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Net Profit to EGP 2.5 Billion
in Q1 2026



Ali Marafi:
We continue to strengthen
our position as one of the
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Egyptian market

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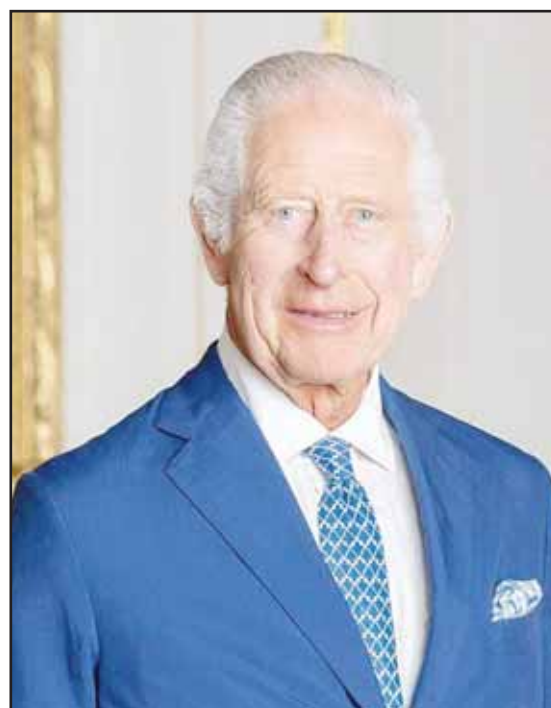
KING CHARLES III SLAMS IRAN AGGRESSION IN CALL WITH AMIR

Global outcry as Kuwait targeted again

Trump says Tehran will 'pay the price' for stalled talks



His Highness the Amir



His Majesty King Charles III

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (Agencies): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a call on Wednesday from His Majesty Charles III, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

During the call, both sides touched on the strong bilateral ties between the two countries, as well as number of mutual issues and developments, particularly the heinous Iranian attacks on Kuwait's territories and airspace.

King Charles III expressed his strong condemnation of the attacks, which constitute a flagrant violation of Kuwait's sovereignty, international law, and the UN Charter, affirming his country's solidarity with Kuwait and its full support for all the measures taken to preserve its sovereignty, security, and stability.

His Highness the Amir thanked King Charles III for standing by Kuwait and supporting all measures taken, wishing the King good health and well-being, and to the British people continued progress and prosperity.

Separately, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received a call from President of the European Council Antonio Costa, who conveyed the European Union's full solidarity with Kuwait following the attacks.

Costa stressed that diplomacy remains the only viable path to achieving security and stability in the Middle East,

reiterating the EU's call for de-escalation and continued diplomatic engagement. The two sides also reviewed the longstanding and distinguished relations between Kuwait and EU member states, with Costa expressing aspirations to deepen cooperation as both sides mark the 40th anniversary of their ties.

His Highness the Crown Prince expressed appreciation for the EU's supportive stance and highlighted the depth of Kuwait-EU relations, wishing continued prosperity for EU member states.

On the ground, Kuwait's General Staff announced that air defense systems intercepted hostile objects early Wednesday in line with operational procedures, urging citizens to adhere to safety instructions issued by authorities.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly condemned the continued Iranian attacks, describing them as a dangerous escalation that threatens civilian lives and vital infrastructure. The ministry said the repeated attacks reflect a systematic aggressive approach and constitute a clear violation of Kuwait's sovereignty, international law, and the UN Charter, affirming Kuwait's right to take all necessary measures to defend its territory.

Kuwait also condemned similar Iranian attacks targeting Bahrain and Jordan, warning that such actions undermine de-escalation efforts and pose serious risks to regional stability. The ministry reaffirmed Kuwait's full solidarity with both countries.

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A click closer to justice

Criminal judgements go digital

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

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait revealed that the Ministry of Justice has launched an electronic service for criminal court rulings.

Speaking to Al-Seyassah daily, Counselor Al-Sumait explained that serving a criminal judgment is directly linked to the convicted person's right to be informed of the verdict and to file an appeal within the specified grace period, particularly in cases of default judgments where the appeal is not submitted within one week from the date of service.

The new electronic service will allow convicted individuals to file appeals against default judgments start-

ing from the date of service.

If the convicted person does not appeal within the legal timeframe, the judgments become final once all legal requirements are fulfilled.



Al-Sumait

Counselor Al-Sumait stressed that this step achieves an important balance between preserving the convicted person's right to be informed and to appeal in time, and ensuring the stability of court rulings.

It is worth highlighting that Counselor Al-Sumait announced on Tuesday that the ministry completed a comprehensive review of the judicial notification process, which is considered one of the main causes of delays and postponements in court sessions.

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Guyana and Kuwait mark 30 years of diplomatic ties

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Guyana in Kuwait Troy Torrington said the cooperative relationship between Guyana and the State of Kuwait serves as a model of partnership founded on mutual respect and shared interests.

Torrington disclosed that this year marks the celebration of two significant milestones in the history of relations between the two countries -- the 60th anniversary of the independence of Guyana and the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Guyana and Kuwait.

He made the statement at a reception held on Tuesday evening at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, with Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister for the Americas Ambassador Abdulaziz Al-Qadfan, as well as several ambassadors and members of the diplomatic corps, in attendance.

He pointed out that the occasion goes beyond commemorating historical events, as it reflects two national journeys shaped by determination, vision and ambition. He said the first



Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Guyana in Kuwait Troy Torrington and Assistant Foreign Minister for the Americas Ambassador Abdulaziz Al-Qadfan cut a ceremonial cake marking the anniversary of Guyana's independence and 30 years of diplomatic relations between Guyana and Kuwait during a reception held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel on Tuesday evening.

journey started 60 years ago when Guyana embarked on the path of building a modern nation, while the second started 30 years ago with the

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Fahaheel tanker fire crash kills 1

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: An individual died in a traffic accident that occurred Wednesday afternoon on Fahaheel Expressway, towards Kuwait City.

Two vehicles collided, followed by the overturning of a fuel tanker that subsequently caught fire.

Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) said the firefighters from Mangaf Fire Station responded immediately after receiving information about the accident.

Upon arrival at the accident scene, the firefighting teams extinguished the fuel tanker fire, secured the site and confirmed that the accident resulted in one fatality.

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Rana Al-Najjar wins NBK Al-Jawhara monthly prize of KD 125,000



Kuwait Finance House celebrates over 100 employees under the Injaz program

Kuwait Cabinet sets two holiday scenarios for Islamic New Year



PM Diwan photo

Acting Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah chairs the Cabinet meeting on Wednesday.

One-day break or long weekend?

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): Kuwait's Cabinet, during its meeting on Wednesday chaired by Acting Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, approved the arrangements for the Islamic New Year holiday for (Hijri year 1448).

In a statement, the Cabinet said that two possible scenarios have been set depending on the sighting of the moon and the number of days in Dhu Al-Hijjah 1447 AH.

In the first scenario, if Dhu Al-Hijjah consists of 29 days, Tuesday, June 16, will be an official holiday for all ministries, government bodies, public institutions and authorities on the occasion of the Islamic New Year, with official work resuming on Wednesday, June 17.

In the second scenario, if Dhu Al-Hijjah consists of 30 days, Wednesday, June 17, will be the official holiday, while Thursday, June 18, will be considered

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Phone cards used in drug money scheme

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The General Department of Criminal Investigation, represented by the Hawally Investigation Department, has apprehended two individuals involved in laundering money obtained through drug trafficking, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Interior explained that the suspects were using mobile

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PACI adds blood type info to Civil ID online

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) has launched an online service to add blood type information to civil ID card records via the Sahel application, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This step is part of ongoing efforts to develop digital services and streamline procedures, ensuring a faster and more convenient experience for users.

Other Voices

'Russia Day: A celebration of history, sovereignty and partnership'

By H.E. Mr. Vladimir Zheltov

Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the State of Kuwait

On June 12, Russia marks its national holiday, Russia Day. This date commemorates the adoption, exactly 36 years ago, of the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. That was Russia's official name during the Soviet era.

The history of our country, however, stretches back more than a millennium. Modern Russia is the successor to Ancient Rus' (Kievan Rus), the Tsardom of Moscow, the Russian Empire and, ultimately, the Soviet Union. Extending across thousands of kilometres from the Baltic Sea in Europe to the Pacific Ocean in the Russian Far East, Russia represents a unique and distinctive civilization with its own rich traditions, cultural heritage and historical experience.

Throughout its long history, Russia has endured countless challenges and severe trials. Numerous foreign invaders - from the Mongol hordes in the Middle Ages to European conquerors such as Napoleon and Hitler in the 19th and 20th centuries - sought to subjugate our nation. Yet Russia not only withstood these invasions but also contributed to



H.E. Mr. Vladimir Zheltov Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the State of Kuwait

the liberation of other peoples across Asia, Africa and Latin America.

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HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

This was the end of the man who built modern Iraq!

He ruled the country fourteen times and was killed by the very people he had educated

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Nuri al-Said's body was dragged through the streets of Baghdad, the city he built

40,000 Muslim fighters defeated 120,000 Byzantine soldiers

The Battle of Yarmouk changed the map of the region and broke the Crusader power

An octogenarian man crushed the strongest armies in Europe

For centuries, Yusuf ibn Tashfin solidified the Arab presence in Andalusia

He was the first ruler in Islamic history to hold the title of Commander of the Faithful

He halted the advance of the Crusaders that would have wiped out the Islamic presence



Prayer Timings

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



Amir Sheikh Meshal



Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa

Amir congratulates Pres. of Portugal on Nat'l Day

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday, a cable of congratulations to the President of the Portuguese Republic Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa good health and well-being, and wished more progress and prosperity to Portugal and its people.

Crown Prince congratulates

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

Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Wednesday, to the President of the Portuguese Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, on his country's national day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa good health and well-being.

Prime Minister congratulates

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent Wednesday, a cable of congratulations to the President of the Portuguese Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, on his country's national day.

Other Voices

In appreciation of Hans-Christian Freiherr von Reibnitz and Ina

By Nasser Al-Hajeri

Few diplomats leave a lasting impression not only through their official work but also through the friendships they build and the respect they earn along the way. As Kuwait bids farewell to H.E. Hans-Christian Freiherr von Reibnitz, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the State of Kuwait, and his dear wife, Ina Freifrau von Reibnitz, many of us reflect on a remarkable chapter arched by professionalism, friendship, and genuine engagement with the country they came to call home.

Ambassador von Reibnitz brought with him 37 years of diplomatic experience, serving his country with distinction across different regions and assignments around the world. That wealth of experience was evident in his calm leadership, thoughtful approach, and deep understanding of international affairs. Throughout his time in Kuwait, he worked tirelessly to strengthen the long-standing relationship between Kuwait and

Germany, contributing to closer cooperation in diplomacy, trade, culture, education, and many other areas of mutual interest. It was also during his tenure that Kuwait and Germany celebrated the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations, a significant milestone that highlighted the strength and depth of the partnership between our two friendly nations.

Yet what many will remember most is not simply his impressive career, but the manner in which he carried himself. He approached people with humility, kindness, and sincerity. Whether at an official event, a cultural gathering, or a simple conversation among friends, he always made others feel welcomed and respected. These qualities earned him the admiration of colleagues, members of the diplomatic corps, and countless friends throughout Kuwait.

Alongside him stood his dear wife, Ina, whose warmth, grace, and kindness complemented his service beautifully. Together, they formed a remarkable team. Her presence at countless community, cultural, and diplomatic events helped strengthen the bonds of friendship that exist between people of different backgrounds and nationalities. Those who had the pleasure of knowing her will remember her generosity, elegance, and genuine friendliness.



Ambassador Hans-Christian Freiherr von Reibnitz and his wife Ina Freifrau von Reibnitz.

One of the greatest strengths of any diplomatic couple is their ability to build bridges between people and cultures. Ambassador von Reibnitz and Ina achieved this with ease and authenticity.

They embraced Kuwait with respect and affection, and in return earned the friendship and appreciation of many. Their contributions extended beyond official duties and helped foster a spirit of understanding and goodwill between our two nations.

FDI spikes info tech sector

Digitalization main engine driving growth: experts

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The telecommunications and information technology sector ranked first among all sectors in terms of direct service investments entering Kuwait, accounting for 33.78 percent of total inflows, according to a report issued by the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA).

The newspaper obtained a copy of the report detailing the flow of direct investments into the country from 2015 to 2025.

In an interview with the newspaper, economic and information technology experts attributed the leadership of the sector over the other 16 sectors receiving foreign direct investment in Kuwait to the significant and sustained government focus on information technology in recent years.

Former Ministry of Finance advisor and economic analyst Mohammad Ramadan stated that although overall direct investment in the country declined and remained below KD2 billion, foreign investments in information technology outpaced investments in all other service sectors. He stated that digital transformation has become the main engine driving growth in commercial and economic activities, as well as other sectors.

He stressed the importance of the Kuwaiti government's reliance on technology to simplify and accelerate government procedures and transactions that were previously time-consuming and cumbersome.

Development

He explained that Kuwait is moving swiftly toward full e-government implementation, a development that encouraged major global technology and telecommunications companies to invest in the local market, particularly since the government continues to embrace advances in information technology, artificial intelligence and cloud computing.

He cited another factor behind the growth of information technology investments -- the banking sector's adoption of advanced information technologies aimed at supporting digital transformation and delivering innovative

banking solutions, along with distinguished digital products and services, keeping pace with rapid technological developments in the international banking industry.

Asked why oil and gas investments ranked second at 27.65 percent while telecommunications and information technology investments secured first place, he said "despite the oil and gas sector's long-standing history, the telecommunications and information technology sector managed to surpass it."

He clarified that digital transformation technologies are now considered the most promising avenue for generating attractive returns on foreign investments in Kuwait, considering they constitute one of the key pillars of Kuwait Vision 2035.

He added that the vision is based on diversifying sources of income to reduce the State's reliance on oil revenues, while investments in digital infrastructure also support startups in the public and private sectors.

He asserted that the expansion of digital technologies goes hand in hand with intensified government efforts to strengthen cybersecurity infrastructure and enhance protection for government websites and information networks.

Information technology and cybersecurity expert Huda Al-Kuraibani stated that technology-related projects are among the most attractive sectors for foreign investors in the country. She explained that such projects represent more than conventional commercial investments, serving as a channel for transferring knowledge, improving services, and raising efficiency in public and private institutions, while contributing to the creation of high-quality employment opportunities for Kuwaiti youths.

She said Kuwait has several strengths that make it an attractive destination for technology investments, including rising purchasing power, a developing digital infrastructure, and growing reliance on electronic services. She added that the country is making rapid progress in digital transformation, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, financial technology and cloud services.

She emphasized that foreign investors are not merely seeking markets in which to market their services, as they are rather looking for stable environments, transparent regulations, simplified procedures, and genuine partnership opportunities with government institu-

tions and the private sector.

According to Al-Kuraibani, the more these factors are strengthened and facilitated, the greater Kuwait's ability to attract high-quality technology investments -- not merely foreign company branches, but projects that create added value for the national economy.

Predicted

She predicted that foreign investment in Kuwait's technology sector will continue to expand in the coming years, particularly in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, digital financial services, data centers, and smart solutions serving vital sectors such as healthcare, education and energy.

However, she stressed that achieving this growth will require continuous improvements to the regulatory framework, faster licensing procedures, and stronger support for partnerships involving Kuwaiti talent.

She asserted that the true value of technology investment should not be measured solely by the amount of capital invested, but by its capacity to build a more diversified, efficient and sustainable economy.

She concluded that technology is no longer a secondary option, as it has become one of the most important drivers for attracting foreign investment and strengthening Kuwait's position as a competitive regional hub within the digital economy.

Economist and information technology expert Salem Al-Kandari affirmed that the expansion of Kuwait's telecommunications and information technology market affirms its leading role in attracting foreign investment and its continuous commitment to develop the information and telecommunications technology sector.

According to American information centers, the value of Kuwait's telecommunications and information technology sector exceeded \$20 billion by 2025 and is projected to reach \$35 billion before 2030, due to the expanding activities in the sector, which generate substantial returns for both domestic and foreign investors.

Al-Kandari noted that the telecommunications and information technology market experienced rapid growth in Kuwait following the COVID-19 pandemic, prompting government institutions and private entities to increase investments in artificial intelligence, internet technologies, big data and cloud services.

Bahrain reaffirms support for deeper GCC integration

MANAMA, June 10, (KUNA): Bahrain's Crown Prince and Prime Minister Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa on Wednesday reaffirmed Bahrain's commitment, under the leadership of King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, to supporting Gulf cooperation efforts aimed at advancing integration and coordination among GCC member states in line with the aspirations of their leaders.

The remarks came during his reception of heads of delegations participating in the 167th Ministerial Council meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the third joint ministerial meeting of the GCC-Canada Strategic Dialogue.

The Crown Prince expressed pride in the GCC's achievements and the foundations laid by previous generations for joint Gulf action, stressing the importance of building on existing accomplishments and strengthening the close ties and cooperation among member states as a source of strength for the bloc.

Delegation heads conveyed greet-

ings from GCC leaders to the Bahraini King and Crown Prince, while Prince Salman extended the King's greetings and his own to GCC leaders, expressing hope that the meetings would achieve their objectives and further enhance cooperation in pursuit of shared goals.

He underscored Bahrain's support for initiatives aimed at promoting peace, security, prosperity and sustainable development, while investing in future opportunities across various sectors.

The Crown Prince also condemned the renewed Iranian attacks on GCC countries, reaffirming Bahrain's support for efforts to prevent escalation, protect civilians and vital facilities, and strengthen regional and international peace and security.

He further highlighted the longstanding friendship between GCC countries and Canada, noting the steady progress in bilateral cooperation and stressing the importance of expanding joint efforts and creating new opportunities to advance relations to higher levels of development and prosperity.



KUNA photo

Director General of the Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Sabah meets the Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait Tuba Nur Sonmez.

Kuwait, Turkiye to upgrade cooperation in civil aviation

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): Director General of the Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Sabah discussed on Wednesday with Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait Tuba Nur Sonmez ways to enhance bilateral cooperation in the field of civil aviation.

In a statement for KUNA, PACA said that the meeting reviewed existing cooperation between Kuwait and Turkiye and explored means of further developing bilateral relations in support of air transport and the exchange of

technical and operational expertise.

The two sides also discussed opportunities to strengthen cooperation in the civil aviation sector in a manner that contributes to improving services and raising performance levels in line with international standards and best practices.

Both sides underscored the importance of continuing joint coordination and cooperation to further strengthen ties between the two friendly countries and expand partnership prospects in areas related to civil aviation.

KISR begins summer courses for students July 12 to Aug 13

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) announced organizing its 47th summer training course for high school and university students from July 12 to August 13.

Director of KISR's Manpower Development Department Muna Al-Failakawi said in a press statement on Wednesday that these courses embody the Amiri decree establishing the institute to encourage Kuwaiti youth to practice scientific research and foster a research spirit among the young generation.

Al-Failakawi added that organizing these courses comes within the framework of providing a purposeful educational and training environment that invests in youth energies.

She noted that the course has achieved continuous success over 46 years, contributing to improving the skills of a large number of students.

This year's course includes scientific programs alongside cultural, social, and sports activities, providing an experience that combines knowledge and practical application, she explained.

The programs cover microbiology, healthy food, chemistry and physics, robotics building, genetic engineering, sustainable construction, and aviation sciences.

Al-Failakawi indicated that admission for high school is limited to 10th and 11th-grade science section students, with a grade percentage of no less than 75 percent at the end of the first semester of the (2025-2026) academic year.

As for university students, admission requires the applicant to be from scientific colleges (second year and above), not enrolled in the summer semester, and have a minimum grade of (Very Good), she mentioned.

Kuwait, Pakistan to widen investment, trade scope

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Minister of Finance Dr. Yaqoub Al-Sayed Yousef Al-Rifai met with Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the State of Kuwait Dr. Zafar Iqbal.

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance Aseel Sulaiman Al-Saad Al-Munaifi and several other senior ministry officials also attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the two sides affirmed the depth of their countries' distinguished relations in several areas, in addition to discussing ways to strengthen cooperation and broaden the scope of their partnership, updates on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments Agreement between the two countries, and recent developments regarding the signing of the Free Trade Agreement between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and Pakistan, which was initiated in September 2023.



Finance Ministry photo

Minister of Finance Dr. Yaqoub Al-Sayed Yousef Al-Rifai receives Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the State of Kuwait Dr. Zafar Iqbal.

Appeals overturns lower court ruling

Court imposes jail, fine in arms smuggling, peddling

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

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Court of Appeals, headed by Judge Nasr Salem Al-Haid with Judges Mutaib Al-Aradhi and Saud Al-Sanea as members, overturned the ruling of a lower court that exempted several defendants from punishment in the arms smuggling and trafficking network case.

The appellate court sentenced three defendants to four years in prison with hard labor and imposed a fine of KD1,000 on each of them.

