament kicks off in the U.S., which hosts the majority of the games, at a time of rising inflation, the war in Iran, and the Trump administration's policies regarding immigration.

President Trump has been a big supporter of the World Cup coming to America, repeatedly hosting Infantino at the White House and speaking in glowing terms about the tournament. Infantino has gone to great lengths to strengthen those relations, awarding Trump the inaugural FIFA Peace Prize last year after he was overlooked for the Nobel Prize.

There was also the Tiffany-crafted golden Club World Cup trophy, which sat in the Oval Office after America hosted the tournament last year. In an interview with broadcast DAZN, Trump said he asked FIFA when it would pick up the trophy. He was told: "You can have it forever in the Oval Office. We're mak-

ing a new one."

Six months have passed since a German soccer federation official said it was time to consider a World Cup boycott because of Trump's actions, which included threats to take control of Greenland. That was even before the United States and Israel launched military attacks on Iran, which has led to a surge in oil prices and destabilization in the Middle East.

It also raised questions about Iran's participation in the World Cup. The team moved its training base from Tucson, Arizona, to Tijuana, Mexico, citing visa hassles just a week before it opened play and arrived wearing lapel pins highlighting the victims of a deadly missile strike on an elementary school at the start of the war.

FIFA has come in for fierce criticism over its ticket pricing strategy for this World Cup, which was already considered an expensive trip.

When tickets went on general sale in January, they ranged from \$140 to \$8,680. While some have since been made available for less, others have risen significantly -- up to \$32,970 for the final. Fans have accused the governing body of a "monumental betrayal".

Resale prices are even higher on the secondary market, with FIFA's own resale marketplace in April listing four tickets to the

final for just under \$2.3 million each. While FIFA does not control prices on the site, it does take a 30% commission from each resale. Parking for games can cost as much as \$175, and fans have been stunned by rising train fares, up from \$12.90 to \$98 in New Jersey, for example.

Infantino has defended ticket prices and said demand was equivalent to "1,000 years of World Cups at once", adding that all 104 matches would be sold out.

A recent IPSOS poll, however, found that only 26% of Americans said they were "at least somewhat excited" about the World Cup and 7% were "extremely or very excited."

Meanwhile, room bookings have been lighter than expected in most of the 11 U.S. host cities, according to an April survey by the American Hotel & Lodging Association.

A super-sized tournament across three countries is FIFA's latest World Cup experiment, and only time will tell if it works. For some, the quality of the event will seem diluted by expanding the format from 32 teams to 48 and creating room for debutants like tiny Curacao and Cape Verde.

Much of the jeopardy of the group stage has effectively been removed with elite teams largely separated. It means the real drama may be put on hold until the round

of 16.

"There's a balance to be struck between making sure the World Cup is genuinely representative, but it's also meant to be a football tournament that determines who the best team in the world is," said Jonathan Wilson, author of *The Power and the Glory: A New History of the World Cup*.

One thing FIFA cannot be blamed for is rising temperatures, and extreme heat is likely to affect athletes, fans, workers, and officials during the games. Some of the sites -- the Texas cities of Dallas and Houston, for example, though Kansas City and Atlanta are not immune -- could see "feels like" temperatures above 90 degrees F (32 C).

There will be safety measures such as hydration breaks for players, and FIFA wound up changing its policy on water bottles for the tournament's 16 stadiums across North America, including some with limited shade from the sun.

Ultimately, when it comes to the World Cup, soccer eventually takes over, and there are many potential storylines ahead.

Does Lionel Messi have one last great act at the World Cup at the age of 38 and in what is surely his final bow on this stage?

Can the 41-year-old Cristiano Ronaldo land the one major trophy that has eluded him in his record-breaking career?

Record five-time winner Brazil is out for its first title in more than 20 years and has turned to iconic Italian coach Carlo Ancelotti to try to end its drought.

England has put its faith in German Thomas Tuchel as it tries to end 60 years of hurt.