The Public Prosecution charged the defendants with possessing firearms and ammunition without a license for the purpose of trade, facilitating the illegal transportation of weapons across borders, and engaging in money laundering activities linked to arms sales conducted between 2021 and 2025.

Investigations revealed that the primary defendant, a first sergeant serving in the Ministry of Interior, maintained a stockpile of weapons intended for commercial trading.

Another defendant, a government employee, was accused of

trading various types of ammunition, while an illegal resident was charged with trafficking firearms and possessing a machine gun without a license.

State security investigations revealed that the first sergeant played a central role in managing cross-border smuggling operations, while the government employee facilitated the resale of weapons.

Other defendants were found to have participated in marketing activities or unlawfully possessing weapons and ammunition.

In the initial proceedings, the Criminal Court acquitted some of

the defendants and suspended the sentences of four others, subject to maintaining good conduct and the payment of bail, while ordering the confiscation of the weapons and related materials.

After reviewing the case, the Court of Appeals reversed the suspended sentences imposed on the three defendants and sentenced each of them to four years in prison with hard labor, in addition to the KD1,000 fine.

The court also dismissed charges against one defendant after determining that the statute of limitations already expired.

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



This was the end of the man who built modern Iraq !

IN the following lines are stories of construction and strength, as well as of crowds who follow every slogan without understanding its meaning.

The first story is the story of building modern Iraq, and how that story ended with some young officers led by Abdul Karim Qasim. The second story shows how courage triumphs over strength. The third story illustrates how shrewdness and experience can defeat large armies.

The following lines contain lessons for whoever seeks to build.

The man who ruled Iraq 14 times was killed by his own people, whom he had educated. He formed his first Cabinet in 1930. It was the first time in Iraq that a military officer had headed the government. He formed and led the government 14 times. He skillfully maintained a balance between tribal leaders, intellectuals, the British, and oil interests.

He built the first universities and hospitals, and transformed Baghdad into a regional cultural center. He used vast oil revenues to make Iraq one of the most stable and prosperous Arab countries.

He survived several coup attempts with British protection. He remained untouchable for a long time, but his pro-Western policies made him an icon of foreign domination in the eyes of Iraqi nationalists.

On July 14, 1958, young officers led by Abdul Karim Qasim overthrew the monarchy. The man who built modern Iraq was captured while trying to escape disguised as a woman. Angry mobs beat him to death and dragged his body through the streets of Baghdad. This man was Nuri al-Said.

* * *

The Battle of Yarmouk demonstrated the strength and courage of Muslims.

In 15 AH (635 CE), the Byzantine armies gathered in the Yarmouk Valley in a major attempt to

- He ruled the country fourteen times and was killed by the very people he had educated.
- He was the first military officer to become Prime Minister during the monarchy.
- He survived several coup attempts under British protection.
- Nuri al-Said's body was dragged through the streets of Baghdad, the city he built.
- 40,000 Muslim fighters defeated 120,000 Byzantine soldiers.
- The Battle of Yarmouk changed the map of the region and broke the Crusader power.
- An octogenarian man crushed the strongest armies in Europe.
- For centuries, Yusuf ibn Tashfin solidified the Arab presence in Andalusia.
- He was the first ruler in Islamic history to hold the title of Commander of the Faithful.
- He halted the advance of the Crusaders that would have wiped out the Islamic presence.

40,000 fighters, while the Byzantine army ranged from 80,000 to 120,000.

The battleground was a wide valley surrounded by rocky cliffs, making the fighting perilous.

The clashes lasted for several days, with both sides exchanging arrows and engaging in sword and spear combat. Dust rose from the battlefield as the fighting intensified. The Byzantines deployed their armored cavalry to break the Muslim ranks, but the Muslim lines remained steadfast and organized under the command of Khalid ibn al-Walid.

As the fighting continued, fatigue began to show among the Roman soldiers, and their ranks gradually began to crumble. At that moment, Khalid ibn al-Walid gathered his cavalry and ordered a powerful, organized, and decisive attack on the enemy positions.

The horses charged swiftly, and the Roman ranks broke apart. Their forces then began to retreat towards the slopes of the valley.

The Battle of Yarmouk ended in a great victory for the Muslims. This victory was one of the most important events that paved the way for the conquest of the cities of the Levant and the consolidation of the Muslim presence there.

* * *

Ibn Tashfin solidified the Arab presence in Andalusia.

An octogenarian man crushed the strongest armies of Europe.

In 1085 CE, Andalusia was crumbling. The Taifa kings were mired in their own conflicts and disputes. Alfonso VI, King of Castile, seized the opportunity and captured Toledo, one of the oldest Muslim capitals, on May 25 of that year.

King Alfonso planned to conquer all of Andalusia. It was then that Al-Mu'tamid ibn Abbad, the ruler of Seville, made the most difficult decision of his life when he sent for the aid of Yusuf ibn Tashfin, the founder of the Almoravid

dynasty, a vast empire that stretched from the jungles of Senegal in the south to the ports of Tangier. Ibn Tashfin united warring tribes, creating the greatest military power in the Islamic West.

Yusuf ibn Tashfin was the first ruler in Islamic history to hold the title of Commander of the Faithful. In October 1086, he led the Battle of Zallaqa near Badajoz. It was named so because it means in Arabic "slips," as the ground reportedly became slippery due to the vast amount of blood shed. It was said that even the horses slipped in the chaos of the battle.

Alfonso arrived with tens of thousands of heavily armed European knights. Ibn Tashfin stood firm like a mountain, despite the fact that he was over eighty years old.

At first, Alfonso charged fiercely at the armies of the Taifa kings, nearly crushing them. At the crucial moment, Ibn Tashfin unleashed his army, which he had kept concealed throughout the battle. He outflanked Alfonso and set fire to his camp.

Alfonso found himself trapped and his army reduced to rubble. He fled with a deep wound in his thigh, leaving only five hundred knights with him.

This battle was not merely a fleeting victory; it was a lifeline for Andalusia. It halted the advance of the Crusaders that threatened to wipe out the Muslim presence from the Iberian Peninsula. The battle granted Muslims centuries of continued presence and civilization there.

Yusuf ibn Tashfin lived for a full hundred years and built an empire from nothing. I wonder how this great empire collapsed after his departure.

Arrest warrant overturned

Kuwaiti jailed five years for joining terrorist outfit

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The State Security Circuit of the Court of Appeals sentenced a Kuwaiti citizen to five years in prison after convicting him of joining Hezbollah, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

It sentenced another defendant to three years in prison for spreading false news and inciting sedition via social media.

The court overturned a lower court's ruling that had refrained from punishing a third defendant and sentenced him to three years in prison for sympathizing with Iran and inciting sedition.

The Court of Appeals upheld the lower court's ruling that declined to punish several citizens accused of inciting sedition via social media.

It acquitted a female Kuwaiti activist and a Kuwaiti man, overturning the lower court's ruling that had declined to punish them.

The charges against them included sympathizing with and inciting sedition via social media during the period of Iranian aggression against Kuwait.

□ □ □

Arrest warrant overturned: The Appeals Chamber of the Court of First Instance accepted the appeal of a company manager and overturned an arrest warrant issued against him for a debt of KD 184,000, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This ruling is among the early decisions issued since the implementation of the law allowing for the arrest and detention of insolvent debtors.

Lawyer Waleed Masoud filed the appeal on behalf of the company manager, requesting the cancellation of the arrest warrant and its legal consequences.

The request was based on the fact that the company is a limited liability company, and its manager cannot be held personally liable for the company's debts and obligations, according to the provisions of the Companies Law.

Lawyer Masoud insisted that the conditions for issuing the arrest warrant were not met, as the judgment in question had not yet become final and binding.

During the proceedings, the defendant's lawyer maintained that his client could not be imprisoned for a debt belonging to the company, and that the necessary legal conditions for issuing the arrest warrant were not fulfilled.

Woman in outburst over car parking under probe

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: A police station in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate referred a woman to the General Department of Investigations on charges of damaging an expatriate's vehicle following a dispute over a parking space at a shopping mall in Al-Masayel, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, an expatriate, who arrived at the mall with his wife and children, was surprised when a woman approached them angrily after he had parked his car, and began verbally abusing him and his wife, claiming they had taken a parking space she considered hers.

The expatriate advised his wife not to respond, and they proceeded inside the mall. Upon returning, he discovered that his car had been scratched on both sides.

Detectives reviewed CCTV footage and determined that the woman reported by the expatriate was the same person who had intentionally damaged the vehicle.

She was summoned and questioned, during which she confessed to the act, admitting she acted out of anger.

A lawsuit was filed for further legal procedures.

Surgeon fined in breach of ethics

Medic fights back to save name

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Court of Appeals imposed a fine of KD6,000 on a foreign cosmetic surgeon for disclosing confidential medical information by publishing the photograph of a veiled patient's face on social media and other advertising platforms without her consent, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

specialized technical committee affirmed that no medical error or professional violation was committed. It stressed that the medical team acted in accordance with scientific standards and medical protocols.

However, the Appeals Review Committee declared the surgeon responsible, stating that he failed to request an urgent re-evaluation and did not reassess the treatment plan despite the continuation of certain symptoms.

As a result, a warning was issued to the surgeon.

In its judgment, the court stated that it was persuaded by the conclusion of the technical committee, as it consists of a bigger number of specialists within the same sub-specialization relevant to the subject of the dispute.

The court added that the case file did not contain sufficient technical or legal evidence to support the allegations of professional misconduct against the surgeon.

The court stated "the medical records, reports and statements of the treating medical staff proved that the diagnosis was based on the examinations and clinical information available at the time, and that more than one specialist physician arrived at the same diagnosis. Therefore, the surgeon exercised the degree of professional care required by law and that no negligence warranting disciplinary measures was established against him."

Meanwhile, Al-Khatib asserted that the judgment reinforces an important legal principle — medical liability cannot be based only on differing medical opinions or on the failure to achieve the desired therapeutic outcome, but must rest on the existence of a clear professional error supported by technical and legal proof.

He added "the ruling enhances the legal protections available to healthcare professionals and underscores the importance of ensuring that disciplinary decisions are founded on solid evidence and well-established grounds, thereby, maintaining balance between safeguarding patients' rights and preserving the integrity and independence of medical practice."

Maritime law ensures safety and security for 'seafarers'

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Interior announced on Wednesday the enforcement of Decree-Law No. 61 of 2026 on maritime facilities and floating units, effective from its publication in the Official Gazette on Sunday following completion of related administrative and technical procedures.

The ministry said that the law aims to enhance maritime safety, improve regulatory efficiency and promote responsible conduct among sea-goers to ensure a safe and organized marine environment.

It added that the law introduces stricter penalties for serious and repeat violations, including reckless driving, driving without a license, and operating under the influence of alcohol, drugs or psychotropic substances.

The legislation also regulates safe-speed requirements, restricted areas and beaches, while mandating the availability of safety and security equipment aboard marine vessels.

Owners of maritime facilities and floating units have been granted a period of up to six months to comply with the new requirements and avoid legal penalties, the ministry said.

Man beaten, car vandalized

Asian expatriate commits suicide

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: A 1984-born Asian expatriate was found dead inside an apartment he shared with others in Farwaniya, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, one of the expatriate residents reported the death of his roommate to the Ministry of Interior's Operations Room on Tuesday morning.

Security personnel rushed to the location with detectives, and an investigator affirmed that the expatriate hung himself by attaching a rope to the ceiling of the room, tying the other end around his neck, and then kicking the chair he was standing on.

The deceased's roommates reported that he had been experiencing financial difficulties and facing pressure from his family to provide financial support.

□ □ □

Man beaten, car vandalized: Mut-

laa Police Station's investigator has tasked detectives in the area with apprehending and summoning five individuals for questioning in a case of assault and property damage, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, locating or summoning the suspects is not a difficult task, as the victim provided the name and phone number of one of the accused in the case file, which could help identify the remaining individuals.

They explained that a young Kuwaiti man, born in 2005, went to Al-Mutlaa Police Station and reported that while returning home in Al-Mutlaa, he was stopped by a white American-made vehicle with no license plates carrying five occupants. He recognized one of them and knew his phone number.

These individuals assaulted him and damaged his 2016-model SUV.

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PAHW, CAIT review 'Wasel' platform to boost government digital services

Unified AI system streamlines public service handling

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

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) Eng. Rashid Al-Enezi met with acting Director General of the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) Najat Ibrahim, with several senior officials from both entities in attendance.

Omar Al-Ruwaieh, Deputy Director General for Public Relations and Development and official spokesperson of the author-

ity said the meeting included a presentation on the 'Wasel' government platform, its operational framework and the services it offers. He revealed these services include the receipt and tracking of inquiries, observations and complaints submitted by citizens and residents through a unified system designed to ensure the prompt handling of requests and their referral to the appropriate authorities.



Al-Enezi

Al-Ruwaieh added that the presentation showcased the platform's main technical features, including a centralized call center serving multiple government entities, the capability to receive and route reports and issues to the relevant authorities, and the integration of artificial intelligence technologies to classify, analyze and direct requests with more accuracy and efficiency. He stressed that these capabilities contribute to faster response times and an overall improvement in service quality.

He stated that discussions also covered the platform's ability to conduct intelligent monitoring and analysis of content on social media platforms, traditional and digital media channels, and government services.

He confirmed this includes a

smart search engine capable of tracking content published on social media networks and various media outlets, as well as specialized dashboards used to measure service quality and monitor user complaints and feedback.

He also affirmed that both parties emphasized the importance of maintaining cooperation and the exchange of expertise in the fields of digital transformation and technological innovation.

He pointed out that such collaboration will strengthen integration among government agencies, support the advancement of electronic services, and enhance the overall user experience, in line with the digital transformation strategy of the State and efforts to raise the efficiency of government services delivered to the public.

Envoy highlights legal reforms

Kuwait reaffirms commitment to disability rights

NEW YORK, June 10, (KUNA): Kuwait's Representative to the UN Fahad Al-Ajmi reaffirmed his country's commitment to supporting the rights of persons with disabilities, highlighting the ongoing efforts to improve laws and policies in line with international standards.

Addressing the 19th session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, he noted that Law No. (8) of 2010 forms the basis for protecting the rights of people with disabilities in Kuwait, covering education, health, employment, and social participation.

"Kuwait continues to improve accessibility to buildings and digital services for people with disabilities.

"Programs include accessible healthcare, vocational training, and inclusive education to support independence and integration," Al-



KUNA photo
Fahad Al-Ajmi, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Kuwait to the United Nations.

Ajmi pointed out.

He noted that Kuwait prioritizes equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities at all levels of education, believing that

education is key to their empowerment.

Al-Ajmi highlighted the launch of the Kuwait Disability Guide 2025, a comprehensive national reference that supports data-driven planning, policymaking, and service development for this group.

"Kuwait offers job training and placement to improve employment and independence for people with disabilities.

"National law protects the right to decent work and reasonable accommodations," he stressed.

Kuwait pledges to involve people with disabilities in policy-making and is working on accessible digital services to enhance inclusion.

Kuwait sees investing in people with disabilities as essential for an inclusive, sustainable future, the senior diplomat went on.

He reaffirmed Kuwait's cooperation with international partners to strengthen disability rights.

Violations uncovered, warnings issued

Kuwait Municipality steps up health licensing inspections

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): Kuwait's municipality on Wednesday ramped up its inspection campaigns against healthcare licensing and advertisement irregularities, in line with established rules and guidelines.

A Kuwaiti municipal team from the Capital Governorate carried out inspection tours on a number of establishments in Shuwaikh Industrial Area after reports of "repeated violations" there, the team's head Meshari Al-Shemmari told the press.

He went on to say that any establishment found to have violated established rules is warned multiple times before an infraction is recorded, citing that the team has found some 10 violations and issued five warnings against licensing and advertisement irregularities.

Similar inspection tours will be carried out across Kuwait's governorates to clamp down on any violations, added the official.



Kuwait Municipality photo
Municipality employees issue warnings to violators.

Other Voices

Our deepest, most dangerous problem

By Ahmad alsarraf

ONE does not need to be an education expert to see the poor outcomes in public sector schools, and in some private sector schools as well. Inefficient education is the root cause of many of our problems.

Modern education requires a strong curriculum and well-qualified teachers. Successive governments have failed to provide either. The problem began in the mid-1960s when it was decided to nationalize education.

At that time, there were no clear criteria for appointing teachers to undertake the noblest and most dangerous profession, including individuals whom I would not even trust to herd sheep.

One of the foundations of developing any curriculum is that it must encompass all educational stages within a clear philosophy and a defined plan. Manufacturing a car tire, for example, cannot be done without considering all its specifications.

Last summer, just three months before the start of the academic year, the Ministry of Education announced the development of a new curriculum for the primary stage, stating that it would be finalized, reviewed, printed, and distributed before the beginning of the academic year.

The improvisation was evident, and the promise was not fulfilled. Two weeks ago, the Minister of Education announced that work was underway to develop the Grade 10 curriculum. What about the preparatory stage curriculum? Why was it ignored? If this is true, we are facing a disaster, meaning that improvisation may be repeated again due to the absence of a clear philosophy and a comprehensive plan.

The Ministry of Education stated that 13 specialized committees, comprising a number of national educational experts, will prepare and develop the high school curriculum according to the latest educational standards. This will reflect the identity of Kuwaiti society and its national values, meet its needs, and contribute to preparing a generation capable of creativity, competition, and active participation. The ministry stressed that the curriculum will aim to keep pace with educational developments and contemporary standards.

However, most of those as-

signed to carry out these tasks may lack sufficient training, competence, and understanding of the nature of the new material and its underlying philosophy. I doubt their understanding of whether the new curriculum aligns with approved assessment plans and programs that contribute to improving the educational environment and facilitating the teacher's role.

The ministry's statement also indicated that textbooks in the new curriculum will be divided into two independent semesters to achieve flexibility in presenting and organizing content, thereby contributing to the development of a conscious and responsible personality.

I don't understand how dividing the curriculum into two semesters is directly linked to building a conscious and responsible personality.

According to the Ministry of Education, the new curriculum aims to develop students capable of adopting positive behaviors that enhance community security and stability. The development will primarily focus on improving core subjects such as English, mathematics, and science in line with modern scientific standards, thereby contributing to higher learning outcomes and strengthening students' scientific and analytical capabilities.

The statement also indicated that the revised curricula will be free of traditional rote memorization and passive learning methods. Instead, they will focus on developing higher-order thinking skills, enhancing analytical, deductive, problem-solving, research, and inquiry skills, connecting knowledge to practical, real-life applications, and building digital skills and understanding of artificial intelligence concepts and their modern applications, as well as promoting awareness of the safe and ethical use of technology.

It is easy to say but difficult to act. How can a sixteen-year-old student, who has not been prepared for these developments and has had little or no exposure to them, suddenly be expected to adapt? How can we expect students to apply critical thinking and inquiry skills when they have spent at least eight years in a system focused on listening, memorization, and traditional learning?

What does it mean to prepare high school students for the workforce when the job market is already oversupplied with graduates and facing a severe shortage of skilled technicians?



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Continued from Page 1

Criminal judgements

Counselor Al-Sumait explained that judicial notification is not a mere formality but rather the foundation for initiating legal proceedings and the proper commencement of litigation. Legal proceedings cannot proceed without proper notification.

The percentage of judgments dismissing cases as if they had never been filed due to incomplete notification reached approximately 36 percent.

Counselor Al-Sumait said expanding electronic notification of criminal judgments is an important step, especially in cases of default judgments and difficulties in notifying convicted individuals, adding that this process was carried out

in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Public Authority for Civil Information, the Ministry of Communications, the Central Agency for Information Technology, and Microsoft.

Fahaheel tanker

The firefighters put the fire under control, and then the relevant authorities took the necessary legal and procedural measures.

The body of the victim was transferred to the Forensic Medicine Department.

Meanwhile, traffic police closed part of the road during the rescue and firefighting operations and reopened it gradually, facilitating the return of normal traffic flow once the incident was fully dealt with.

Continued from Page 1

'Russia Day:

In the context of ongoing geopolitical transformations, Russia continues to resist the Western policies aimed at hegemonic domination and isolating our country. Together with like-minded partners, we advocate the establishment of a just and multipolar world order based on genuine equality, mutual respect and adherence to international law, free from dictate or double standards. The concept of the so-called "rules-based international order" promoted by the collective West does not reflect the interests of the global South.

As for the Arab world, Russia has consistently sought to build relations founded on mutual respect, trust and pursuit of shared interests. This approach fully applies to Kuwait. This year, our diplomatic relations mark their 63rd anniversary. Our countries are bound by strong, time-tested ties of friendship and cooperation.

Kuwait was the first Arab Gulf state to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1963. In historical terms, however, our contacts go back even further. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Imperial Russian naval vessels, including the legendary cruiser Varyag, paid friendly visits to Kuwait during the reign of the visionary ruler Sheikh Mubarak the Great.

At present, Russia holds in high regard the wise and consistent policies pursued by the Kuwaiti leadership. Kuwait has always remained committed to advancing its national interests while maintaining balanced and constructive relations with major international partners. As a result, our bilateral ties have withstood the test of time and remained resilient regardless of changes on the global scene.

An important chapter in our shared history was the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait in 1990-1991. Kuwaitis appreciate the political and diplomatic support extended by the Soviet Union during that difficult period. Equally significant was the humanitarian dimension of our assistance. During the Iraqi occupation, the world-renowned State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg played a crucial role in preserving Kuwait's cultural heritage. Priceless works of Islamic art from Kuwaiti museum collections, which had been exhibited at the Hermitage shortly before the invasion, were carefully safeguarded in the museum's repositories until they could be safely returned.

Politically, our countries maintain a regular and substantive dialogue.

The most recent meeting between the Russian and Kuwaiti Foreign Ministers took place in September 2025 in Sochi on the sidelines of the eighth ministerial meeting of the Russia-GCC Strategic Dialogue, which was co-chaired by the Russian and Kuwaiti sides.

This year will also see important multilateral engagements. GCC partners will host the ninth ministerial meeting of the Russia-GCC Strategic Dialogue. In addition, the Russia-Arab Cooperation Forum is scheduled to convene in Moscow in September, providing another practical platform for strengthening cooperation between Russia and the Arab world.

Economically, Russia and Kuwait as major oil-producing and exporting nations share a natural convergence of interests in the energy sector and cooperate closely within both bilateral and multilateral frameworks, including OPEC+, to support stability and predictability on global energy markets. At the same time, opportunities for cooperation extend beyond oil and gas. Russian agricultural products increasingly get their ground on the Kuwaiti market, reflecting the growing interest of Kuwait in long-term partnerships for the sake of food security.

Tourism has emerged as another important pillar of bilateral relations. Today, Russia is among the most attractive new destinations for visitors from the Gulf region. In 2025, approximately 20,000 Kuwaiti citizens travelled to Russia - a sign of the steadily growing interest in our country. Visitors are drawn by its rich cultural and historical heritage, diverse natural landscapes and climate zones, modern urban infrastructure, high standards of safety and competitive prices.

Travel has become even more convenient thanks to Russia's electronic visa system, which allows Kuwaiti citizens to obtain visas online within just four days and stay in the country for up to one month. In addition to Moscow and Saint Petersburg, the city of Sochi on the coast of the Black sea has gained particular popularity in recent years. Its mild seaside climate, combined with world-class mountain and coastal resorts, offers Kuwaiti visitors unique opportunities for both summer and winter holidays.

Our practical cooperation in the cultural and humanitarian sphere is also expanding. A notable example was the successful holding of the Moscow Seasons festival in Kuwait in September 2025, which vividly demonstrated the growing interest

of the Kuwaiti public in Russian culture, traditions, and contemporary life.

Cultural, educational, and people-to-people exchanges continue to enrich our partnership and strengthen mutual understanding between our nations. These contacts provide a solid foundation for the further development of Russian-Kuwaiti relations in the years ahead.

As Russia celebrates its national holiday, we look back with pride at our history while viewing our future with confidence. We remain committed to developing friendly and mutually beneficial relations our partners with Kuwait ranking high among them.

Global outcry

Regional and international condemnation followed swiftly. Saudi Arabia denounced the attacks as blatant violations of sovereignty and a threat to regional security, while the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and the Arab Parliament issued similar statements rejecting the escalation and expressing full solidarity with Kuwait, Bahrain, and Jordan.

Qatar, in statements from both its Foreign Ministry and Cabinet, stressed the need to prevent further escalation and support diplomatic solutions. The Arab Parliament underscored that Arab national security is indivisible, calling on the international community and the UN Security Council to act decisively.

Arab League Secretary-General Ahmad Aboul Gheit also condemned the attacks, warning that continued targeting of Arab territories threatens regional stability. He called for intensified efforts to resolve the ongoing crisis and contain its broader implications.

In latest development, the United States launched airstrikes early Wednesday against Iran, and Tehran fired back at countries in the region. The escalating attacks threatened to derail efforts to end the war, as U.S. President Donald Trump warned that Tehran would "pay the price" for stalled peace negotiations.

Trump's warning came hours after Bahrain, Kuwait and Jordan - all of which host U.S. troops - came under Iranian fire. It was the second time this week that back-and-forth strikes have tested a two-month ceasefire. On Monday, Iran and Israel targeted each other.

It was not clear what Trump's post on Truth Social would mean for Tehran, and the comments underlined the American leader's whipsaw ap-

proach to the war. He suggested on Monday that a deal to end the conflict could be reached in a matter of days.

Iran, meanwhile, has proved resilient despite having faced weeks of heavy bombing. It is betting that its ability to effectively close the Strait of Hormuz - a crucial passageway for the world's oil and natural gas - gives it a strong bargaining chip.

Still, both countries seem to be looking for a way to end the conflict - if they can manage to sell it as a win at home. But Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appears intent on pursuing much more difficult goals: the collapse of Iran's theocratic government, the elimination of its nuclear program, and the destruction of the Iranian-allied Hezbollah militant group in Lebanon. That will make compromise much harder.

Since the U.S. and Israel started the war with attacks on Iran on Feb. 28, the conflict has shaken the global economy, driven up energy prices around the world, and made food and other basics more expensive. The international benchmark for crude oil traded above \$92 a barrel on Wednesday, up more than 25% since the start of the war.

In the latest strikes, U.S. fighter jets targeted "air defense, ground control stations, and surveillance radar sites," the military's Central Command said. Iran acknowledged strikes around Bandar Abbas and Qeshm Island, but gave no details on damage.

Iran's top diplomat vowed that there would be a response, and Tehran later claimed attacks in Kuwait, Bahrain and Jordan.

Guyana and

establishment of diplomatic relations between Guyana and Kuwait based on the principles of mutual respect, sovereign equality, and a shared conviction in the value of international cooperation as a means to achieve progress and prosperity.

He confirmed Guyana's full solidarity with the State of Kuwait in addressing the security challenges in the region and reaffirmed his country's support for stability and security of Kuwait.

He stated that what makes the relationship between the two nations distinctive is that it is not rooted in geographic proximity or short-term economic interests, but rather in a framework of common values. He added that both countries recognize the value of resilience in overcoming

challenges, and have demonstrated that smaller nations can play influential roles when guided by clear vision, wise leadership and strong determination.

He praised the humanitarian and development contributions of Kuwait on the international stage, stressing that the principled positions and humanitarian initiatives of his country helped improve the lives of millions of people around the world.

He also commended the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and highlighted the continuous development and progress taking place throughout Kuwait.

He lauded as well the efforts of various Kuwaiti institutions and entities in strengthening bilateral relations, particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He expressed appreciation for the role of Al-Qadfan in advancing cooperation between the two countries.

He emphasized that the simultaneous celebration of Guyana's Diamond Jubilee of Independence and the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations with Kuwait underscores the depth and strength of the partnership between the two nations.

He added that Kuwait has long been, and continues to be, an important development partner for Guyana, asserting that the future of bilateral cooperation offers considerable opportunities and promising prospects.

He explained that the economic progress achieved by Guyana, particularly in the energy sector, created new opportunities for cooperation and investment between the two countries. He said a number of business leaders and investors from Kuwait and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have already begun exploring investment opportunities in the Guyanese market.

He believes that the next phase of bilateral relations could bring about stronger cooperation between the private sectors of both countries, expanded partnerships among universities and research institutions, and broader collaboration in various fields, including food security, agricultural production, infrastructure, logistics, conventional and renewable energy, climate resilience, digital transformation, ecotourism, healthcare, innovation, finance and sustainable development.

He added that Guyana and Kuwait have a unique opportunity to showcase a successful model of international cooperation based on

mutual interests and shared development objectives. He then asserted that these ambitions are achievable through concerted efforts and strong political will.

Kuwait Cabinet

a rest day as it falls between two holidays. Official work would then resume on Sunday, June 21.

The Cabinet noted that authorities will determine their holiday schedules through their administrations in accordance with the public interest.

On the occasion, the Cabinet extended its sincere congratulations to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti people and residents, praying for continued prosperity and blessings for Kuwait and the Arab and Islamic nations.

Phone cards

phone recharge cards as an alternative to cash. Users were instructed to purchase the cards and send their details to dealers, who would then convert the proceeds into cash through intermediaries, in order to conceal the movement of funds and make it difficult to trace.

The investigation led to the identification and arrest of the first suspect, who was found in possession of a sum of money. He confessed to receiving the recharge cards, reselling them, and converting their value into cash for distribution to other members of the network.

Based on the information provided by the first suspect, an ambush was set up, resulting in the arrest of the second suspect while he was receiving cash proceeds from these transactions.

The second suspect confessed to collecting, distributing, and handling the funds according to instructions he received from an inmate at the Central Prison who had been convicted of drug trafficking.

It was revealed that part of the money was used to purchase supplies and deliver them to the inmate in question. The remaining funds were distributed and concealed through various individuals to disguise their true source.

The two defendants were referred to the relevant authorities for legal proceedings.



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Villegas advances in California congressional district

Platner wins Maine Democratic primary for Senate

PORTLAND, Maine, June 10, (AP): Graham Platner won the Maine Democratic primary for US Senate on Tuesday, channeling voter frustration over the high cost of living and overcoming revelations about his past to set up a high-stakes race against Republican Sen. Susan Collins.

Speaking to supporters in the small town where he was born, Platner, an oyster farmer and combat veteran, stressed a message of redemption as he promised to oust Collins. Democrats see the race as a top opportunity to flip a GOP-held seat and a must-win as the party tries to claim control of the Senate in November.

Platner's expected win in the primary came after days of questions about his past personal conduct, particularly his relationships with women, that threatened to undermine enthusiasm on the left over his candidacy.

"If you believe, as I do, that we can change our politics and change our country, then you must also believe that people can change," Platner said during his acceptance speech in Blue Hill, a rural town where he was born,

as the crowd cheered on. "And the reason I believe that is because I have lived it."

Maine is the only state with a competitive Senate race where voters supported Democrat Kamala Harris over Donald Trump in 2024. Collins is the only Republican senator from New England.

Platner, a progressive who had early support from Sen. Bernie Sanders, has said he plans to focus on economic issues such as housing and healthcare. He'll be facing one of the most powerful legislators in the Senate, and one of its few remaining moderate Republicans.

"Any of those who feel let down, or disappointed, or disillusioned, it is my job to earn your trust, faith and support, and I will spend every day of this campaign, and if I have the privilege, every day in the United States Senate doing exactly that," Platner said.

Maine voters on Tuesday also were choosing nominees for governor US House. The Democratic and Republican primaries for governor and the 2nd Congressional District will be decided by ranked choice

voting after no candidate won a majority Tuesday.

After thanking his supporters, Platner quickly pivoted to attacking Collins, who was unopposed in the GOP Maine primary.

Also:

WASHINGTON: Democrat Randy Villegas has advanced to the November ballot in a California congressional district that was redrawn to favor Democrats.

The Central Valley's 22nd District seat has been held by Rep. David Valadao, considered one of the most vulnerable House Republicans this year.

Valadao is one of only two remaining House Republicans who voted to impeach President Donald Trump after the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Republican-turned-independent Rep. Kevin Kiley and former Democratic state Sen. Richard Pan advanced to the November election Tuesday in a Northern California congressional district, setting up a significant test of whether Democrats' redraw of California's House maps will pay off for the party.



Democratic US Senate candidate Graham Platner stands on stage during a primary election night watch party after winning the Democratic nomination on June 9 in Blue Hill, Maine. (AP)

Trump administration seeks to deport some 1 million people per year

US House passes \$70b bill to fund immigration enforcement for 3 years

WASHINGTON, June 10, (AP): A bill to provide nearly \$70 billion for immigration enforcement narrowly passed the House on Tuesday and now goes to President Donald Trump for his signature, bolstering the administration's deportation agenda for the remainder of his time in the White House.

Republicans used their majority to get the bill over the finish line, funding a pair of Homeland Security agencies through the next three years. The bill passed by a vote of 214-212, over the objections of Democrats. Trump was expected to sign it into law on Wednesday.

The White House says the bill will provide \$38 billion for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, \$26 billion for the Border Patrol and another \$5 billion to cover unforeseen costs. It frontloads routine annual funding, ensuring a virtually uninterrupted flow of money as the Trump administration seeks to deport some 1 million people per year.

Speaker Mike Johnson needed near-perfect attendance and unity on his side to complete weeks of action. The legislation got side-tracked over \$1 billion for White House security, including for Trump's new ballroom, and a \$1.8 billion fund to compensate his al-

lies who claim they have been unjustly investigated and prosecuted. Those proposals proved politically toxic and were scrapped.

Now, the bill is focused entirely on immigration enforcement, a topic that Republicans have treated as a defining issue between the two major political parties and one they hope will carry them to victory in this year's midterm elections.

"It's long overdue," said Johnson, R-La., of the bill. "We have to fund border security and immigration enforcement, and it's sad that Republicans have to do it on our own."

But Democratic Rep. Lloyd Doggett of Texas called it a "slush fund for ICE."

The funding comes on top of the nearly \$140 billion that the Republican-controlled Congress gave ICE and Customs and Border Protection last year as part of Trump's tax and spending cuts bill.

Democrats objected to giving the agencies more money without significant changes in the way they operate after the deaths of Alex Pretti and Renee Good in Minneapolis. For example, Democrats insisted that agents remove masks and be required to display their ID badges during enforcement operations and that they get a judicial warrant be-



Department of Homeland Security, Transportation Security Administration, Federal Air Marshals, patrol around Washington Dulles International Airport, in Chantilly, Va., on March 24. (AP)

fore entering private property. Instead, the funding will come with virtually no strings attached.

Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries of New York said Republicans weren't focused on the top priorities of the American people and have cut access to Medicaid and nutrition assistance through Trump's earlier tax and spending cut bill.

law enforcement.

"Make no mistake, if you're voting yes, you're not only voting to secure America's border, you're voting to fund law enforcement," Scalise said. "And if you vote no, you are voting to defund the police."

The package is the result of a monthlong standoff in Congress after Democrats refused to fund the Department of Homeland Security in the wake of the immigration enforcement actions in Minneapolis and other American cities, leading to the longest shutdown in agency history.

Negotiations had been underway with the White House to alter ICE operations as Democrats were demanding. When those negotiations failed, Republicans turned to a complicated procedural maneuver to get around the filibuster and pass the immigration funding with no Democratic votes.

Rep. Jodey Arrington, R-Texas, the chairman of the Budget Committee, said the money would provide "regular, normal funding" that ICE and the Border Patrol would get through the annual budgeting process.

"And we're going to do it, not for one year, but for three years, so we don't end up here again."

The Senate completed its work on the legislation last week during an overnight session on a nearly party-line vote, with Sen Lisa Murkowski of Alaska the only Republican to oppose it.

The money will come at a pivotal time for the Department of Homeland Security, which is under new leadership after Trump replaced Kristi Noem with new Secretary Markwayne Mullin in March.

While Mullin has vowed to keep the department out of the headlines, the administration is under pressure from anti-immigration advocates to deliver on Trump's campaign promise of the largest deportation operation in American history.

At the same time, the administration is making it more difficult for certain legal immigrants to remain in the US with Temporary Protective Status or to obtain green cards.

On the House side, Johnson had little margin for error. Rep. Kevin Kiley, I-Calif., ended up siding with Democrats on the party-line vote.

Leading up to the vote, Democrats portrayed DHS as an agency that has used its new resources to buy private jets for its leadership, warehouse immigrants in deplorable conditions and attack U.S. citizens.



In this photo provided by Sevastopol mayor Mikhail Razvozhayev telegram channel on June 10, firefighters put out a fire after a Ukrainian drone attack hit the building of 'Defense of Sevastopol 1854-1855' Panorama in Sevastopol, Crimea. (AP)

Ukraine launches long-range strikes on military and energy sites in Russia

KYIV, Ukraine, June 10, (AP): A series of long-range Ukrainian attacks hit targets deep inside Russia on Wednesday, part of Kyiv's efforts to raise the costs of the war for the Kremlin by striking energy facilities and military industries.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Ukrainian forces struck several military and energy infrastructure sites, including a military factory that he said supplied components for Russian drones and missiles.

In a post on social media, Zelenskyy said Ukrainian FP-5 Flamingo long-range missiles had hit the facility in Cheboksary, located in the Chuvashiya region more than 900 kilometers (over 560 miles) from the front line.

Russia's Defense Ministry said that air defenses downed 326 Ukrainian drones overnight.

Oleg Nikolayev, the head of Chuvashiya, confirmed that the missile attack but didn't give details. The Astra online news outlet reported that the Ukrainian strike hit the

VNIIR-Progress plant that produces antennas for drones.

Zelenskyy also said Ukrainian forces struck a refinery in Russia's Samara region, where Gov Vyacheslav Fedorishchev said that several industrial plants were damaged by drone strikes and three people were injured.

Fedorishchev didn't name the facilities that were damaged, but Astra carried images of a large fire at the Samara refinery.

Zelenskyy added that Ukraine's Security Service (SBU) had also targeted two oil infrastructure facilities in Russia's Vladimir region, about 700 kilometers from the front line.

In Russia-occupied Crimea, a Ukrainian drone hit the building housing a huge panorama painting depicting the defense of the city during 19th century Crimean War. Mikhail Razvozhayev, the Kremlin-appointed head of Sevastopol, said the painting by artist Franz Rubo was effectively destroyed.

As the more than 1,000-kilometer front line in the four-year war has remained largely static as swarms of drones hinder advances, both sides have increasingly relied on long-range strikes.

The increasingly deep and audacious Ukrainian strikes have cast a challenge to Russia's President Vladimir Putin, defying his claim that Moscow was winning the war now in its fifth year.

Last week, Putin vowed to strengthen Russia's air defenses after Ukrainian attacks set ablaze an oil terminal in St. Petersburg and also hit a nearby naval base, casting a cloud on his showcase economic forum in his hometown.

The attacks on St. Petersburg came as another embarrassment for the Russian leader, weeks after he pruned back an annual Victory Day parade in Moscow because of fears of Ukrainian drone attacks.

Ukraine's Air Force says air defenses downed 181 of 207 Russian drones.

Belfast stabbing suspect appears in court

UK leaders condemn violence, call for calm

BELFAST, Northern Ireland, June 10, (AP): A 30-year-old man from Sudan appeared in a Belfast court Wednesday charged with attempted murder over a stabbing attack that left a victim seriously injured and triggered anti-immigrant violence in several parts of Northern Ireland.

Hadi Alodid, 30, was ordered held in jail after an appearance by video in Belfast Magistrates' Court, where he was accused of blinding Stephen Ogilvie in his left eye during the stabbing, prosecutors said. He was also charged with threatening to kill a radiographer on the same day and with possessing a knife.

Alodid refused legal representation through an Arabic interpreter and did not enter a plea.

The court appearance followed a night of violence in which masked men set fire to several homes they believed to house immigrants, burned trash bins, torched a Belfast bus and pelted police with objects. Firefighters rescued several people from burning homes.

Anselme Shima, a Belfast resident originally from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, said he saw smoke from burning vehicles near his home.

"I've lived on my street for almost 10 years, I have a good relationship with my neighbors, but last night was a horrific one," he said. "We don't know what to do. I'm scared. Seeing this, I'm wondering if I'm next."

Politicians from both parts of



People watch as firemen arrive to put out vehicle that was set alight during a protest in East Belfast following a stabbing incident in Belfast on June 9. (AP)

Northern Ireland's power-sharing government condemned the violence. First Minister Michelle O'Neill of Irish nationalist party Sinn Fein said it was "thuggery."

"Groups of masked men burning families out of their homes is nothing less than disgusting cowardice," she said.

Deputy First Minister Emma Little-Pengelly, of the pro-British Democratic Unionist Party, said that "taking frustration at the evil actions of a person out on those who had no part in it is utterly wrong."

Monday's attack, caught in graphic video footage that quickly spread on social media, was seized on by anti-immigration activists. Ogilvie, a man in his 40s, was hospitalized with serious injuries to his face and back after being stabbed.

Police said Alodid entered Northern Ireland from the neighboring Republic of Ireland in 2023, applied for asylum and was given a 5-year permit to remain.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland said there is no information to suggest the attack is terrorism-related and they are not seeking other suspects.



An electoral poster for the right-wing Swiss People's Party (SVP) popular initiative 'No 10-million-Switzerland' is pictured on a field, near Zweisimmen, Switzerland on May 2. (AP)

Switzerland to vote on capping population at 10m

GENEVA, June 10, (AP): Swiss voters will take up an unprecedented proposal to limit Switzerland's population, part of a longtime push by right-wing leaders to cap the number of foreigners who migrate to the rich and economically vibrant Alpine country.