And what about the United States, led by Argentine coach Mauricio Pochettino? Can it pull off the biggest World Cup upset of all time on home soil?

"If you go into a tournament thinking, 'Oh yeah, we have no chance of winning it,' then what's the point of even going? What's the point of playing?" U.S. captain Tim Ream told The AP. "He (Pochettino) is not shy about speaking about that when we're together... 'Why not us? Why can't we do it?'"

France wins final warmup Spain finalizes preparations with 3-1 victory over Peru

PUEBLA, México, June 9, (AP): Mikel Oyarzabal and Pedri scored early goals and Spain overcame key absences to wrap up its World Cup preparations with a comfortable 3-1 victory over Peru in the Mexican city of Puebla.

Lamine Yamal, Nico Williams, and Víctor Muñoz missed the game because of injuries and remained at the team's training base in Tennessee.

Oyarzabal opened the scoring after just two minutes, and Pedri doubled the lead in the 32nd. Peru goalkeeper Pedro Gallese scored an own goal in the 53rd to give Spain a 3-0 lead.

Jairo Vélez scored in the 66th for Peru, which missed out on qualifying for the World Cup.

Coach Luis de la Fuente has said Yamal, Williams and Muñoz could be available to play in Spain's World Cup opener on June 15 against Cape Verde in Atlanta. Yamal, the Barcelona star, has not played since April 22 because of an injured left hamstring.

After Cape Verde, Spain faces Saudi Arabia on June 21 in Atlanta and Uruguay on June 26 in Guadalajara, Mexico.

□ □ □

Michael Olise completed his hat trick with a brilliant curler as France beat Northern Ireland 3-1 in its final World Cup warmup on Monday.

It was also the last game on French soil for coach Didier Deschamps, who steps down following the World Cup after 14 years in charge of Les Bleus. He picked Kylian Mbappé and Ousmane Dembélé in a glittering attack along with Olise and Désiré Doué.

Olise netted from close range in the 43rd minute after Dembélé's shot was blocked, then grabbed his second of the night in the 49th, blasting in from near the penalty spot after Northern Ireland failed to clear a cross from the right.

Saving the best for last, the fleet-footed winger broke off the right wing and bent an unstoppable shot into the top left corner from 20 meters in the 75th.

Olise grabbed 22 goals in all competitions for Bayern Munich this season and looks a certain World Cup starter for two-time champion France -- the runner-up to Argentina four years ago -- against Senegal on June 16 in New Jersey.

After Olise's second goal, France's defense went napping in the northern city of Lille and Patrick Kelly tapped in a cross midway through the second half for Northern Ireland.

Mbappé failed to add to his 56 international goals and remained one behind



Spain's Marc Pubill, left, and Marcos Lopez vie for the ball during an international soccer match against Peru in Puebla, Mexico. (AP)

France's all-time highest scorer Olivier Giroud.

Liverpool forward Cody Gakpo's second penalty gave the Netherlands a scrappy 2-1 win against coach Fabio Cannavaro's Uzbekistan in New York.

His first came in the 32nd minute, but poor defending allowed Uzbekistan to level in the second minute of stoppage time through Igor Sergeev's close-range finish. When the Netherlands was awarded another penalty, Gakpo slotted in his 21st international goal.

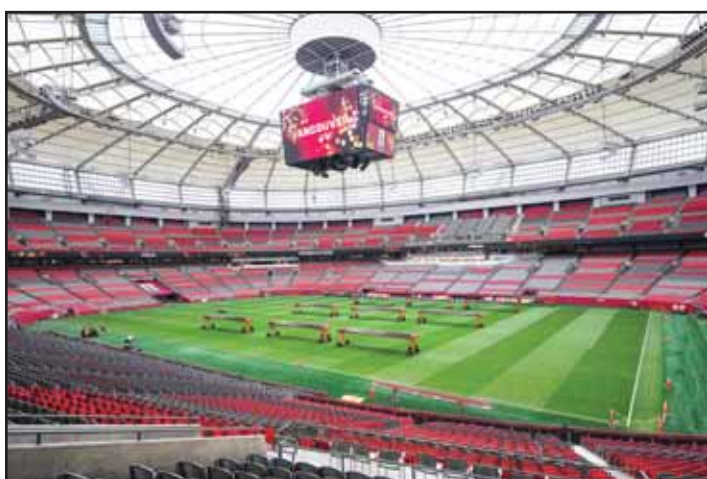
Coach Ronald Koeman's Netherlands opens its World Cup campaign against Japan in Dallas on June 14.