A national vote on whether to cap Switzerland's population at 10 million in coming decades culminates with in-person balloting on Sunday. Swiss democracy gives voters a direct say in policymaking through referendums typically held four times a year.

The proposal is backed by the populist Swiss People's Party, which has the most seats in parliament and has for years thrived off and fomented an isolationist streak in Switzerland. Recent polling from the gfs.bern agency suggested that it could be a close contest.

Supporters of the initiative dislike an influx of expatriates from the neighboring European Union, and say Swiss infrastructure, housing, social programs, natural resources and way of life have been strained under demographic growth.

Most of deaths caused by falling debris from collapsed buildings

Aftershocks complicate Philippine recovery from powerful earthquake

GENERAL SANTOS, Philippines, June 10, (AP): Dozens of rescuers in hard hats scrambled out of a partially collapsed grocery in a southern Philippine city Wednesday as it was rattled by an aftershock from a powerful earthquake that left at least 45 people dead and 17 others missing in the region.

A safety officer blew his whistle and others screamed to warn about 30 firefighters and coast guard personnel to dash to safety as concrete debris crashed down from the leaning three-story building in General Santos city in a frantic scene witnessed by an AP video journalist.

The coastal city, a bustling commercial hub and the country's tuna capital, was devastated by a 7.8-magnitude earthquake that hit Monday and left a trail of destruction across southern Mindanao, the Philippines' second-most populous region.

"It was a strong aftershock and an alarm was immediately sounded so those inside and under the damaged building can run out for a headcount," said Ressa Mia Tactaquin-Betoya, who speaks for the firefighters searching for the last employee missing in the ruined grocery, where two upper floors collapsed during the initial quake.

"It was scary because we don't want our rescuers to be harmed so the area must be secured before they can go back in," she told The Associated Press.

The earthquake has been followed by more than 2,100 aftershocks including a few that ranged up to 6.4 magnitude, which is strong enough to cause more casualties and damage, according to Teresito Bacolcol, who heads the Philippines Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

More than 25,000 people remain displaced, many of them staying in 45 government-run emergency shelters and still too traumatized to return home, officials said.

Monday's quake was one of the most powerful to hit the Philippines in



Rescuers conduct a search operation at a damaged building following an earthquake in General Santos, Philippines on June 10. (AP)

a half century. It injured at least 630 people and damaged more than 3,100 houses, 29 roads, 11 bridges and more than 100 government buildings.

It also damaged the international airport in General Santos, forcing it to shut down indefinitely except for government and military flights transporting aid

and disaster-response personnel, Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines spokesperson Eric Apolonio said.

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.

Most of the deaths were caused by falling debris from collapsed buildings and landslides in General Santos and the nearby provinces of Sarangani, South Cotabato and Davao Occidental.

At least one person died after being swept out to sea following the quake, as waves up to 1.4 meters (4.6 feet) above tide level were measured in the southern Philippines. Smaller waves washed ashore in Indonesia and Palau and as far away as southern Japan before tsunami warnings were lifted.

Seven swimmers near General Santos were swept away by strong currents in the minutes after the quake. Three were rescued by the coast guard, one managed to swim back to shore, one drowned and two remain missing, the Philippine coast guard said.

The strong currents that swept away the victims were most likely set off by the earthquake, Bacolcol said.

The earthquake was set off by movement in the Cotabato Trench and was one of the strongest to hit the country since the same undersea depression triggered an 8.1-magnitude quake that whipped up tsunami waves on Aug. 17, 1976 and killed about 8,000 people.

The Philippines, one of the world's most disaster-prone countries, is often hit by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions due to its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of seismic faults around the ocean.

HK charges 7 people, 2 firms over deadly fire

HONG KONG, June 10, (AP): Hong Kong authorities on Wednesday charged seven people and two companies with offenses including manslaughter and conspiracy over the city's deadliest fire in decades last November.

The massive blaze engulfed seven apartment buildings and killed 168 people on Nov. 26, 2025. Former residents and relatives of the dead have been waiting for answers for months after the fire shattered the close-knit community of Wang Fuk Court, which housed thousands of people in the suburban district of Tai Po.

In a statement on Wednesday, authorities said police and the Independent Commission Against Corruption charged the suspects with 25 counts. Money laundering, attempting to pervert the course of public justice and tax evasion were also among the allegations.

The seven people played different roles in the major renovation project of Wang Fuk Court. The two companies charged are the project consultancy firm and the main contractor involved in the project.

The cases were scheduled to be heard in court Wednesday afternoon.

In March, police said they arrested 38 people on accusations related to the complex, including manslaughter and fraud. Nine have been charged, police said. The anti-graft agency said in the same month that they also arrested 23 people on suspicion of offenses such as bribery and conspiracy to defraud.

Victor Dawes, a lawyer representing an independent committee conducting an ongoing inquiry into the fire's cause, previously said almost all fire safety systems failed on the day of the blaze because of human error.



Smoke rises after a fire broke out at Wang Fuk Court, a residential estate in the Tai Po district of Hong Kong's New Territories on Nov 26, 2025. (AP)

Indonesia finds 4 army members guilty of acid attack on activist, sends them to jail

JAKARTA, Indonesia, June 10, (AP): An Indonesian military court on Wednesday found four service members guilty of an acid attack on a prominent human rights activist and sentenced them with up to three years in prison, in a case that has intensified scrutiny of military accountability and drawn fresh criticism from rights groups.

The three navy marines, Sgt. Edi Sudarko, First Lt. Budhi Hariyanto Widhi Cahyono, and Capt. Nandala Dwi Prasetya, and an air force officer, Lt. Sami Lakka, were all assigned to the intelligence agency of the Indonesian National Armed Forces, or TNI. They were convicted over the March attack on Andrie Yunus, a human rights lawyer and senior activist with the Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence, known as KontraS.

Yunus, 27, suffered severe burns and permanent damage to his right eye when assailants hurled hydrochloric acid at his face while he rode a motorcycle in central Jakarta after recording a podcast about the military's influence on the Indonesian government.



Indonesian service members, (from second left), Sami Lakka, Nandala Dwi Prasetya, Budhi Hariyanto Widhi Cahyono, and Edi Sudarko who are accused of carrying an acid attack to human rights activist Andrie Yunus, are escorted by military police persons as they leave after their sentencing hearing at a military court in Jakarta, Indonesia on June 10. (AP)

The three-judge panel at the Jakarta Military Court sentenced Sudarko to three years in prison, Cahyono to two and a half years, while Prasetya and Lakka were jailed for 2 years and 18

months respectively. Sudarko, who is believed to have recruited the other three soldiers, and Cahyono who suggested the assault by throwing acid, were also fired as TNI members.

Cuba's top diplomat to US calls Trump's sanctions on Cuban leaders a 'pretext' for military action

WASHINGTON, June 10, (AP): Recent US sanctions targeting Cuba's leadership and the indictment of former President Raúl Castro are a "pretext" for the Trump administration to persuade the American people to support a military intervention, Cuba's top diplomat to the United States told The Associated Press.

In an interview on Tuesday, Ambassador Lianys Torres Rivera repeated accusations against the Trump administration made by other Cuban officials, including the foreign minister and the president, and complained bitterly that the US is targeting Cuban civilians with its decades-old embargo and new blockade of energy shipments to the island.

"The sanctions against our leaders, we see as a pretext to make the American people think we are a threat," she said at Cuba's embassy in Washington. "We are not a threat to the US, and we don't want confrontation."

Torres Rivera, who holds the formal title of chargé d'affaires, described the situation as "a war without bombs." She said efforts to change Cuba's government by coercion or force would be met by fierce resistance.

"Raúl is sacred," she said of the indictment by a federal grand jury last month of Castro. The 95-year-old former president faces conspiracy and murder charges related to the 1996 shootdown of two unarmed civilian planes operated by the Mi-



Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Cuba Lianys Torres Rivera, speaks with The Associated Press at the mission in Washington on June 9. (AP)

ami-based exile group Brothers to the Rescue while he was serving as Cuba's defense minister.

"Raúl is a sacred symbol of the revolution, and we will defend Raúl - as we will the country - until the end," Torres Rivera said. "If we are attacked, we are going to respond, and we are prepared for that. But we don't want it."

Her comments reflect a belief among many Cubans and Cuba analysts that the charges against Castro and the sanctions imposed on others in the socialist government's leadership are similar to those the Trump administration touted as a reason for the military intervention in Ven-

ezuela in January that deposed then-President Nicolás Maduro.

On Thursday, the same day the US Treasury Department leveled sanctions on Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel, Castro's son and grandson, along with others, US President Donald Trump said of Cuba: "We're going to handle that as soon as we've finished" military operations in Iran.

Trump has been threatening military action in Cuba ever since ousting Maduro and then ordering an energy blockade that choked off fuel shipments to Cuba. That has led to severe blackouts, food shortages and an economic collapse across the island.

Torres Rivera said the moves by the Trump administration to tighten the screws on Cuba's already faltering economy have resulted in untold misery for ordinary Cubans who are struggling to survive with power cuts of up to 20 hours a day and exorbitant costs for gasoline, kerosene and everyday goods, including food and medicine.

"What is happening now is tough," she said. "It is heartbreaking."

Trump, Secretary of State Marco Rubio and other administration officials have repeatedly denied that Cuba's economic strife is America's fault and repeatedly cast the blame on the Cuban government's socialist policies. They have not ruled out military action against the island but have said they are willing to give Cuban authorities time to make reforms.

Torres Rivera said that recent discussions between senior US and Cuban officials in Havana and elsewhere have been "professional and respectful." But she said that Cuba is not willing to change unless reforms are made from within and not under duress.

A former Cuban ambassador to Vietnam, another socialist country with which Cuba has long-standing ties, she noted that Washington and Hanoi have forged a positive relationship over the past four decades, but only because the Vietnamese enacted reforms at their own pace. The same should be permitted for Cuba, she said.

Multiple shooters kill 12 and wound 9 in S.Africa attack

JOHANNESBURG, June 10, (AP): More than 10 suspects got out of a minibus and moved through a poor neighborhood in South Africa's biggest city while shooting at residents in a late-night attack that killed at least 12 people and wounded nine others, police said Wednesday.

The mass shooting shortly after 11 pm Tuesday in an informal settlement in the Cleveland suburb of Johannesburg had the hallmarks of organized crime gangs vying for control of illegal mining or other activities, though police said the motive was still under investigation.

Police said the shooters were dropped off at the settlement in a minibus "and moved through the area, opening fire on residents and community members at multiple locations before fleeing the scene in the same vehicle."

The victims were nine men and three women, according to police. Eleven died at the scene and another victim died in the hospital.

A search was launched for the suspects and no arrests had been made, police said.

Informal settlements in South Africa are unplanned residential areas that are common in and around big cities where people looking for housing live in shacks or other makeshift structures.

Ambulances were on the scene on Wednesday morning to carry away the bodies of victims, while some community members huddled in groups on the streets.

South Africa has seen several high-profile mass shootings recently, including two in December that killed more than 20 people. One of those attacks also involved multiple shooters.

Mass shootings in South Africa are often connected to criminal gangs. In Johannesburg, violent gangs are involved in illicit mining in and around a city that has large gold reserves and many mines that have been abandoned by companies. Gangs establish operations in those mines to search for leftover deposits for the illicit trade.

They are renowned for fighting violent turf wars with rival gangs or other killings to try and reinforce their control of areas.

Cleveland is a suburb connected to illegal mining activity, a local council member said, though he added there were also other problems in the area including tensions over land between different parts of the local community and it was not certain illegal mining gangs were responsible for the killings.

Police deployed specialist crime intelligence officers to the scene, according to police spokesperson Athlenda Mathe. Provincial police commissioner Tommy Mthombeni said the attackers were "heartless" but refused to link the killings to illegal mining until the investigation was complete.



Mthombeni



Residents inspect the site of a strike in Kabul, Afghanistan on March 13, 2026. (AP)

Pakistani airstrikes in Afghanistan kill 13: Taliban official

KABUL, Afghanistan, June 10, (AP): Pakistan launched new airstrikes on Afghanistan early Wednesday, in a further escalation of months of fighting between the two neighbors that has killed hundreds.

The strikes, which Afghanistan said hit the eastern provinces of Khost, Kunar and Paktika, shattered more than a month of calm between the two sides.

Afghan government spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said 13 people had been killed - 11 children, one woman and an elderly man - and that 14 other civilians were wounded. Pakistan confirmed it had carried out strikes, saying it targeted militant hideouts and infrastructure linked to recent attacks inside Pakistan, and that 26 militants were killed.

The two sides often give widely differing casualty figures.

Pakistan and Afghanistan have engaged in deadly fighting since late February, when Afghanistan launched a cross-border attack on

Pakistan in retaliation for Pakistani airstrikes inside Afghanistan. Several rounds of internationally mediated peace talks have failed to produce a lasting truce.

Pakistan accuses Afghanistan of harboring militants that carry out deadly attacks inside Pakistan, especially the Pakistani Taliban, known as Tehrik-e-Taleban Pakistan or TTP. The group is separate from, but allied with, the Afghan Taliban, which has ruled Afghanistan since it seized power in the country in 2021 amid the chaotic withdrawal of US-led troops. Kabul denies the charge.

In a post on X, Pakistan's Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said that "precise and calibrated strikes were carried out along Pakistan-Afghanistan border areas on hideouts and safe havens of masterminds and planners" of attacks carried out by the Pakistani Taliban and insurgents in Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region bordering Afghanistan.

Tarar said four targets were destroyed in the operation: a training center, a hideout, an ammunition cache and a facility belonging to militant commanders.

He added that Pakistan has always strived to maintain peace and stability in the region, but the safety and security of its citizens remain the top priority.

The country's counter-terrorism campaign will continue "at full pace to wipe out the menace of foreign-sponsored and supported terrorism," he said.

Pakistan's Information Ministry dismissed Afghanistan's reports of civilian casualties. In a post on X, it said that "Afghan Taliban accounts are peddling propaganda claiming Pakistan bombed civilian homes and caused civilian casualties."

Wednesday's strikes came a day after suspected Pakistani Taliban militants attacked a security post in Pakistan's Hasan Khel area of northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa prov-

ince bordering Afghanistan, triggering an intense gunfight in which six members of the Federal Constabulary were killed and several others wounded, according to Pakistan's Interior Ministry.

Local authorities in Pakistan said Tuesday that security forces killed eight of the attackers and thwarted an attempt to overrun the checkpoint. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi later attended funeral prayers for the dead personnel in Peshawar, the ministry said.

Though the situation along the border was calm hours after the strikes, Kabul has previously responded to Pakistani strikes by targeting Pakistani posts along the frontier.

Pakistan in February declared it was in open war with Afghanistan, following a surge in militant attacks on civilians and security forces inside Pakistan. Afghanistan has said a Pakistani airstrike in March hit a drug treatment center in Kabul, killing more than 400 people.

Kuwait oil price down to \$101.84 pb

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): Price of Kuwaiti oil fell by USD 4.4 to USD 101.84 per barrel (pb) in Tuesday's trading, compared with USD 106.24 pb on Monday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Wednesday. In global markets, Brent crude declined by USD 2.8 to USD 91.45 pb, and West Texas Intermediate fell by USD 3.1 to USD 88.2 pb.

Business

In collaboration with CFA Institute and CFA Society Kuwait

Boursa Kuwait raises awareness of fixed-income instruments

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: As part of its commitment to develop an integrated investment environment and equip Kuwaiti capital market participants with the tools and knowledge needed to engage with advanced financial products, Boursa Kuwait organized a webinar on fixed-income instruments on Tuesday, 9 June 2026, in collaboration with the CFA Institute and CFA Society Kuwait. The initiative reflects the strategic partnership between institutions united by a shared vision to build a more knowledgeable and capable investment community.

The webinar comes at a significant moment for Kuwait's fixed income landscape as it follows the issuance of Capital Markets Authority (CMA) Resolution No. 38/2026, which established a comprehensive regulatory framework for fixed-income instruments, including bonds and sukuk, on Boursa Kuwait and created a platform to list and trade domestic and foreign issuances for the first time.

The new framework governs the full lifecycle of these instruments, from listing and daily trading through to early redemption or maturity, and introduces a dedicated trading board for bonds and sukuk, separate from equities.

These developments represent a significant addition to the Kuwaiti capital market and a pivotal step toward diversifying its investment instruments in line with international best practices.

Awareness of fixed-income instruments has become a structural necessity. While the regulatory framework has laid the foundations for the platform, financial education initiatives play a vital role in translating this infrastructure into an active investment reality that the market can understand, adopt and engage with efficiently.

From Theory to Practical Application
The webinar was delivered by Mr. Rob Langrick, Chief Product Advocate at the CFA Institute in New York, who guided participants through the core concepts, frameworks and analytical tools covered in the CFA curriculum, with a particular focus on the mechanics of fixed-income markets and their practical applications globally.

The session also covered several core concepts that form the foundations of fixed-income analysis, including:

- Yield curves, how to read them and how they can be used to assess economic expectations and investment decisions.
- Duration and its role in measuring sensitivity to changes in interest rates and managing portfolio risk.
- Credit risk and the analytical tools used to assess the creditworthiness of issuers.
- Bond pricing mechanisms and the factors that determine fair value under changing market conditions.



Rob Langrick



Naser Al-Sanousi



Amina Abotalaf

In addition, a Bloomberg terminal was used throughout the session to demonstrate how these principles apply in real market conditions, giving participants direct exposure to the world's leading fixed-income data platform and bridging the gap between academic concepts and the requirements of real-world professional practice.

Institutional commitment to empowering participants through knowledge

Commenting on the webinar, Senior Director of Marketing and Corporate Communications at Boursa Kuwait, Mr. Naser Mishari Al-Sanousi, said:

"Boursa Kuwait believes that knowledge is a fundamental pillar in the development of the Kuwaiti capital market and a key enabler of its ability to keep pace with global transformations and accommodate new asset classes. Our commitment extends to all market participants, from students taking their first steps in their investment journey to experienced professionals seeking to develop their knowledge and enhance their readiness to engage with more diverse and advanced financial instruments."

Al-Sanousi emphasized that Boursa Kuwait seeks to enable investors, market participants and professionals to understand fixed-income instruments better and grasp their associated risks and opportunities, to foster more informed and efficient investment decision-making. He added:

"This initiative reflects the strength of the long-standing strategic partnership between Boursa Kuwait, the CFA Institute and CFA Society Kuwait, which has contributed over the past years to delivering educational programs, knowledge initiatives and professional develop-

ment opportunities for Kuwait's investment community. Through these partnerships, we continue to support the development of a more knowledgeable, efficient and resilient capital market, serving investors, issuers and the national economy."

Understanding fixed-income: risk, return and market practice

Highlighting the link between theory and professional practice, Mr. Rob Langrick, Chief Product Advocate at the CFA Institute, said:

"Fixed-income instruments are a fundamental component in building investment portfolios, given their role in financing governments and companies, providing more stable sources of income and supporting long-term wealth preservation. Despite their importance, the asset class remains less understood by a wide segment of retail investors, particularly in emerging markets, which has a direct impact on the quality of investment decision-making. A sound understanding of fixed-income concepts is essential for assessing risk and return in a balanced manner."

Langrick noted that the webinar was specifically designed to develop skills in this area by combining theoretical concepts with the practical tools and analytical frameworks used by CFA charterholders in professional practice. These were linked to real data from Bloomberg to provide a learning experience closely connected to actual market applications.

Capacity building and integration of financial expertise

This webinar builds on the memorandum of understanding signed between Boursa Kuwait and the CFA Institute in October 2025, as well as the agreement signed

with CFA Society Kuwait in 2018, which aim to enrich Boursa Academy content and organize awareness and training programs.

These agreements enable the institutions to combine their expertise in financial services and provide educational content for those seeking to learn more about investing, including information that helps investors assess opportunities and make informed investment decisions, in addition to educational materials such as videos, infographics and presentations.

Commenting on the partnership, CFA Society Kuwait President Mrs. Amina Abotalaf said:

"This webinar reflects the importance of partnerships between financial and professional institutions in enhancing financial literacy and developing the capabilities of participants in the Kuwaiti capital market. Through our collaboration with Boursa Kuwait, the CFA Institute and CFA Society Kuwait seek to provide educational and training content based on global professional standards, helping investors, professionals and students gain a deeper understanding of modern investment instruments and make more informed, analysis-based decisions."

Abotalaf added that developing knowledge of fixed-income instruments is not limited to introducing new asset classes and represents an important step toward building a more mature and deeper market, where participants are better equipped to assess risks and opportunities, supporting the continued development of the investment environment in the State of Kuwait.

A partnership rooted in financial awareness and literacy

This webinar forms part of the long-standing strategic partnership between Boursa Kuwait, the CFA Institute and CFA Society Kuwait. It reflects the exchange's efforts to strengthen the foundations of institutional sustainability and enhance the capabilities of market participants, in line with Kuwait's national vision to achieve economic diversification and build a more advanced and resilient financial ecosystem.

As part of this cooperation, Boursa Kuwait was the first strategic partner of the CFA Research Challenge for university students in Kuwait, reaffirming its commitment to investing in young national talent and bridging the gap between academic education and professional practice.

Together, these knowledge-building initiatives translate Boursa Kuwait's ESG practices into tangible action and align directly with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4 - Quality Education and Goal 17 - Partnerships for the Goals, contributing to the development of a more mature, deeper and sustainable Kuwaiti capital market.

During high-level roundtable hosted by KDIPA and The Business Year

Deposit by 30 June for the next draw

Zain stresses digital readiness for Kuwait's capital market future

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Zain participated in a high-level roundtable discussion hosted by global media group The Business Year, in collaboration with the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), under the title Thought Leadership Circle: Unlocking Kuwait's Market Potential. The panel featured H.E. Abdulaziz Al-Marzouq, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, and discussed Kuwait's evolving economic landscape, investment outlook, and the reforms needed to support the country's long-term economic diversification agenda under Kuwait Vision 2035.

The session brought together senior government officials, business leaders, financial institutions, regulators, and private-sector stakeholders. Zain Kuwait CEO Nawaf Al-Gharabally joined the panel to share Zain's perspective as one of Kuwait's flagship national companies and a leading regional player, highlighting the expanding role of telecom and digital infrastructure in supporting Kuwait's economic diversification, capital market development, and long-term digital growth.

During the session, Al-Gharabally stated: "Kuwait's telecom sector has evolved far beyond voice, data, and traditional connectivity. Today, it is becoming a wider digital ecosystem that supports individuals, households, enterprises, SMEs, government entities, smart districts, and emerging digital businesses. For Zain, this evolution is closely aligned with our '4WARD-Progress with Purpose' strategy, which is guiding our transformation from a telco into a regional TechCo."

He added: "Connectivity will always remain the foundation of our business, but the real opportunity today is in building on that foundation to deliver digital solutions, cloud, AI, cybersecurity, IoT, fintech, smart infrastructure, and customer-centric experiences. Our role has long evolved from providing mere connectivity to enabling the digital foundations of Kuwait's economic transformation."

Al-Gharabally further said: "A clear example of this evolution is our recent partnership with United Real Estate Company, where Zain is powering the digital infrastructure of Hessah District, one of Kuwait's most ambitious urban developments. This reflects how the telecom market is expanding into new segments such as smart districts, real estate technology, connected workplaces, smart homes, and digitally enabled community experiences."

He continued: "We also see fintech as one of the key growth ar-



Minister Abdulaziz Al-Marzouq with Nawaf Al-Gharabally and the participants.



Al-Gharabally speaks at the session.



Group photo of the panel.

Nawaf Al-Gharabally:

■ "Our role has long evolved from providing connectivity to enabling the digital foundations of Kuwait's economic transformation"

■ "Investors will increasingly look for companies that are not only financially strong, but also digitally mature, AI-ready, and capable of using technology to create long-term value"

eas in the evolution of the telecom sector. Through initiatives such as Zain Insure, we are helping introduce simpler, faster, more inclusive, and more customer-centric financial experiences. The opportunity is not only to digitize existing financial services, but to create a new layer of digital financial capability in Kuwait, supported by strong infrastructure, trusted national players, and a regulatory environment that balances innovation with protection."

On the future of Kuwait's capital market, Al-Gharabally said: "Over the next three to five years, Kuwait's capital market has the opportunity to become more diversified, more technology-driven, and more connected to the transformation taking place across the wider economy. AI will be a major enabler of this shift, powering everything from digital infrastructure and enterprise operations to cus-

tomers experience, fintech, insurance, healthcare, education, and large-scale government projects. Investors will increasingly look for companies that are not only financially strong, but also digitally mature, AI-ready, and capable of using technology to create long-term value."

He concluded: "As Kuwait attracts leading global technology companies and advanced digital capabilities, there is a valuable opportunity to further integrate national private-sector companies as strategic partners in major development projects. This will help localize expertise, strengthen execution, and build sustainable national capabilities that create long-term value for Kuwait."

The roundtable explored several key themes, including capital market development, broadening investor participation, digital financial services, public-private

partnerships, and the role of technology in accelerating Kuwait's economic diversification. Discussions also highlighted the importance of strengthening collaboration between government entities, national private-sector companies, and global technology partners to support major development projects and build sustainable digital capabilities within Kuwait.

Zain continues its long-standing partnership with The Business Year to support platforms that bring together decision-makers, investors, and private-sector leaders to exchange perspectives and identify opportunities that contribute to Kuwait's progress. The company is also keen to contribute to advancing KDIPA's efforts to enhance Kuwait's business environment, attract investment, strengthen competitiveness, and position the country as a regional financial and investment hub.

Gulf Bank announces 10 'AIDanah' draw winners

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: As part of its ongoing efforts to reward its customers, and under the supervision of international audit firms, Gulf Bank announced 10 winners in the monthly AIDanah Millionaire draw for May, with each winner receiving a prize of KD 1,000.

The 10 winners are:

1. BADER FAWAZ SALEH ALSHAYJI
2. AHMAD ABDULLAH MOHAMMAD SALEH
3. MOHAMMAD FADEL ABBAS ALAMDAR
4. AHMED ABED ALHAMMED ALI AKBAR
5. HALA SRAJ KADEE
6. ALI MOTLAQ KHALAF ALAZMI
7. SUMAYA BARDAWIL
8. FAHAD ZUBAIR AHMAD KHOKHAR
9. LAILA ALI HUSSAIN SHARAF
10. MAJDI MOHAMMAD FEKRI ALJUBAILI

Gulf Bank had recently announced 120 winners in the first quarterly draw of 2026, alongside the monthly draws for February and March, with each winner receiving KD 1,000. Prior to that, Gulf Bank crowned 272 winners from AIDanah account customers in the postponed 2025 draws, with total prizes amounting to nearly KD 3.3 million. This included the announcement of two new millionaires, joining the list of millionaires the Bank has continued to create since 1998.

In a related development, AIDanah Millionaire account customers are looking forward to the announcement of the KD 1,000,000 draw winner on July 8, in addition to the announcement of 10 winners in the monthly June draw, with each winner receiving KD 1,000.

The closing date for customers to deposit and qualify for the up-

coming KD 200,000 draw is 30 June 2026.

Starting next September, Gulf Bank will launch a new draw system for the "AIDanah Millionaire" account, increasing the total value of prizes to KD 3,500,000. The new prize structure will include a grand prize of KD 1,500,000, a KD 1,000,000 prize, as well as five winners of KD 200,000 each across five different draws throughout the year.

It is worth noting that Gulf Bank's "AIDanah Millionaire" account is one of Kuwait's leading prize-linked savings accounts. Since its launch in 1998, it has continued to enable customers to build a more stable financial future.

The account was designed to promote a culture of saving, making it a suitable option for all segments of society, from children to adults and across different nationalities. With a minimum deposit of KD 200, customers become eligible to enter all draws, including the KD 1 million and KD 1.5 million draws, providing multiple opportunities to win throughout the year. Customers' chances of winning increase as their savings balance grows and the funds are held for a longer period, as part of a distinguished loyalty program that enhances the overall customer experience.

The account also offers full flexibility in deposits and withdrawals at any time, while maintaining the customer's eligibility to enter the draws. The "AIDanah Millionaire" account is more than just a savings account; it is an integrated savings experience that combines financial discipline with winning opportunities, reflecting Gulf Bank's commitment to empowering its customers to achieve their financial goals with confidence and sustainability.



Gulf Bank awards 10 AIDanah prize winners.

Net interest income climbs 38% in Q1

ABK-Egypt achieves EGP 2.5 billion net profit in Q1 2026

CAIRO, June 10: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait – Egypt (ABK-Egypt) announced its Q1 2026 financial results, recording EGP 2.5 billion in net profit in 31 March 2026, marking remarkable growth of 100% compared to EGP 1.25 billion during the same period last year. Net interest income increased by 38% to reach EGP 2.5 billion, up from EGP 1.82 billion in the same period last year, while profit before tax surged by 94% to EGP 3.15 billion, compared to EGP 1.62 billion in Q1 of 2025.

Despite escalating regional tensions, the Bank achieved significant growth across all key performance indicators during Q1, further strengthening its financial position and balance sheet. Total assets increased by 5% to EGP 187.8 billion, compared to EGP 178.1 billion in 2025. Total customer deposits rose by 6% to EGP 149.4 billion, compared to EGP 141 in 2025, while the Bank's total gross loan portfolio expanded by 6% to EGP 92.5 billion, compared to EGP 87.6 billion at the end of 2025.

Commenting on these results, Mr. Ali Marafi, Chairman of ABK-Egypt, stated, "The remarkable results achieved during Q1 2026 are a testament to ABK-Egypt's efficient business model and agile growth strategy. Despite the prevailing geopolitical and economic conditions, the Bank managed to strengthen its balance sheet, achieve significant growth in revenues, and maintain operational efficiency."

Mr. Marafi further highlighted ABK-Egypt's continuous pursuit of excellence as one of the fastest-growing banks in the Egyptian market, driven by its commitment to innovation, expansion, digital transformation, and sustainable growth. He noted that ABK-Egypt's 2026 vision reflects the Bank's ambition to remain a resilient and sustainable financial institution powered by advanced financial technology, experienced talent, and superior customer experience.

He added that the Bank is very appreciative of the efforts orchestrated by the Egyptian government and pivotal role played by the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) in driving economic growth, which are expected to yield even greater results in the near future.

In the same context, Mr. Khaled El Salawy, CEO & Managing Director of ABK-Egypt commended the Bank's performance, stating,



Ali Marafi, Chairman of ABK-Egypt.

"These results reaffirm that we are moving forward with strong momentum and confidence towards achieving balanced growth across all business segments. This performance is reflected across our key financial indicators."

Mr. Khaled El Salawy further elaborated that the Bank's achievements are the direct outcome of the unwavering efforts of its team coupled with the growing confidence of its customers, which continue to serve as a key driver of growth and operational excellence.

He also emphasized the significant progress in digital transformation over the past period, referring to the recent upgrade of its digital platforms and the ongoing efforts towards re-engineering internal processes and automating workflows to ensure speed and efficiency, lessening the reliance on traditional methods, all within ABK-Egypt's broader vision to build a highly agile ecosystem.

Mr. Khaled El Salawy confirmed that despite global economic challenges and heightened geopolitical uncertainty, the coming period will witness further growth across all business segments driven by the ongoing efforts of the Egyptian government and CBE to support and guide the banking sector, as well as the constant efforts exerted by the Bank's Executive Management team to identify and capitalize on strategic investment opportuni-



Khaled El Salawy, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director ABK-Egypt.

ties that accelerate growth and capture market share.

He added that over the past decade, ABK-Egypt has successfully deployed an integrated strategy to diversify its business portfolio, reflecting its firm belief in aligning corporate synergy with national development plans and Egypt's Vision 2030 to boost the national economy.

Community-Centric

Meanwhile, ABK-Egypt will continue to build on its position as a responsible institution within the Egyptian banking sector in 2026 through launching targeted community initiatives in full alignment with CBE directions and its well-articulated CSR strategy that aims at supporting underprivileged communities with special focus drawn to healthcare, education, and sustainable economic empowerment across various segments.

New Branch

During Q1, the Bank inaugurated its new branch at 'Madinaty' East Hub Mall, as part of its ambitious strategy to expand its geographical presence and enhance the delivery of banking services. With the opening of the new branch, the Bank's network has grown to 47 branches across various governorates in Egypt.

The new branch has been designed in accordance with the latest technological standards to keep pace with developments in the

banking industry, while ensuring a superior customer experience, reducing waiting times, and providing access to the full range of banking products and services. The branch has also been equipped to accommodate customers with disabilities and facilitate their access to banking services and products, in line with CBE's directives to promote financial inclusion across the market.

Ambitious Goals

The Bank continues to pursue ambitious objectives for 2026 aimed at strengthening growth and profitability while maintaining robust governance standards and adhering to banking best practices. It remains committed to investing in technology to advance its digital transformation agenda and deliver a seamless, secure, and reliable banking experience for its customers.

The Bank's expansion strategy and geographical growth plans are based on a thorough understanding of customers' evolving needs and expectations, with a focus on offering innovative banking products and exceptional services to both existing and prospective customers.

In line with these efforts, ABK-Egypt recently launched an enhanced version of its online banking platform and mobile banking application to better serve both retail and corporate customers. The upgraded platforms provide a secure and seamless digital experience while introducing a range of new banking services.

Furthermore, the Bank successfully integrated the security token into its mobile banking application, becoming the first bank in the Egyptian banking sector to offer this feature to its customers. This achievement further strengthens customers' confidence in conducting their financial and banking transactions through the Bank's continuously evolving suite of digital banking solutions, delivered in accordance with the highest standards of the banking industry.

Against the backdrop of an increasingly dynamic banking landscape, ABK-Egypt remains committed to proactively addressing market developments, strengthening its institutional capabilities, enhancing operational efficiency, and capitalizing on new opportunities that support its long-term growth trajectory.

Unlocking Kuwait's market potential

Kuwait strengthens Vision 2035 drive through leadership forum

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The latest edition of the Thought Leadership Circle: Unlocking Kuwait's Market Potential, co-hosted by KDIPA and The Business Year, convened at Al Hamra Tower, bringing together government officials, business leaders, and private-sector stakeholders to discuss Kuwait's evolving economic landscape and investment outlook.

As Kuwait advances its economic diversification agenda under Vision 2035, the event provided a platform for dialogue between public- and private-sector leaders, highlighting reforms and initiatives aimed at strengthening the country's investment environment.

KDIPA emphasized the importance of collaboration between public and private stakeholders to support economic growth, attract investment, and enhance Kuwait's competitiveness.

Discussions focused on regulatory reforms to expand capital market participation, empower SMEs, strengthen investor confidence, and support the long-term development of Kuwait's financial ecosystem.

The event hosted HE Abdulaziz Al-Marzooq, Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, who stated: "Kuwait continues to advance reforms that support a more competitive and diversified economy, creating new opportunities for businesses and investors alike."

CEOs from some of Kuwait's leading organizations shared their perspectives on the country's future.

"Kuwait is entering a new era of opportunity, driven

by strong institutions, visionary leadership, and a commitment to sustainable development," said Abdulrahman Al Khannah, CEO of Beyout Holding.

Ali Khalil, CEO of Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz", noted: "There's a national conviction to rely on the private sector to drive growth and job creation through a close public-private partnership collaboration and active capital market."

Abdullah Sulaiman Al-Haddad, CEO of KFH Capital, stated that, "with continued collaboration and regulatory support, we see enormous potential for growth, innovation, and international partnerships."

"There is tremendous momentum in Kuwait's fintech and investment ecosystem," said Abdulrahman Al Kharafi, CEO of Zad Fintech.

Other private-sector speakers included Nawaf H. Al-Gharabally, CEO of Zain Kuwait; Sheikh Ahmed Al-Duaij Al-Sabah, Chairman of Commercial Bank of Kuwait; and Muhannad AlSane, CEO of Almowazi Capital, who contributed their perspectives on Kuwait's evolving investment landscape and the role of the private sector in supporting sustainable economic growth.

The Thought Leadership Circle provided valuable insights and reinforced the importance of continued collaboration in achieving Kuwait's transformation goals.

The event was made possible through the support of sponsors and partners including Beyout Holding, KFH, Zain, Markaz, Zad Fintech, AlMowazi Capital, Miceminds, and Apache Photography.



Stakeholders discuss Kuwait's evolving market landscape.

Minister Al-Mishari to patronize ENCON5 opening

KFEOCH hosts forum on Kuwait's housing future

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Kuwaiti Federation of Engineering Offices and Consultant Houses (KFEOCH) announced the completion of its preparations for the Kuwait Second Development Projects Forum (ENCON5), to be held under the patronage of and in the presence of H.E. Eng. Abdul Latif Hamad Al-Mishari, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, on Sunday, June 14, at 9:00 a.m. in Al Baraka Hall at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

KFEOCH President, Eng. Bader Al-Salman expressed his appreciation to H. E. the Minister for his patronage and attendance at the opening ceremony, noting that such support reflects the government's commitment to engaging specialists and experts to shape the future of housing projects in Kuwait. He added that the forum will focus on future housing initiatives based on the real estate developer model, as well as the proposed implementation of a mortgage financing system that would provide more flexible financing programs for beneficiaries.

Al-Salman also highlighted the participation of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare and the Direct Investment Promotion Authority, and expressed his appreciation for their contributions to the forum. He noted that the event will bring together a distinguished group of government officials, decision-makers, investors, real estate developers, financial institutions, engineering consultants, and industry experts. The forum sessions will focus on practical solutions to accelerate the implementation of housing projects, enhance private-sector participation in real estate and investment financing, and improve the quality and sustainability of housing developments in line with the aspirations of both the government and citizens.

KFEOCH President explained that the forum comes at a critical stage in Kuwait's development journey, as the housing sector remains a national priority for both the government and the public. He emphasized that the forum serves as a platform for constructive dialogue among stakeholders to explore the most effective ways to advance the housing sector.

Al-Salman further stated that the forum will discuss the proposed real estate developer model and mortgage financing system, expressing optimism that these initiatives can



H.E. Eng. Abdul Latif Hamad Al-Mishari, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs.



Eng. Bader Al-Salman, President of the Kuwaiti Federation of Engineering Consultancy Offices and Consulting Houses (KFEOCH)

Al-Salman:

■ Patronage and Attendance of the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Reflect Government Support for Discussing New Approaches to Implementing Housing Projects in Kuwait

bring about a transformative shift in Kuwait's housing welfare framework. Such reforms would expand financing options, accelerate the delivery of housing units, and improve the efficiency of project implementation while adhering to the principles of transparency, sustainability, and modernity, without compromising the privacy and distinctive characteristics of the Kuwaiti home.

He added: "The government's continued prioritization of housing welfare despite economic and regional challenges demonstrates that the well-being of Kuwait citizens remains at the forefront of national priorities." He stressed that the initiatives presented at the forum represent an important step toward achieving housing sustainability and enhancing the quality of life for future generations.

Al-Salman expressed his appreciation to all sponsors whose support has contributed to the success of this important event. He noted that their sponsorship reflects a shared belief in the importance of housing development as a fundamental pillar of Kuwait's economic and social development.

Thanks, and appreciation to Sponsors and Participating Organizations

For its part, Razen Events affirmed its pride in organizing ENCON5 in partnership with government entities and leading national

institutions. The company expressed its sincere appreciation to all sponsors, partners, and participants for their support and confidence, and looks forward to the forum's outcomes contributing to national development efforts and advancing urban and housing development in the State of Kuwait.

The company also extended its gratitude and appreciation to the Platinum Sponsors: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), Kuwait Finance House (KFH), KEO International Consultants, United Real Estate Company (URC), and Kuwait Steel Company. It also acknowledged the Gold Sponsors: Kuwait Financial Center (Markaz), Mabaneer Gulf Consult, and Soor Engineering Bureau.

Finally, Razen expressed its appreciation to the participating government entities, namely the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) and the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA); to the Knowledge Partner, Al-Yaqout & Al-Fouzan Legal Group; to the Official Carrier, Kuwait Airways; and to the Media Sponsors, Al-Qabas and Al-Anbaa newspapers, as well as all media organizations supporting these specialized awareness and knowledge platforms that contribute to advancing and supporting development in Kuwait.

Kuwait Finance House celebrates over 100 employees under the Injaz program



The executive management was at the forefront of those present.



Ahmad Alhammad



Khaled AlShamlan and Ahmad Alhammad honored an employee who holds a professional certificate.



Khaled AlShamlan and Ahmad Alhammad honored one of the female employees.

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) celebrated over 100 male and female employees graduating from the scholarship program and earning specialized professional certificates under the Injaz program, reflecting its ongoing efforts to develop human capital and enhance national competencies.

The ceremony was held in the presence of KFH Group CEO Khaled Yousef AlShamlan, KFH Acting Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer Ahmad Alhammad, and the executive management team.

As a strategic KFH initiative to recognize and reward employees, the Injaz program encourages staff to earn accredited professional certifications in specialized banking, finance, and management areas. It also provides academic scholarships for postgraduate studies at top universities. By enhancing leadership and technical skills, the program prepares qualified professionals to pace

Alhammad: Investing in human capital fosters leadership and drives sustainable growth
 ■ Developing human resources boosts productivity and fosters innovation

with rapid banking transformations, ultimately supporting innovation and aligning the bank with global best practices.

Speaking at the Injaz ceremony, Alhammad emphasized that honoring numerous employees reflects the bank's commitment to developing staff and enhancing their capabilities. He noted that the program belongs to an integrated

strategy investing in human capital, the Bank's true wealth.