□ □ □

Top defender Chris Richards participated in his first full practice with the U.S. World Cup team on Monday when the Americans reported to their training base in Southern California.

Richards tore two left ankle ligaments while playing for Crystal Palace on May 17, and he missed the Americans' two friendlies over the past week. He was included on the United States' 26-man roster for the World Cup, but injured players can still be replaced until Thursday evening.

"We will see," U.S. coach Mauricio Pochettino said. "Today is the first time with the team, and so it's good to have nearly everyone ready to be selected for the game."



A worker cuts the grass that has been installed in B.C. Place stadium for the World Cup soccer tournament in Vancouver, British Columbia. (AP)

Eriksen says he is back home and 'doing well' after collapse

ODENSE, Denmark, June 9, (AP): Soccer star Christian Eriksen was at home with family and "doing well" he said, a day after collapsing on the field again while playing for Denmark.

The reassuring health update by 34-year-old Eriksen came after he clutched his chest with both hands in an off-the-ball action in the 65th

minute of a friendly against Ukraine in Odense on Sunday. After dropping to the ground, Eriksen received medical attention as fellow players formed a circle around him.

He then walked off the field by himself and was taken to the hospital, where he underwent more tests. He had an implantable cardioverter

defibrillator (ICD) fitted to support his heart after suffering a cardiac arrest during a European Championship match in 2021.

After updates by the team physician via statements from the Danish soccer federation, Eriksen himself posted for the first time on social media.

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President Donald Trump watches Game 3 of the NBA Finals basketball series between the New York Knicks and the San Antonio Spurs at Madison Square Garden in New York with Knicks owner James Dolan and Kai Trump. (AP)

Sports

Kuwait in Pot 4 ahead of World Handball Championship draw

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, June 9: The draw ceremony for the 30th IHF Men's World Handball Championship will be held today at 10:00 a.m. (Kuwait time), setting the stage for the tournament scheduled to take place in Germany in January 2027.

The International Handball Federation (IHF) confirmed that the draw will be conducted in Munich, Germany, at the renowned Hofbräuhaus Hall, with the proceedings broadcast live on the federation's official YouTube channel for fans and media



A file photo of players in action.

worldwide.

The IHF has also called on all participating federations and delegations to coordinate with the local organizing committee regarding attendance and representation arrangements for the event.

In preparation for the championship, the federation adopted a transparent system for assigning teams to host cities, taking into consideration geographical and cultural factors aimed at enhancing fan engagement and maximizing attendance.

The teams have been seeded into four pots based on world rankings and continental performances.

Pot 1: Denmark, Germany, Croatia, Iceland, Portugal, Sweden, Egypt and Argentina.

Pot 2: France/Czech Republic, Switzerland/Italy, Norway, Spain, Hungary, Slovenia, Faroe Islands and North Macedonia.

Pot 3: Netherlands, Austria, Brazil, Bahrain, Tunisia, Cape Verde, Chile and the North American representative.

Pot 4: Qatar, Kuwait, Japan, Algeria, Angola, Uruguay and two wildcard teams.

The draw is expected to provide an early indication of the challenges awaiting the participating nations as they begin their quest for world championship glory in 2027.

PAS partners with Salisbury FC to send three Kuwaiti players for England trials

KUWAIT CITY, June 9, (KUNA): Kuwait's Public Authority for Sports (PAS) has signed a cooperation agreement with English club Salisbury FC to select three Kuwaiti players for a professional trial in England.