He noted that employee achievements advance career paths, strengthen bank leadership, and drive sustainable growth. Human Resources continues supporting academic and professional development through advanced training aligned with international standards, preparing employees to face challenges and achieve excellence.

Alhammad pointed out that employees' professional certifications will boost performance by increasing productivity, enhancing service quality, fostering innovation, and sharing knowledge across the work environment.

The ceremony concluded by emphasizing the need to develop human capabilities to meet employee aspirations and sustain KFH's leadership in the banking sector.



Khaled AlShamlan and Ahmad Alhammad are honored as employees who obtained a professional certificate.



Khaled AlShamlan, Ahmad Alhammad, and Abdullah Alhaddad honoring one of the employees of Baitak Capital



Khaled AlShamlan and Ahmad Alhammad honored one of the employees



Khaled AlShamlan, Ahmad Alhammad, and Abdullah Alhaddad honoring one of the employees

11 new winners announced in Kuwait's largest prize draw program

Rana Al-Najjar wins NBK Al-Jawhara monthly prize of KD 125,000

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) hosted a special event at its headquarters, during which it announced 11 new winners in Al-Jawhara and Al-Jawhara Junior draws. Attended by a number of the Bank's officials, the event was broadcast live across NBK's social media platforms, reflecting the Bank's steadfast commitment to transparency and reinforcing its close and continuous engagement with customers.

The event was marked by an enthusiastic atmosphere that reflected Al-Jawhara's leading position as one of Kuwait's premier savings programs. Through the program, NBK continues to offer a comprehensive experience that combines the benefits of saving with the opportunity to win valuable cash prizes.

The draw results revealed that an NBK customer, Rana Abdulredha Abbas Al-Najjar, won the Al-Jawhara monthly prize of KD 125,000. In addition, three customers were announced as winners in the Al-Jawhara weekly draw, each receiving a prize of KD 20,000.

The monthly Al-Jawhara Junior draw was also conducted, resulting in seven winners. Three customers each won KD 1,000, while four customers received cash prizes of KD 500 each, reflecting the Bank's commitment to promoting a culture of saving among younger generations.

All draws were conducted in the presence and under the supervision and oversight of representatives from the two global audit firms, Deloitte and Grant Thornton, reflecting NBK's commitment to the highest standards of transparency and integrity.

Speaking on the occasion, Hisham Al-Nusif, Head of Consumer Banking at NBK, said: "Al-Jawhara continues to reinforce its position as the largest prize draw program of its kind in Kuwait, offering genuine added value by combining the promotion of a savings culture with the opportunity to win rewarding cash prizes."

He added that the announcement of 11 new winners reflects the Bank's ongoing commitment to rewarding its customers and encouraging a culture of saving, noting that the program represents a key pillar of NBK's strategy to promote financial inclusion and deliver innovative savings solutions to different segments of society.

Al-Nusif further emphasized that NBK remains committed to upholding the highest standards of fairness



Hisham Al-Nusif

Al-Nusif: Al-Jawhara continues to reinforce its position as Kuwait's largest prize draw program of its kind
 ■ The program serves as a key pillar of NBK's strategy to promote financial inclusion and deliver innovative savings solutions
 ■ NBK remains committed to upholding the highest standards of fairness, transparency, and equal opportunity in conducting its prize draws



NBK awards Al-Jawhara Prize.



Representatives of the auditing firms Deloitte and Grant Thornton during the draw.

and equal opportunity by subjecting all draws to the oversight of independent global audit firms, alongside implementing rigorous mechanisms designed to maxi-

mize the distribution of winning opportunities among customers. Under these measures, winners are excluded from participating in any subsequent draw for a period

of 90 business days, while winners of prizes valued at KD 50,000 or more are excluded from all draws for a full year.

He noted that Al-Jawhara savings account offers customers a range of competitive benefits, including an additional interest rate of up to 1.5% during the first year, in addition to automatic entry into the weekly, monthly, and grand prize draws once the account balance reaches KD 5,000 or more.

The total value of Al-Jawhara prizes amounts to approximately KD 5 million annually, distributed across weekly prizes of KD 20,000, a monthly prize of KD 125,000, and the grand prize of KD 1 million, which is awarded through three draws held each year.

Through Al-Jawhara prize draw program, NBK continues to enhance the value it delivers to customers by offering innovative banking solutions that combine saving with rewarding prize opportunities, further reinforcing its position as a trusted banking partner that meets customers' aspirations and delivers a comprehensive banking experience in line with the highest international standards.

Draw Winners

- (Read as Winner Name, Draw Category, Price Amount)
- Fadhah Mohammed Mohalhal Alkhaled, Al-Jawhara Weekly Draw, KD 20,000
- Tareq Helal Hafer Aljumeili, Al-Jawhara Weekly Draw, KD 20,000
- Abdullah Saleh Mohamad Ameen, Al-Jawhara Weekly Draw, KD 20,000
- Rana Abdulredha Abbas Alnajjar, Al-Jawhara Monthly Draw, KD 125,000
- Roqayah Yousef Saoud Naqi, Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw, KD 1,000
- Alaa Mohammad Abdulaziz Alali, Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw, KD 1,000
- Abdullah Meshal Fahad Aldhafeeri, Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw, KD 1,000
- Tareq Mohammad Abdulrazzaq Alkandar, Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw, KD 500
- Fatemah Sayed Mousa Sayed Ali Sayed Mustafa, Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw, KD 500
- Bader Walaa Kadhem Alqallaf, Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw, KD 500
- Ruqayah Hussain Saud Alqattan, Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw, KD 500

Fed faces pressure as inflation climbs

US inflation hits 3-year high

WASHINGTON, June 10, (AP): Rising gas prices pushed inflation to its highest level in three years last month, a headache for the Federal Reserve and a potential political challenge for the Trump administration as midterm elections near.

Consumer prices rose 4.2% in May from a year earlier, the Labor Department said Wednesday, up from 3.8% in April and the third straight monthly increase. On a monthly basis, prices rose 0.5% last month, after big gains of 0.6% in April and 0.9% in March.

Prices have now risen faster than wages for several months, pressuring many Americans' finances and causing consumers to take a decidedly dim view of the economy. Families are dipping into savings to maintain their spending, and more people are falling behind on their credit card bills. Large retailers say they have also noticed changes in customer behavior, like buying smaller amounts of gas during visits to the pump.

Inflation is now well above the Federal Reserve's 2% target, which it has surpassed for more than five years. New Fed chair Kevin Warsh will preside over his first policy meeting next week, when the central bank is expected to keep its key interest rate unchanged. But the Fed is also likely to change the statement it issues after each meeting to remove a suggestion that its next move could be to lower rates. With inflation proving stubborn, financial markets expect it could instead raise rates by the end of the year.

When the Fed lifts rates, over time it can make mortgages, auto loans, and business borrowing more expensive.

Outside energy costs, price increases last month were not as dramatic, a sign that sharply higher inflation hasn't yet spread throughout the economy. Should the Iran war end and oil and gas prices

decline, headline inflation could begin to cool. Gas prices have fallen this month, though they remain elevated.

Excluding the volatile food and energy categories, core prices rose at a more modest pace. On a monthly basis, they climbed just 0.2%, down from a 0.4% gain in April. Compared with a year ago, they have risen 2.9%, up from 2.8% in April.

Still, many goods and services rose in price last month: Clothing costs increased 0.3% and are 4.8% more expensive than a year ago. Airline fares, pushed higher by pricier jet fuel, jumped 2.7% just in May and are nearly 27% higher than a year ago. Electricity prices rose 0.6% in May and are up 5.9% in the past year.

Grocery prices were tamer in May compared with previous months, rising just 0.1% from April. Still, they are up 2.7% from a year ago and have risen sharply since the pandemic.

"I don't think we're anywhere near out of the woods yet," Omair Sharif, chief economist at Inflation Insights, said. Price increases "were stronger under the hood."

Sharif and other economists point out that the cost of many services, including child care, home health care, and dental services are still rising much more quickly than is consistent with the Fed's 2% inflation target.

Bill Adams, chief U.S. economist at Fifth Third Commercial Bank, attributed some of the gain to a crack-down on immigration, which has likely forced many employers in those industries to raise wages.

Inflation had been cooling before President Donald Trump imposed sweeping tariffs in April 2025, which lifted the costs of many goods. Prices have since surged after the Iran war made oil and gas more expensive, making affordability a key political issue.

Supporting the next generation of dentists through its educational 'upgrade' initiative

stc sponsors the Graduation Ceremony of College of Dentistry at Kuwait University



During the stc's recognition for sponsoring the graduation ceremony.



Group photo of the graduates

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Kuwait Telecommunications Company - stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, sponsored the Graduation Ceremony of the College of Dentistry at Kuwait University for the 2025-2026 academic year. The sponsorship reflects stc's support toward the educational system in Kuwait, while empowering the youth through its educational 'upgrade' initiative, which aims to contribute to the development of future generations and equip them with the tools needed to succeed in an evolving digital world.

The ceremony, held at the Four Seasons Hotel Kuwait, brought together graduates, faculty members, and distinguished guests to celebrate the academic achievements of the graduating class. The event was attended by Dr. Rashed Al-Azemi, Acting Dean of the College of Dentistry, and Prof. Nourah Al-Suwaih, Acting Secretary General of Kuwait University, in addition to members of stc's executive management and Public Relations team. As part of its sponsorship and participation, stc was present through its Youth booth, where attendees had the opportunity to learn

more about the latest offers and services designed specifically for young customers while engaging with the Company's team throughout the event.

During the ceremony, stc celebrated alongside the graduates by presenting a selection of commemorative gifts in recognition of this important milestone in their academic journey. The Company also showcased a range of its latest digital services and solutions through its interactive booth, which attracted significant interest from students and guests alike, highlighting products and services designed to meet the evolving needs and aspirations of Kuwait's youth.

stc's support for the graduation ceremony aligns with the Company's ongoing commitment to promoting education and empowering the youth of Kuwait. The initiative is part of stc's broader strategy to invest in the development of future leaders and innovators who will contribute to the growth and progress of the nation. As part of its commitment to support the community, stc launched the educational 'upgrade' initiative to play an active and contributing role in the local education system. stc remains committed to supporting educational initiatives and contributing to the develop-

ment of a knowledge-based society in Kuwait. Through such sponsorships, stc aims to inspire and motivate the younger generation to strive for academic excellence and pursue their aspirations with confidence.

In a statement, stc emphasized that supporting educational institutions and students-focused initiatives remains an integral part of its CSR and sustainability programs. The Company believes that investing in youth development and creating opportunities for future generations contributes to building a more prosperous and sustainable future for Kuwait, while reinforcing the role of education as a key driver of social and economic progress.

stc congratulated the graduates on their academic achievements and expressed its appreciation to Kuwait University, the College of Dentistry, and the sponsors and organizers whose contributions helped make the ceremony a success. The Company looks forward to supporting similar initiatives in the future and continuing to invest in the educational sector, recognizing its significant role in empowering members of the community, nurturing future talent, and supporting Kuwait's long-term development goals.

A fast, conspiratorial ride into alien secrets and global chaos

'Disclosure Day' delivers vintage Spielberg magic

LOS ANGELES, June 10, (AP): "Disclosure Day" invites you into its world with a kick to the face. Or maybe it's a stomp. Whatever it is, this opening sequence, in a garish professional wrestling ring, is bound to wake you up and make you wonder, first, if you're in the right movie, and second, if Steven Spielberg has lost it.

Don't worry, he hasn't. In fact, he's on fire, making a movie that feels like the kinds he used to churn out regularly in the first half of his career.

And he doesn't make you guess for long where he's going: The camera soon finds the one person in this frenzied crowd who is as worried and befuddled as we are: His name is Daniel Kellner, he's played by Josh O'Connor (the perfect "grown up" Spielberg kid), and he is already in the middle of his adventure. The suits have found him, put a gun to his side and confiscated his backpack. A girl, Jane, has been taken hostage. And we as the audience are on a non-stop ride of discovery, wonder and thrills and, thankfully, no more wrestling.

"Disclosure Day," in theaters Friday, is a classic, big-hearted Spielberg adventure through and through, with ordinary people rebelling against shadowy secret keepers in the name of the truth. Indiana Jones wanted antiquities in museums for all to see. Daniel, and the team of people who convinced him to steal files from a private cybersecurity firm, want the world to know that there is life elsewhere and they have made contact.

Nearly 50 years after Roy Neary's close encounter, Spielberg isn't so much asking questions this time: He's blowing the whistle, in classic paranoid conspiracy thriller style (although this is decidedly more romantic than 70s-era cynical), with a turtlenecked Colin Firth as the maverick leader of WARDEX, the company seeking to keep this information under wraps.

The story, conceived by Spielberg and scripted by David Koepp, finds us in a time and place that looks like our own. Attention is on a global conflict brewing - there are passing references to World War III, and some hysterical hoarding at the local gas station - but on a certain level everyone is going about business as usual, including local Kansas City, Missouri, broadcaster Margaret Fair-



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Colman Domingo, from left, Tommy Martinez, Emily Blunt and Josh O'Connor in a scene from 'Disclosure Day.' (AP)

child (Emily Blunt), who is trapped in weather girl mode but dreams of reporting serious news.

She's a little flighty and unsettled, we're told, but then things start getting deeply weird: Suddenly she's slipping in and out of different languages, knowing extremely personal details about strangers, and divining all sorts of information about Daniel and the other players in this operation. Margaret and Daniel are clearly on a path toward one another, with the men in the black SUVs on their tail.

As in many Spielberg films there is a spiritual element to the proceedings of "Disclosure Day," with the believers, the skeptics and the scared all crashing into one another and slouching toward revelation. Dan-

iel's girlfriend, Jane (an excellent Eve Hewson), is a former nun who has questions and concerns about the utility of the information. And the maestro of this operation is Hugo, a calm and somewhat inscrutable former WARDEX employee, played by Colman Domingo. He is soft coaching his unlikely heroes through the situation while he oversees what appears to be the construction of a set. It always comes back to movies, doesn't it?

Many of the greatest pleasures of "Disclosure Day" are wrapped up in our own Spielberg literacy. The movie language is unmistakably his, with shadows and lens flare and smoke, blown out lights and wet streets and all. His set-pieces are old fashioned, tactile and de-

lightfully sane, from car chases to a thrilling sequence involving a train - apparently a dream of his since he made "Duel." And the John Williams score, a very undeniably John Williams score, is the kind that may produce goose bumps.

You're never not aware that you're watching a movie in the silly ways too: Blunt's hair and makeup are suspiciously styled throughout, even after a rainstorm and days on the run. We're never quite rooted in a place despite all the talk otherwise: One might think with all the driving everyone is doing that the distances between Kansas City, Indiana and the D.C. area aren't all that far. The CGI animals look like CGI animals. And for all the

specificity of a specific date for a specific character's childhood, in 1996, said child's bedroom, and pajamas, look perhaps more suited to 1966. But maybe these are just details that stick out on the first watch, the ones that will fade into the scenery as the decades go by.

While the emotional trajectory of these characters was not something I found myself especially wrapped up in, despite the good acting and sharp script, the film itself is a profoundly emotional experience in other ways. Spielberg's last three movies have all felt like farewells in some way, but maybe that's just projection. It would be wrong to think of "West Side Story,"

"The Fabelmans" and "Disclosure Day" as part of an encore.

But they do share an unapologetic sentimentality. Spielberg has often been wistful, warm and glassy eyed in his films, but maybe this is the kind of poignancy that comes with age. It just hits a little harder.

Did "Disclosure Day" make me believe in aliens or want to seek out truer documentaries about "unidentified anomalous phenomena" however? Eh ...? Mostly, it just reminded me that I believe in Spielberg. Always have.

"Disclosure Day," a Universal Pictures release in theaters Friday, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association for "action/violence, some bloody images, and strong language." Running time: 145 minutes. Three stars out of four.

'I didn't connect the dots'

Scott Pelley details shocking 10-minute CBS firing after 37 years at '60 Minutes'

NEW YORK, June 10, (AP): When CBS News President Tom Cibrowski asked Scott Pelley if he could come by for a meeting last Tuesday, the longtime "60 Minutes" correspondent booked about an hour on his calendar, he says. He assumed he'd be having an extensive discussion about issues that led to his tense confrontation a day earlier with his new boss, Nick Bilton.

He didn't know Bari Weiss, the news division's editor in chief, would be there. But his initial reaction to seeing her was "This is terrific of her," he told The New York Times in a wide-ranging podcast interview. He figured he'd be able to ask questions, and she'd explain her sweeping changes of the previous week, in which she'd replaced the executive producer, Tanya Simon, and let go two correspondents, along with other key staffers.

The last thing on his mind? That he himself was about to be fired, after a meeting that he says lasted about 10 minutes. "I just didn't connect the dots," he said.

In a raw and emotional interview with the Times' Lulu Garcia-Navarro, released Sunday, Pelley, who had been at CBS for 37 years, told his side of the story. Several times, he teared up. He said the whole affair felt "like your spouse was murdered."

Here are some takeaways from the interview.

THE BACKGROUND: Five days before he was fired, on the previous Thursday, the stunning changes were announced. In Simon's place Weiss had installed Bilton, a former tech columnist at the Times and a documentarian with no TV broadcast experience. Though Weiss, who had quickly become a polarizing figure in the industry, had been widely expected to make changes, Pelley says that what he calls "Black Thursday" came as a shock.

THE QUOTE: "No one saw the Black Thursday massacre coming. This is our entire senior staff. Tanya Simon, our boss, she's the first woman ever to be executive producer of '60 Minutes.' And she concluded this season with a growth in our audience of nine percent, which is unheard-of in broadcast television."

THE BACKGROUND: The correspondent heard up several times when describing how close-knit relationships were at the show.

THE QUOTE: "That's a family at



Scott Pelley, anchor of 'CBS Evening News,' at the CBS Upfront in New York, May 15, 2013. (AP)

'60 Minutes'. My colleagues and I have worked together 10, 20, 30 years. We travel together. We dine together. We go into literal combat together. My former boss and former producer Bill Owens saved my life in a firefight in Iraq. So, Lulu, these bonds are pretty tight, and when somebody wipes out, murders, a large number of your family members, people are hurt, and shocked, in disbelief and just desperate for some explanation. And as you and I sit here today, there still has been none."

THE BACKGROUND: Bilton had written an introductory email to the staff. Pelley didn't appreciate it.

THE QUOTE: "It was so insulting ... He told us that it wasn't 1968 anymore, and he helpfully noted that gasoline doesn't cost 32 cents anymore, and suggested that we had all been frozen in amber in 1968 when the program first went on the air, and that nothing had improved."

THE BACKGROUND: Pelley set a scene of a roomful of people "who have devoted their lives to '60 Minutes'" and had received no explanation of what was going on. He says they were waiting for Weiss to elucidate. She didn't attend. Instead, Bilton took out his phone and started reading from it.

THE QUOTE: "Nick makes his way to the front of the room and does some-

thing absolutely jaw-dropping to me. He pulls out his phone and begins reading a statement off his phone in a room full of 50 heartbroken people. The callousness, the tone-deafness of that, you could hear the groan in the room. They put out a big spread of bagels like we were all going to feel better. ... I felt that somebody had to stand up, not just for the broadcast, but for the people. There are people in that room who go to war zones when they are pregnant."

THE BACKGROUND: What happened at the meeting is now widely known, with Pelley challenging Bilton about his qualifications for the job and saying Weiss was "murdering" the show, among other things. Still, he did not think his job was on the line.

THE QUOTE: "Oh gosh, furthest thing from my mind. ... Some reporter I turned out to be. I just didn't connect the dots. I mean, was this meeting (on Monday) contentious? Yes, but '60 Minutes' is known for two things: a ticking stopwatch and hard questions."

THE BACKGROUND: In the story about the deaths of Renee Good and Alex Prettini in confrontations with federal immigration agents in Minneapolis earlier this year, Pelley says that he and colleagues made efforts, on their own, to show examples of how protesters had been aggressive. But Weiss asked for more that he

says he could not give. Ultimately, Pelley simply resisted the changes and the piece went forward.

Asked about the accusation, CBS News responded: "In an email, Bari made four points in the course of editorial back-and-forth. They had no political motivation and were proposed solely to make the piece as strong, fair, and accurate as possible. As is frequently the case in any newsroom that operates with collaboration, not everything she raised made it into the final piece."

THE QUOTE: "We get the piece approved by everyone. And about four hours after our deadline, Bari Weiss sends an email to my boss, Tanya Simon. Two of the things in the email include, 'Can we make the protesters look more violent?' Now, I'm paraphrasing. I don't have the quote, but that's what was communicated to me. And the other thing, Renee Good's car. You need to describe her as driving toward the officer ... This is not what you see on the video. ... But that's how that happened. There was a thumb on the scale for the president's version of events that I felt was a level of political influence that I had never seen in 37 years at CBS News."