Acting PAS Director General Bashar Abdullah said the trials will take place from June 13 to 16 at the auxiliary pitches of Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium, with participation from Salisbury FC coaches in coordination with the Kuwait Football Association.

He said the initiative, supported by Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma, aims to give young Kuwaiti footballers a pathway to professional opportunities, helping them develop their skills and gain international experience.

Bashar Abdullah added that the program reflects PAS's community-driven strategy to empower youth, promote sports participation, and encourage healthier lifestyles.

Salisbury FC owner Ali Al-Hamad said the project will provide Kuwaiti players with direct exposure to a professional football environment in England. He noted that registration is limited to 400 players aged 18 and above, with only three ultimately selected for the experience.

The chosen players will travel to England on June 27 to join Salisbury FC's first-team training sessions and gain hands-on experience in a professional setup.

Salisbury FC competes in the National League South, the sixth tier of English football. The club was acquired by Kuwaiti businessman Ali Al-Hamad last year as part of efforts to develop the team and create professional pathways for young Kuwaiti talent.



KUNA photo

Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Sports, Bashar Abdullah with Salisbury FC owner Ali Al-Hamad after signing the cooperation agreement.

Official praises strong media turnout at Club Handball Championship

Kuwait earns applause as Al-Jalahma lauds national refs

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 9: Kuwait's Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs, Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma, reaffirmed his support for national sports talents during a meeting with international handball referees Maali Al-Enezi and Dalal Al-Naseem on the sidelines of the 28th Asian Men's Club League Handball Championship currently being hosted by Kuwait Club.

The meeting was attended by Asian Handball Federation President Bader Al-Theyab, with Al-Jalahma praising the referees for their distinguished performances and achievements at both local and international levels.

He said the growing role of Kuwaiti women in officiating major international handball events reflects the remarkable development of sports in Kuwait and highlights the ability of national talents to excel on the global stage.

Al-Jalahma stressed the ministry's commitment to supporting national referees and providing the necessary opportunities to help them continue



Al-Jalahma and Al-Theyab with referees Al-Enezi and Al-Naseem.

their successful careers and achieve further accomplishments.

Meanwhile, Al-Theyab commended Kuwait Club for its outstanding organization of the Asian championship, which serves as a qualifier for the 2026 IHF Men's Super Globe in Egypt.

He noted that Kuwait has once again demonstrated its capability to host major sporting events, crediting

the efforts of young Kuwaiti organizers and volunteers for delivering a tournament that has earned widespread praise from participating delegations.

Al-Theyab also highlighted the tournament's high technical standard, pointing to the presence of several world-class professional players. He added that the level of competition among clubs can often surpass

that of national teams due to the quality of international talent on display.

For his part, tournament media committee member Khaled Al-Enezi praised the strong media turnout from participating clubs and Kuwaiti, Gulf and Asian news organizations.

He said the extensive coverage has played a key role in showcasing the championship and bringing its events to fans across the region. Al-Anzi also commended the organizing committee for providing journalists with fully equipped media facilities, timely access to information, photographs and match statistics.

He thanked all journalists, photographers and broadcasters covering the event and expressed confidence that the strong media momentum would continue until the conclusion of the championship.