THE BACKGROUND: Pelley says in the interview he has not spoken to Lesley Stahl, Jon Wertheim and Bill Whitaker, who have said they decided to stay for now, based on assurances that they can work without interference. But he says he doesn't think those assurances can be trusted. He also suggests that Anderson Cooper, who did not renew his contract for what he said were family reasons, actually was leaving because of the new leadership.

THE QUOTE: "I haven't talked to them. we have had conversations before this about staying to maintain the principles of the broadcast. If we leave, we can't help. There have been other times - when Anderson left, when others were fired - that we could have stormed into a meeting and quit, but those very distinguished correspondents and myself did have conversations about this and decided that we were better working on the inside, and that we could influence things for the better. And we did. And it was my intention to stay and do exactly that. ... (Now) I would venture to say that trust is broken."

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Hollywood directors on Tuesday reached a four-year tentative contract agreement with studios and streaming services.

The deal struck between the Directors Guild of America and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers came four weeks after talks began. The talks were the first under new DGA President Christopher Nolan, who took the job in September.

Along with similar four-year deals - longer than the industry three - ratified in recent weeks by unions representing writers and actors, the

DGA agreement adds to the likelihood of long-term labor peace despite many other industry upheavals.

The collective bargaining agreement must still be approved by the guild's national board, and no details on the terms will be released until then, the DGA said in a statement.

It then must be ratified by the guild membership. But tentative agreements generally win approval at both stages.

The directors' previous contract had been set to expire June 30.

The AMPTP said in a statement that it was pleased to help achieve "a fair deal that helps advance a stable and successful entertainment industry." (AP)

□ □ □

PARIS: French singer and actor Patrick Bruel is in police custody over allegations by at least 13 women of rape, attempted rape and sexual assault, the prosecutor's office in Nanterre said on Tuesday.

Bruel, 67, who has been in police custody since Monday, denies the allegations.

The singer became a major star across the French-speaking world in the 1980s and 1990s with a string of hit songs that became part of French popular culture. He has also appeared in more than 40 film and television productions.

The Nanterre prosecutor's office said in a statement that the investigation began after three women accused Bruel of sexual assault and attempted rape allegedly committed in 1997, 2000 and 2001.

During the investigation, additional women were identified and interviewed. They reported allegations of rape or attempted rape, sexual assault and harassment, according to the statement.

Separately, an investigation opened in western France over an alleged rape in 2012 in Dinard, in the Brittany region, was transferred to the Nanterre prosecutor's office.

Belgian authorities also formally notified French prosecutors earlier this month of allegations by a woman who accused Bruel of rape and sexual assault allegedly committed in Brussels in 2010, according to the statement.

Bruel's lawyers, Christophe Ingrain, Céline Lasek and Fanny Colin said in a statement the singer has indicated for several weeks "he was available to the judicial authorities so that he could finally respond through the proper legal proceedings." (AP)



Liu Xiang, Deputy Head of the Chinese diplomatic mission in Kuwait, delivers a speech.



Attendees and dignitaries observe proceedings during a cultural event marking the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations in Kuwait.



Sheikha Al-Anoud, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Islamic Antiquities delivers a speech.



Hussein Al-Fares, Vice President of the Old Kuwaiti Crafts Association, addresses the audience.



A performer delivers a live artistic performance, adding to the event's cultural atmosphere.



Officials gather around an exhibition table at the cultural event.



Dignitaries and guests attend the 'Arabic and Chinese Calligraphy'.



Guests take a closer look at one of the artworks.

Exhibition blends Arabic and Chinese calligraphy, highlighting cultural exchange and mutual understanding

Kuwait, China celebrate Civilizational Dialogue through art

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): Celebrating the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations, the Old Kuwaiti Crafts Association, in cooperation with the Chinese Cultural Center in Kuwait, organized an event on Tuesday titled "Arabic and Chinese Calligraphy: Harmony of Strings and Ink."

The event, held at the Chinese Cultural Center, included an exhibition of Arabic and Chinese calligraphy, as well as artistic and cultural performances that reflected the values of dialogue, communication, and understanding between civilizations and peoples.

The event brought together the spirit of Arabic calligraphy and traditional Kuwaiti crafts with the aesthetics of ancient Chinese calligraphy and classical music, contributing to highlighting the importance of cultural heritage and strengthening its presence among new generations.

Liu Xiang, Deputy Head of the Diplomatic Mission and Counselor at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Kuwait, explained that despite the geographical distance and cultural differences, China and Kuwait share the values of respecting the diversity of civilizations and supporting equitable exchange and mutual learning.

The cultural and people-to-people exchanges between China and Kuwait are witnessing increasing momentum under the guidance of the leadership of both countries, contributing to shared development and progress and strengthening bilateral relations.

He expressed his country's eagerness to continue working with Kuwait to further broaden bilateral relations.

Xiang noted that several Chinese cities recently hosted art exhibitions



Artists showcase their talents during the event.



Photos by Samer Shiqer

featuring over 100 artworks from the Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah collection, which were widely appreciated by the Kuwaiti public.

He stated that the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations aims to respect the diversity of human civilizations, uphold shared human values, and promote exchange and cooperation among peoples, thereby contributing to overcoming conflicts and achieving coexistence and harmony among different cultures and civilizations.

Xiang highlighted that the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations was unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its 78th session in 2024, based on an initiative proposed by China and more than 80 other countries within the framework of the Global Civilization Initiative launched by the President of the People's Republic of

China, Xi Jinping.

According to a press statement issued by the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Kuwait, hosting the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations is of special significance, due to the intertwining conflicts and ongoing hostilities in the Middle East and the Gulf region.

It highlighted that China-Kuwait relations have developed steadily over the past 55 years since the establishment of diplomatic ties, setting a fine example of mutual respect and equal exchanges among civilizations.

The embassy stressed that the first China Cultural Center in the Gulf region was officially inaugurated in 2025.

It stated, "Through music, dance, and calligraphy from our two countries, and with immersive and interactive experiences, we aim to bring traditional culture closer to the pub-

lic and create a vibrant and accessible platform for cultural exchange. This event is not only a celebration of culture, but also a vivid practice advocating for equality and mutual learning between civilizations. In the future, we hope to work together with our Kuwaiti friends to further deepen people-to-people and cultural exchanges between China and Kuwait, strengthen mutual understanding between our peoples, and push bilateral relations to a new level."

Meanwhile, Hussein Al-Fares, Vice President of the Old Kuwaiti Crafts Association, said this cooperation represents a true bridge connecting the rich heritage of the past with the creativity of the present, reflecting the depth of the historical and cultural ties between the State of Kuwait and the People's Republic of China.

He affirmed that the event combines the aesthetics of ancient Chi-

nese calligraphy, classical music, the spirit of Arabic calligraphy, and traditional Kuwaiti crafts, contributing to highlighting the importance of cultural heritage for new generations.

Al-Fares explained that handicrafts represent a living identity for peoples and a universal language capable of building bridges of communication. Dialogue between civilizations is not limited to intellectual discussions but also extends to the arts and human creativity.

Furthermore, the acting Assistant Secretary-General for Islamic Antiquities at the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) Sheikha Dr. Al-Anoud Ibrahim Al-Sabah, stated that Kuwait and China have succeeded in strengthening the bonds of communication and understanding between the two peoples despite differences in language, customs, and geography.

She affirmed that Kuwait and

China have given great importance to cultural exchange, joint initiatives, and the convergence of shared human values, noting the importance of cultural diplomacy in strengthening relations between countries.

Sheikha Al-Anoud explained that the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations provides an opportunity to reflect on the realities of the world and to promote avenues for human and cultural dialogue. Despite the scientific progress the world is witnessing, it still faces serious challenges, including the rise of hate speech, intolerance, division, and identity-based conflicts.

Emphasizing that dialogue is essential to ensuring a more secure and stable future for generations to come, Sheikha Al-Anoud stated that no civilization can flourish in isolation from interaction with other cultures.

She stressed the importance of supporting cultural initiatives, encouraging education based on openness, and utilizing media and artificial intelligence to disseminate knowledge and boost rapprochement between peoples.

Sheikha Al-Anoud commended the role of Kuwait and the Gulf states in consolidating Arab and Islamic values based on peace, dialogue, and mutual respect, adding that this role is becoming increasingly vital in light of the challenges the world is facing today.

She called for establishing a culture of dialogue as a daily practice that begins within the family, extends to schools and communities, and then to the world at large.

Sheikha Al-Anoud emphasized that the diversity among peoples and cultures represents an opportunity to build a more humane and just world to face the challenges of the future.

Ongoing restoration of a key cultural landmark

UK envoy explores Dickson House heritage site



KUNA photos

The Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the State of Kuwait, Qudsi Rashid, visits (Beit Dickson) and learns about a part of the Kuwaiti-British heritage.

KUWAIT CITY, June 10, (KUNA): UK Ambassador to Kuwait Qudsi Rasheed visited Dickson House, the former residence of the British Political Agent, as part of efforts to strengthen the longstanding cultural and historical ties between Kuwait and the United Kingdom.

The ambassador was accompanied by researcher on Kuwaiti-British relations Issa Dashti and Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Antiquities and Museums

at the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) Mohammad Bin Redha during a tour of the house.

During the visit, the ambassador viewed historical artifacts and documents displayed at the museum that chronicle the era of the British Political Agency in Kuwait. He also received a detailed briefing on NCCAL's efforts to preserve and restore the heritage site as an integral part of Kuwait's historical memory.

Emphasis on quality and impact

Kuwait hosts regional forum for influencers and content creators

KUWAIT, June 10, (KUNA): The Influencers and Content Creators Forum, organized by the Arab Media Forum, opened Wednesday in Kuwait with the participation of content creators, influencers, media professionals and experts.

Arab Media Forum Secretary-General Madi Al-Khamis said the forum, which runs through Thursday, highlights the growing role of influencers in shaping public opinion, raising awareness and supporting development efforts.

He noted that rapid changes in digital media make it important to strengthen dialogue, share expertise and improve the quality and professionalism of Arab digital content.

The forum features discussions on content creation, marketing, communication, cybersecurity, technology, personal branding and self-development, alongside success stories and practical experiences.

It is supported by several institutions and strategic partners, including Kuwait Airways and Zain.

Al-Khamis said Kuwait was chosen to host the event due to its longstanding support for Arab media and



Rezq Tawfiq photo
Madi Al-Khamis, Secretary-General of the Arab Media Forum and President of the Arab Influencers and Content Creators Union, addressed the audience in a speech.

cultural initiatives.

He added that the forum aims to promote responsible content, strengthen collaboration in the digital media sector and empower creators to make a positive impact across Arab societies.



Artemis III crew members Randy Bresnik, Luca Parmitano, Frank Rubio and Andre Douglas wave to the crowd during a news conference at Johnson Space Center on June 9, in Houston. (AP)

NASA unveils Artemis III astronauts to test technology for future moon landing

NEW YORK, June 10, (AP) — NASA on Tuesday revealed the crew for its Artemis III mission, the next step in the space agency's plan to eventually land astronauts on the moon.

The announcement came two months after Artemis II's record-breaking trip around the moon that surpassed the distance record of Apollo 13.

NASA's Randy Bresnik, Frank Rubio, Andre Douglas and the European Space Agency's Luca Parmitano won't fly to the moon or land on the surface. Instead, they'll orbit Earth while practicing docking their Orion capsule with two lunar landers.

"To the Artemis III crew, we wish you Godspeed on the journey ahead," said NASA administrator Jared Isaacman.

Elon Musk's SpaceX and Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin are racing to deliver the lunar landers. The two-week demo is targeted for 2027. Blue Origin suffered a recent setback when its massive rocket exploded during an engine-firing test on the launch pad in Florida, shaking nearby homes and illuminat-



In this image provided by NASA, the Artemis II crew captured this view of an Earthset from April 6, as they flew around the moon. (AP)

ing the sky with an orange fireball.

NASA's Jeremy Parsons said the setback is a learning opportunity and that the space agency is confident Blue Origin's rocket will be ready in time.

NASA's Artemis program aims to return astronauts to the moon's

surface for the first time since the 1970s. A recent revamp of the program announced by Isaacman aims to fast-track it similarly to the Apollo era, adding the upcoming spaceflight around Earth before eyeing a lunar landing in 2028.

'Increase in deaths from ozone attacking lungs'

Wildfires making US smoggy again, reversing progress on cleaner air: study

WASHINGTON, June 10, (AP) — For more than a decade, the United States dramatically reduced its national smog levels, but since 2015 smoke from increasingly larger wildfires is reversing that clean-up trend and making the air dirtier and deadlier, a new study finds.

Scientists say climate change deserves much, but not all, of the blame.

The national smog level dropped by 11% from 2003 to 2015 as strict federal regulations on power plants, cars and diesel engines kicked in. But since then, as wildfires have grown, the nation's average ground level ozone — which is smog — increased by 4%. That means if smoke increases at the current rate, smog will go back up to 2003 levels in 20 years, said study lead author Weizhi Deng, an atmospheric scientist at the University of Iowa.

Study in the journal *Science* also estimated an increase in deaths from ozone attacking lungs, using previously established epidemiology studies that compared death rates in clean and dirty air. They calculated

an increase of 318 American deaths per year since 2013.

"For the last 20 years, by regulations, we keep decreasing the emissions" for human-caused smog-inducing chemicals, said study co-author Meng Zhou, a University of Iowa wildfire researcher. "However, because of wildfires, that is actually from natural hazards, all those kinds of effort were wiped out."

The study was novel in the way it estimated the national smog level, compensating for how the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has a limited number of smog monitors. Those cover only 2% of the nation, mostly in urban areas. So Deng and his colleagues used those observations — along with satellite, pollution and weather data and models — then used artificial intelligence to create a nationwide data set of ozone levels showing smog count at a resolution slightly higher than half a mile (1 kilometer).

EPA figures show the national ozone level since 2015 has vacillated around the same mark, going up



Firefighters are silhouetted amid an operation to control the Sandy Fire on May 19, 2026, in Simi Valley, Calif. (AP)

and down a few percentage points, but Deng said, "by considering everywhere in the U.S., we actually found an increase in ozone starting from 2015."

The method using artificial intel-

ligence is solid because it starts with "massive and reliable datasets," then uses computer models to fill in the gaps in a sensible way to make an "exceptional" high-resolution picture, said University of Delaware en-

vironment professor Cristina Archer, who wasn't part of the study.

Megafire Action's research director and senior policy advisor Teresa Feo said "experts have long called for expanding the air pollution monitoring network to improve research on wildfire smoke exposure and provide the data needed to better protect public health."

For decades, the US tracked six traditional air pollutants, including smog and soot, which are tiny particles. This new study looked only at ozone, while a 2023 study by many of the same team looked at small particle pollution. They found the downward trend in soot levels had similarly reversed. Wildfire smoke increased particle pollution deaths by about 670 per year, the 2023 study found.

Fires don't produce ozone itself, but they release precursor chemicals that become smog when they interact with sunlight, scientists said.

"Higher daily ozone concentrations can increase asthma attacks, hospital admissions, and mortality,"

said University of Washington public health and climate scientist Kristie Ebi. It's not quite as deadly as tiny particles, she said, but it's "still a very important pollutant, which is why it's regulated."

During the heavy wildfire smoke seasons of 2022, 2023 and 2024, much of the fires were in Canada, but the smoke came south. In the US, 43 million people were exposed to smog levels that exceeded the current EPA safety standard, the study found.

And that standard isn't stringent enough, said Dr. Lynn Goldman, former dean of the George Washington University School of Public Health and a former EPA assistant administrator. In 2023, the Biden administration delayed plans to tighten those standards and then the Trump administration changed regulations that consider deaths and health impacts in smog and soot levels.

The biggest increase in ozone levels was in the Northern Rockies, which were near many of the fires, and in the Midwest, where the smoke traveled next, Deng said.



A mother holds her child suffering from cholera at the MSF treatment centre in Maiduguri, Nigeria on June 8. (AP)

Nigeria's Borno state battles cholera outbreak that has killed 74

MAIDUGURI, Nigeria, June 10, (AP) — A cholera outbreak in northeastern Nigeria has killed 74 people and infected more than 7,000 others since it started in early May, medical charity Doctors Without Borders said Tuesday.

The outbreak, reported in 14 of Borno state's 27 local governments, is unfolding in communities with health systems made fragile by nearly two decades of violent extremism from the Boko Haram insurgent group.

The illness is endemic and seasonal in the country, where only 14% of Nigeria's population of more than 200 million have access to safely managed

drinking water supply services, according to government data from 2020.

The situation is sometimes worse in Borno, both in Maiduguri, the state's capital, which is densely populated, and in remote communities with poor sanitation and hygiene due in part to being out of the close reach of health authorities.

The medical group said that it has treated 7,439 cholera patients at its facilities, representing an average of 185 admissions per day. It said that it recorded 500 patients last week on Friday, a single-day record in the outbreak.

United States urges Europe to step up travel measures to prevent spread of Ebola from Africa

WASHINGTON, June 10, (Agencies) — The Trump administration is telling European nations that they need to step up their travel restrictions for people coming to the continent from Ebola-hit countries in Africa, hinting that failure to do so may result in increased US regulations on travel from Europe, including for the World Cup soccer tournament.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Tuesday called European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to convey the concerns and "to discuss US and European coordination and response efforts to the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda," the State Department said in a statement.

"The department's highest priority and focus remain protecting the health of the American people and preventing this Ebola outbreak from reaching our shores," it said.

A State Department official was more blunt, saying the US "has

stepped up" to confront the outbreak and "now the world must do more to step up as well."

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the private call between Rubio and von der Leyen, said it's time for action and that without it, trans-Atlantic travel could be affected.

The official said the US wants to see action that includes financial contributions to combat the disease and "commonsense restrictions on travel from the affected area."

The World Cup tournament opens Thursday in Mexico and unfolds over nearly six weeks, with the United States hosting most of the games.

The Trump administration has banned travelers who have been in one of the affected countries in the previous three weeks from entering the United States and is establishing quarantine procedures for affected American citizens returning home from those places.

SECUNDA, South Africa, June 10, (AP) — Growing up witnessing the devastating effects of HIV in her family and community in South Africa pushed Olwam Plaatjie to start using preventive HIV medications three years ago.

"Sometimes they'd lose weight, they would get sick and have to go to the clinic, and I didn't want that for me," she told The Associated Press. "I'd see the people I live with taking (antiretroviral) pills for HIV every day, and I knew I wouldn't be able to handle that life."

The 19-year-old is one of thousands of South Africans who signed up for clinical trials of lenacapavir, a highly effective, twice-yearly injectable prevention drug that addresses the drawbacks of daily oral prevention pills.

Despite night sweats and other side effects, she is continuing with the medication after South Africa this month became one of the world's first countries to introduce it.

President Cyril Ramaphosa told a stadium crowd at the launch of the drug's rollout that lenacapavir is a "turning point" in South Africa, which carries the highest burden of HIV globally.

But health advocates say the country deserves many more doses after South Africa's central role in the work that brought the promising drug to the world.

Country deserves many more doses: health advocates

South Africa rolls highly effective HIV prevention drug



South African President, Cyril Ramaphosa holds a box of Lenacapavir during the official launch of the drug's rollout programme in Secunda, South Africa on June 5. (AP)

South Africa has over 8 million people living with the virus. It is hoped that lenacapavir will help curb new infections in the country, which range from 140,000 to 170,000 annually.

"If South Africa can deliver it equitably and at scale, it could make a meaningful contribution to reducing new HIV infections," said Leila Mansoor, a senior scientist at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Center for the AIDS Program of Research in South Africa.

Clinical trials in South Africa and Uganda evaluated the efficacy of lenacapavir, which was developed by Gilead Sciences. A crucial study in Johannesburg concluded that a six-month injection demonstrated 100% effectiveness in protecting against HIV.

"It was a groundbreaking finding," said Dr. Nkosi Ndlovu, senior clinician at the research institute Wits RHI.

Now South Africa's government has acquired doses sufficient to cover

456,000 people for a year, funded by a \$29 million Global Fund grant. After that, Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi said South Africa aims to fund its program independently, with help from donors.

Some South African civil society organizations, however, call the rollout plan inadequate, asserting that at least 2 million doses per year are necessary to significantly affect new infection rates.

Ramaphosa has vowed to reach 3 million South Africans over the next three years, but hasn't given details.

There are concerns about access for South Africans despite the country's contribution that made lenacapavir possible, said Tian Johnson, health strategist for the Johannesburg-based health advocacy group African Alliance.

"Our communities participated in the research, our clinics hosted the trials and our scientists helped produce the data," Johnson said. "Yet we are still waiting for Gilead to determine how much of the product we receive, when it arrives and how quickly access can expand."

The health minister has said Gilead committed to granting a voluntary manufacturing license to a South African company following the granting of six licenses to other countries last year.