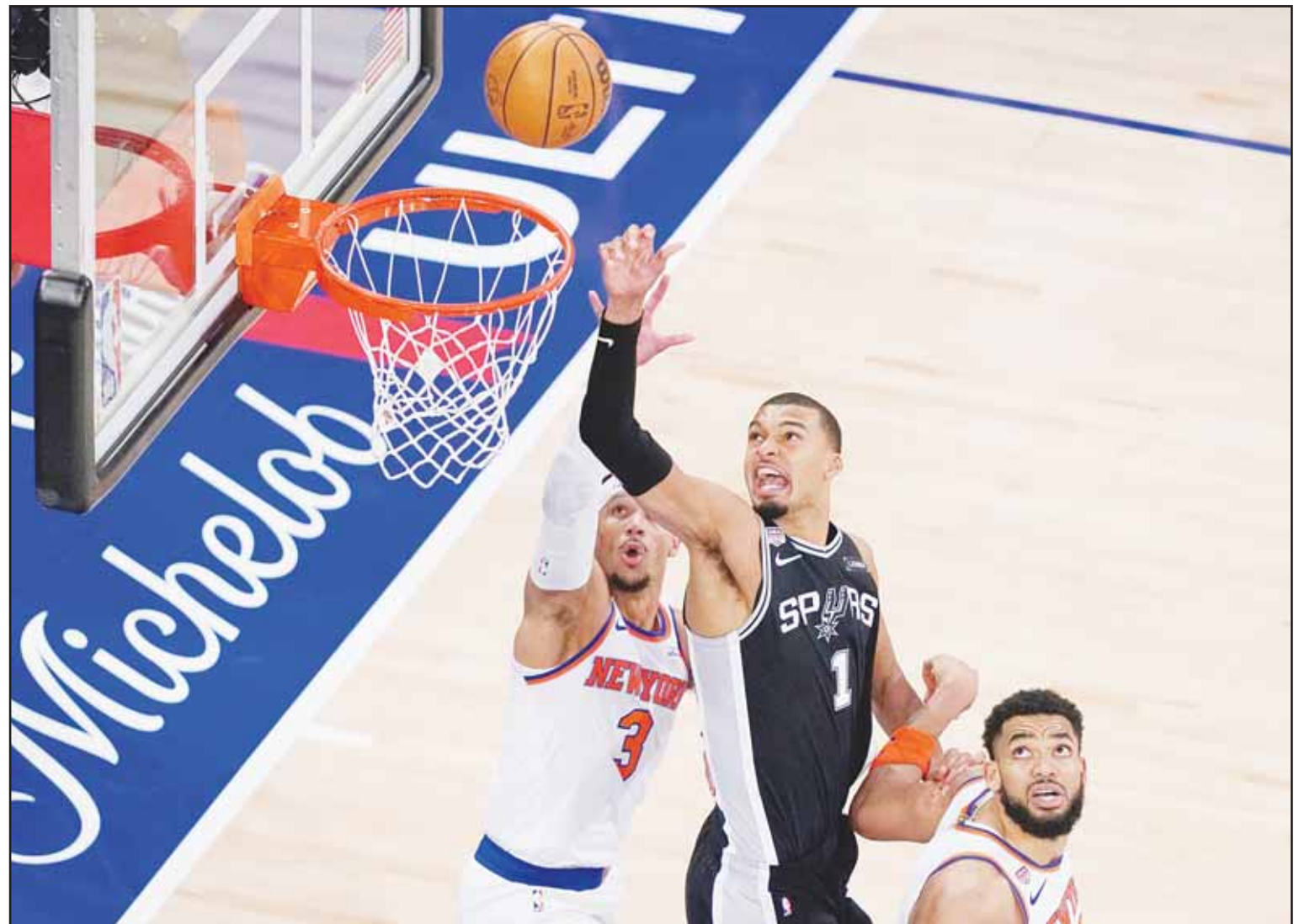
Today's Matches
The fourth round of the championship features three matches today at Sabah Al-Salem Handball Hall:

Burgan (Kuwait) vs Al-Khaleej (Saudi Arabia) - 4:00 p.m.

Kuwait Club vs Al-Duhail (Qatar) - 6:00 p.m.

Al-Najma (Bahrain) vs Sharjah (UAE) - 8:00 p.m.

Spurs trim Finals deficit



San Antonio Spurs forward Victor Wembanyama (1) shoots as New York Knicks guard Josh Hart (3) and center Karl-Anthony Towns (32) defend during the second half of Game 3 of the NBA Finals basketball series in New York. (AP)

Wembanyama takes center stage in front of Trump

NEW YORK, June 9, (AP): Victor Wembanyama has his first NBA Finals win - and the New York Knicks suddenly have a lot of work left to end their 53-year championship drought.

Wembanyama had 32 points, eight rebounds and six assists, carrying the San Antonio Spurs to a 115-111 victory Monday night that cut the Knicks' lead to 2-1 in the best-of-seven series.

San Antonio is trying to make a first-of-its-kind NBA Finals comeback, and the 7-foot-4 Wembanyama, with his array of skills, makes anything look possible.

"I'm sure Victor has numerous sources of motivation," Spurs coach Mitch Johnson said. "I don't think any of us are surprised or expect anything different than a strong performance."

The Spurs handed the Knicks their first loss in 46 days and potentially salvaged their season in front of a Madison Square Garden crowd that included President Donald Trump.

The Knicks had their 13-game winning streak, the second-longest in NBA postseason history, snapped and missed a chance to move to the brink of their first title since 1973. Their previous loss occurred on April 23 in a one-point defeat to the Atlanta Hawks. They won the next three against Atlanta, swept Philadelphia and Cleveland and took the first two games against the Spurs.

The run stirred New York into a frenzy, with raucous watch parties, fans paying outrageous sums of money for tickets and "Knicks In Four" becoming a daily greeting on streets, subway cars and in workplaces.

But Wembanyama and the Spurs ended the streak and ruined the Knicks' first home NBA Finals game since 1999.

"At home, it really feels like playing six against five. Here, it feels like five against six," Wembanyama said. "It really shows what teams are made of."

Knicks coach Mike Brown complained about the Spurs' 24-8 advantage in free throw attempts in the second half.

"I tell the guys, it's a seven-game series for a reason," Brown said. "They are a great team. They are well-coached. They have an iconic player. It's not going to be easy."

Stephon Castle and De'Aaron Fox hit big shots late as the Spurs avoided falling into a 3-0 hole, which no NBA team has escaped. Now they can tie the series Wednesday night and are guaranteed another game at home, with Game 5 scheduled for Saturday.

Castle finished with 23 points as the Spurs got started in their quest to become the first team to win the NBA Finals after losing the first two games at home.

Jalen Brunson scored 32 points and OG Anunoby had 28 for the Knicks.

Fans who endured long lines to get in with the extra security measures in place - and some who paid five-figure sums for the chance to do so - were treated to a back-and-forth game as the NBA Finals returned to Madison Square Garden for the first time in 27 years.

Wembanyama, whose turnover late in Game 2 cost the Spurs dearly, didn't make many mistakes Monday. He had 10 points in the final quarter, helping San Antonio build just enough

of a cushion to withstand Brunson's latest comeback attempt.

Minutes after Trump was booed loudly when he was shown during the national anthem, the Spurs got off to an ideal start. Wembanyama dunked for their first two baskets and they had a double-digit lead 4 1/2 minutes into the game. San Antonio made nine of its first 11 shots, with the Knicks and their fans frustrated by the referees and the home team's sloppy play, and led 33-22 after one.

The Garden crowd didn't really start to rock until Anunoby's 3-pointer capped an 11-2 surge that cut it to 40-38. The Knicks got their first lead of the night on Brunson's 26-footer as part of a big burst to finish the half. New York led 64-57 at the break.

But the Spurs went back ahead in the third quarter and led 111-104 on Castle's 3-pointer with 1:53 to play. Castle then closed the scoring with two free throws with 6.8 seconds left after Anunoby's 3-pointer cut it to two.

The Knicks had piled up massive scoring margins while romping through the Eastern Conference playoffs, then were just good enough in the two games in San Antonio. This time, a horrible start to the fourth quarter put them too far behind.

A star-studded crowd that included Derek Jeter and Eli Manning, champions of New York teams in other sports, was hoping to see the Knicks move closer to a third NBA title. But with Karl-Anthony Towns limited to 11 points and Mikal Bridges saddled with foul trouble, a team that had been so potent in the postseason struggled for long stretches.