A health worker stands at a temporary health clinic at the Mpondwe border crossing linking Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo on June 4. (AP)

Artan urges Somali youths to be proud of their country

Somali World Cup referee denied entry to US arrives home to hero's welcome

MOGADISHU, Somalia, June 10, (AP) — A World Cup referee from Somalia who was denied entry to the United States was received by a crowd of supporters and officials as he arrived in Somalia's capital of Mogadishu, where he said he plans to be at the next World Cup and urged Somali youths to be proud of their country.

Omar Artan was set to be the first referee from Somalia to officiate at a World Cup after making FIFA's final list for the tournament. 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. FIFA subsequently cut him

from the tournament's referee list.

Artan was issued a visa to travel to the U.S. last week, according to the Somalia Embassy in Kenya that processed it. U.S. is co-hosting with Mexico and Canada, and Artan was due to meet up with other World Cup referees at their training base in Miami.

He returned to a hero's welcome at the airport in Mogadishu, where he thanked the Somali government and people as well as FIFA for their support for him.

"I promise you, God willing, that I will attend the next one," he said as hundreds of supporters at the airport waved the Somali flag. "I want the Somali public to take comfort in this and remain confident."

The U.S.'s highly unusual move to deny a FIFA-appointed match official permission to enter a World Cup



Referee Omar Artan, center, who was denied entry to the United States, is welcomed by supporters upon his arrival in Mogadishu, Somalia. (AP)

host country drew outrage across the world and raised questions among

some fans about America's capacity to host the competition.

Somalia is one of nearly 40 countries subject to new travel restrictions under the Trump administration's crackdown on immigration.

Hundreds of supporters, government officials and members of Somalia's football community gathered hours before Artan arrived at Aden Adde International Airport at about 8:30 a.m. local time.

As Artan disembarked, supporters waving Somali flags crowded around him before draping him in the flag.

He was then escorted by police officers to the airport's VIP terminal, where he was welcomed by Somalia's Minister of Youth and Sports, officials from the Somalia Football Federation and other dignitaries and spoke to press.

"It is up to all of us to defend the

Somali name," Artan said. "Somalia belongs to us, whether it is in a bad state or a good state. That flag belongs to us, and that passport belongs to us."

In a country where decades of war and the rise of the al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab extremist group has limited the potential of many, Artan's denial brought disappointment to many but reminded some in the country about what is possible if they chase their dreams.

Artan's expected milestone at this year's World Cup "stands no matter what," the World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus wrote Tuesday on X. "You reached the summit of your profession and inspired a generation back home just by getting there, and being kept off the pitch you earned doesn't change that," he added.

Serena makes winning come back in doubles at Queen's Club with Mboko



Serena Williams of the United States, hits a return as she and playing partner Victoria Mboko of Canada play against Nicole Melichar-Martinez of Canada and Erin Routliffe of New Zealand during their first round doubles match at the Queen's Club tennis championships in London. (AP)

Fernandez and Siegemund await in quarterfinals

LONDON, June 10, (AP): After nearly four years away from professional tennis, Serena Williams showed she still has plenty of power to her game as she made a winning return at Queen's Club.

The 44-year-old Williams hit service winners of up to 120 mph and some ferocious winners as she teamed up with 19-year-old Canadian Victoria Mboko to win their opening doubles match at the Queen's Club grass-court tournament.

Williams and Mboko beat third-seeded duo Nicole Melichar-Martinez and Erin Routliffe 7-6 (2), 6-2 in Williams' first professional match since the 2022 U.S. Open. They next face Leylah Fernandez and Laura Siegemund in the quarterfinals.

As if to punctuate that she's back, Williams served out the first-round match with two aces followed by a service winner.

"It was so fun. I had so much fun playing with Victoria," Williams said in an on-court interview. "We've never played together but it just felt so natural playing with her."

Later, though, Williams gave herself a modest grade in her post-

match news conference.

"A C-minus," Williams said, before cutting herself some slack. "With all the elements, considering coming back on grass is probably not the easiest surface. ... Grass, four years. Overall, I think it was decent."

Perhaps more than decent, given the quality of the opposition. Routliffe is a two-time U.S. Open champion in doubles and Melichar-Martinez has made the doubles final at both Flushing Meadows and Wimbledon.

Sure, Williams' performance was uneven, and at times it looked like she may have lost half a step. But it was clear she can still compete at a high level.

Even Williams seemed to be surprised at the quality of her rapid-reaction backhand winner at 4-4 in the first set, laughing as she high-fived Mboko.

Her teenage partner was clearly impressed.

"I thought she was moving great," said Mboko, one of the rising stars on the WTA tour who is already ranked No. 9 in singles. "There was that one shot you hit, remember, you were on the run, on the backhand, and I was like, 'Oh, my gosh, she's got it.'"

The crowd loved it too, from the moment Williams stepped onto the court on a sunny but windy after-

noon.

Williams received a standing ovation as she made her entrance, by far the loudest cheer of the day at the Andy Murray Arena, even from a crowd that had earlier watched British players Emma Raducanu and Katie Boulter secure wins in the singles tournament at the HSBC Championships.

It was Williams' first appearance at Queen's Club, which is nestled among residential blocks near Hammersmith in west London. The club, which held its first championships in 1881, did not stage a women's tournament for more than 50 years before the WTA tour returned to the venue in 2025.

The men's tournament, which starts next week, has long been one of the main grass-court warmup events for Wimbledon and counts Carlos Alcaraz, Andy Murray, Rafael Nadal, Pete Sampras, Boris Becker and John McEnroe among its former winners.

"I never got to play here, it was always just the men," Williams said. "It felt really special to play some place so iconic."

Aside from a sell-out crowd, Williams also drew some celebrity faces to Queen's Club. Her friend Lindsey Vonn, the skiing star whose own comeback ended in a crash at the Milan Cortina Olympics, watched

from one of the balconies.

Williams' two daughters, Olympia and Adira, were also in attendance. For Adira, who was born in 2023, it was the first time watching her mother play a match.

Not that their response to the win was overly enthusiastic, according to Williams.

"Adira wanted to go to the toy store, and Olympia wanted to know what was for dinner," she said.

Williams is also set to play doubles at the Berlin Open in Germany next week. But even after a winning return, she remains undecided when it comes to whether to extend her comeback to Wimbledon, which starts June 29.

"It's just a day at a time," Williams said. "I still have a little time to decide, and they have been great about giving me that space and time to decide."

Williams had not competed since bidding farewell at the 2022 U.S. Open. At the time, she said she didn't want to use the word "retiring" and instead declared that she was "evolving" away from tennis.

Williams won 23 Grand Slam singles titles, including seven at Wimbledon, before stepping away from the game. She also added 14 Grand Slam doubles titles, including six at Wimbledon - all with her older sister Venus Williams.

Birmingham Albion set for WMRL debut after approval

LONDON, June 10: Birmingham Albion FC will compete in the West Midlands Regional League (WMRL) for the first time in its history after receiving official approval from The Football Association for the 2026-27 season.

Tawari Madloul Al-Dhafiri, a member of the club's Development Committee, said an FA inspection team visited the club last week to assess its facilities as part of the admission process.

The inspection covered the training grounds, match venue, dressing rooms, storage areas, and meeting facilities. According to Al-Dhafiri, the club successfully met all required standards, with the committee expressing satisfaction with the quality of the infrastructure.

"The club's facilities have been officially approved and certified as fully compliant with league requirements for hosting competitive matches," Al-Dhafiri said.

He added that the approval marks a significant milestone in the club's development, paving the way for its



Tawari Madloul Al-Dhafiri

transition from amateur football to a more professional level of competition.

Al-Dhafiri noted that Birmingham Albion's stadium can accommodate approximately 2,000 spectators and emphasized that securing league approval was the result of extensive efforts by the club's management and staff.

Looking ahead, he acknowledged the challenges that await in the WMRL, describing it as one of the strongest leagues in the region, while expressing confidence that Birmingham Albion can deliver strong performances and achieve its objectives in the upcoming campaign.

'This election is a win-win'

Eliasch faces re-election vote amid Shiffrin, Odermatt calls for change

GENEVA, June 10, (AP): It's rare in Olympic sports politics for a sitting president to be challenged in an election after just one full term in office.

Rarer still when that leader also has been accepted as a member into the International Olympic Committee.

Johan Eliasch faces a re-election vote Thursday to stay president of the International Ski and Snowboard Federation (FIS) against strong opposition from the Alpine, Nordic and north American heartlands of winter sport.

"Out of 80 voting nations there are about 10 that feel differently," Eliasch told The Associated Press in a recent interview. "The vast majority are on board for what we are trying to achieve."

Eliasch, a billionaire who built the Head sportswear brand, has clashed throughout his presidency with established ski nations who claim his robust management puts the financial stability of FIS at risk.

A dual citizen of Sweden and Britain, Eliasch was not supported by either of those national ski federations to stand for re-election. He complied with FIS rules by getting a passport and nomination from the country of Georgia.

Eliasch had endorsements from ski greats Lindsey Vonn and Aksel Lund Svindal, long-time users of Head skis, when first elected in 2021.

Now this generation's champions Mikaela Shiffrin and Marco Odermatt spoke against the direction FIS is taking.

Eliasch's one opponent on the ballot is Alexander Ospelt, a lawyer from Liechtenstein. Candidates from the United States, Britain and Denmark withdrew ahead of the election meeting in Belgrade, Serbia.

"For me, this election is a win-win," Eliasch told the AP. "If I win, I get to carry on with what I'm the most passionate about, which is ski racing. And if I lose, I get my life back."

The 64-year-old Eliasch acknowledges he rushed to bring change: "I don't have 25 years to devote to this."

He brought control in-house of commercial rights to FIS events like world championships and World Cup circuits, leading to legal action and frustrated member federations.

"We had a lot of cash in the bank, we invested that. Put the money to work," he told the AP, citing purchases of the Freeride World Tour, a travel agency and developing digital content to increase ski sports' global reach.

Eliasch claims FIS achieved more in five years than the previous 100 but could have been faster. "I haven't been tough enough. I've tried to be too diplomatic in many cases and that has backfired."

Eliasch's critics say he has been too autocratic, lacked transparency and that FIS spent too much.

A group of senior officials from the U.S., Canada, Switzerland, Aus-



In this file photo, candidate to the presidency of the International Olympic Committee Johan Eliasch arrives at the mixed zone during a break of the 144th session, which will elect the new IOC President, in Costa Navarino, western Greece. (AP)

tria, Germany and Norway wrote to FIS member federations last month detailing concerns.

"Cash reserves have declined substantially, annual operating costs have increased significantly, and revenues have not developed as anticipated," they wrote in a letter seen by the AP.

FIS created a new CEO role last year and hired one of Eliasch's 2021 election opponents, Swiss former downhill world champion Urs Lehmann. He quit last week.

Eliasch's long-held goal is to close the massive earnings gap between skiing and tennis, Head's core sports.

"We haven't seen any significant changes based on much of what was promised, including intentions around prize money," Shiffrin said in a statement during the FIS presidential campaign. "In fact, in the coming years, it seems that FIS's contribution to prize money will actually decrease."

American freestyle skier Alex Hall, a two-time Olympic medalist, agreed: "I have been advocating for change over the past five years and can honestly say not much has changed."

Odermatt, the Swiss standout in men's Alpine skiing, suggested "there is little choice but to make a change" atop FIS.

"Marco's comments I don't think are reflective of the general mood of the athletes," Eliasch insisted.

Ospelt is a member of the FIS Council. His election program stresses a "realistic and transparent financial plan," plus better knowledge sharing for member federations.

"I want to really have the impression that we are a family, taking care of each other, and growing to be more of an international world sport," Ospelt said Tuesday in a Zoom interview. "It's more sexy for the sport if we have medal winners from 80 nations and not a Swiss, Austrian or German championship."

His aim is to involve more athletes across all the disciplines, adding "if something is not OK, then the athlete should raise their voice. It's a sign that something has to be changed and I just want to be an alternative for change."

Minnesota makes it eight straight over Dallas

CHICAGO, June 10, (AP): Angel Reese had 17 points and 17 rebounds in the first regular-season matchup against her former team. Rhyne Howard also scored 17 points, and the Atlanta Dream beat the Chicago Sky 82-75.

Reese, who returned to Chicago where she was drafted No. 7 overall in 2024, secured her eighth double-double of the season with six minutes left in the third quarter. Her 57 career double-doubles are the most through 75 games in WNBA history.

Howard eclipsed 2,500 career points and became the youngest player in WNBA history to record 2,500 points, 500 rebounds, 500 assists, 200 steals and 100 blocks. Naz Hillmon finished with 16 points and Allisha Gray, who was held to two points in the first half, added 14 for Atlanta (8-3). Jordin Canada also scored 14 points.

Lynx 100, Wings 76

In Minneapolis, Rookie Olivia Miles had 24



Minnesota Lynx guard Courtney Williams (10) drives past Dallas Wings guard Arike Ogunbowale (24) in the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Minneapolis. (AP)

points, seven rebounds and six assists, Kayla McBride added 22 points, and Minnesota used a

big first half to cruise past Dallas for their eighth straight victory.

Natasha Howard scored 21 points and Courtney Williams added 16 for Minnesota (10-2), which became the first WNBA team to reach 10 wins this season. McBride made four of Minnesota's seven 3-pointers.

Valkyries 87, Mercury 81

In San Francisco, Veronica Burton scored 19 of her 25 points in the first half as Golden State quickly built a big lead and also dished out eight assists, Gabby Williams added 25 points, and the Valkyries held off Phoenix for a win.

Burton made 5 of her 7 shots in the initial two quarters and finished 7 for 15 from the floor. Janelle Salaun contributed 11 points and five rebounds off the bench for the Valkyries, who shot 57.1% on the way to a 49-32 lead at intermission and 44.3% for the game.



Argentina forward Lionel Messi (10) gets control of the ball as Iceland midfielder Kristian Hlynsson (20) defends during the second half of an international friendly soccer match in Auburn, Ala. (AP)

Messi scores as Argentina beats Iceland in final tune-up

Lionel Messi is ready for his sixth World Cup.

After recovering from a muscle injury, the captain of the reigning world champions played 20 minutes and scored a penalty in Argentina's 3-0 victory over Iceland in its final tune-up match before the World Cup.

Messi, recovered from muscle fatigue and a slight strain in his left hamstring that he suffered in his last appearance with Inter Miami on May 24, started the game from the bench.

Just days before his 39th birthday and his sixth World Cup, Messi came on in the 70th minute and he scored a penalty kick after Lautaro

Martínez was fouled inside the area.

Messi, the all-time top scorer for the Argentine national team with 117 goals, converted the penalty with a high left-footed shot in the 72nd minute.

Argentina, seeking its fourth World Cup title after those won in 1978, 1986, and 2022, will open its tournament against Algeria on June 16 in Kansas City in Group J, which also includes Austria and Jordan.

It was the second match between the two nations. The first one was at the 2018 World Cup, when the European side managed a 1-1 draw in which Messi missed a penalty. (AP)

Pochettino says no Americans among top 100 players yet US can win WCup

'Goalkeeping is definitely a concern'

WASHINGTON, June 10, (AP): Mauricio Pochettino was blunt in his assessment of American soccer talent.

"We are USA and competing against Belgium, Portugal," the U.S. coach said after a pair of March losses in friendlies. "I think for sure Belgium and Portugal have in the top 100 players few, or some players playing in that top 100. I think we don't have."

No Americans were listed among the top 100 when The Guardian published its annual list in December. Christian Pulisic was 116th in the voting by a panel of 219 former players, coaches, technical staff and media. Tim Weah was next at 183rd.

Spain placed 14 in the top 100, France 10, Brazil and England nine each, and Argentina and Portugal eight apiece.

"I don't think our talent is far -- or much less than any other country in my humble opinion," retired American forward Jozy Altidore said. "I think we're just as talented. So for me, I'm that crazy guy. I believe and I know the players believe, but, why not? Why not us?"

U.S. players and staff are thinking big, hoping the red-white-and-blue can win its first World Cup title or at least reach the semifinals for the first time since 1930.

Americans still have to prove themselves to much of the soccer world.

"We want to do this for ourselves. We want to do this for



United States' head coach Mauricio Pochettino talks with members of the media as he arrives with his teammates for the World Cup soccer tournament in Santa Ana, Calif. (AP)

our own country. We don't need to prove to anyone else," Pulisic said. "We have good players, really good players playing in top clubs in the world. We have a good team and, yeah, we're going to do the best we can to prove ourselves right now more than anything."

Tyler Adams, the captain in 2022 and the team's top defensive midfielder, sees the goal as to go as far as any team has before.

"It's just been a while, I feel like, since we've knocked off a big boy," he said. "I think we need to try and find that in our character and I think that will."

Dreams and reality have collided for the U.S. in the World Cup. The Americans are 1-7 in World Cup knockout games, their only win over regional rival Mexico in

2002 before a quarterfinal loss to Germany.

Since then, they lost in the round of 16 in 2010, 2014 and 2022, failed to advance from the group stage in 2006 and didn't even qualify for 2018.

Despite the lack of pedigree, Pochettino told players in March they can win the title.

"Why not us? Why not us? Why not us?" he said. "We need to really believe that we can be there. We need to dream."

Pulisic in 2021 became the first American to play in and win a European Champions League final, helping Chelsea to the title. He is one of six American World Cup-bound players on clubs ranked among the top 40 by UEFA coefficient, spending the past three sea-

sons with No. 30 AC Milan.

That list includes midfielder Malik Tillman (No. 9 Bayer Leverkusen), midfielder Weston McKennie (No. 25 Juventus), defender Sergiño Dest and forward Ricardo Pepi (No. 26 PSV Eindhoven) and defender Alex Freeman (No. 39 Villarreal).

Goalkeeper, once an American strength with Kasey Keller, Brad Friedel and Tim Howard all starting for English teams, is now a weakness. This will mark the first time a Major League Soccer goalkeeper appears for the U.S. at a World Cup.

"Goalkeeping is definitely a concern," said former American midfielder Stu Holden, now a Fox commentator. "We haven't had a standout goalkeeper now for a number of years, but yet you have an opportunity to change the perception of who you are by one tournament."

Matt Freese, the likely starter, made his international debut last June and has just 15 appearances.

"Not really, not really listening to anyone outside of the guys with me and the coaching staff," he said.

The U.S. team often plays home games in front of crowds with a majority cheering on the opponent, which happened during games against Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Morocco, South Korea and Turkey.

"Americans are some type of fans that show out and show up for the big things even if they don't love soccer," McKennie said. "Any big event, we know how to put on a show and we know to show up, so I think it's a huge advantage."

'Brimming with confidence'

Olise could be France's attacking star

PARIS, June 10, (AP): It might not be Kylian Mbappé or Ballon d'Or holder Ousmane Dembélé lighting up France's attack at the World Cup.

Instead, it could be the discreet and unassuming Michael Olise, with his golden first touch and devastating changes of direction.

Starting when two-time champion France takes on Senegal on June 16 in New Jersey.

The Bayern Munich winger enters the tournament in fine form after netting a superb hat trick against Northern Ireland on Monday, taking his total to seven in 17 games for Les Bleus.

Coach Didier Deschamps fielded his first-choice side and it was Olise who stood out most in a glittering attack featuring Mbappé, Dembélé and rising star Désiré Doué.

"He's been shining brightly this season at Bayern and he's done great things for us. He's brimming with confidence, he's so decisive," Deschamps said of Olise. "On top of that, as an attacking player he also has a remarkable capacity for hard work."

After two finishes inside the penalty area, Olise curled a brilliant shot into the top left corner after breaking inside from the right flank with one of his sudden switches of play.

He does it so deftly and quickly that it has become his signature move and helped the 24-year-old score 22 goals for Bayern this season.

Deschamps said Olise impressed him at the 2024 Paris Olympics. There, he was coached by Thierry Henry - the France and Arsenal great - and Olise's two goals and five assists helped Les Bleus reach the final.

Olise called the Paris Games "the best football experience of my life" because they "allowed people to get to know me." He praised Henry for sharing his vision of the game.

But when Olise stepped up to the senior side, Deschamps said it took him "four or five" games to show his true potential because he was shy.

"He's not a very expressive character. He's rather introverted, but he's very endearing," Deschamps said.

Olise's first international goal came on his sixth appearance, and it showcased his ability as he bent a free kick into the



In this file photo, France's Michael Olise runs with the ball during a men's Group A soccer match between Guinea and France at Nice Stadium at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Nice, France. (AP)

top corner against Croatia in the 2025 Nations League.

Born in London, Olise began his professional career with Reading after being released by Chelsea and Manchester City.

While playing for Reading in the second-tier Championship he was named the English Football League's young player of the season.

He joined Premier League side Crystal Palace in 2021, and three seasons with Palace were enough to convince Bayern to sign him in a deal worth 60 million euros (\$65 million).

Olise added goal-scoring to his superb range of passing and in two seasons at the German giant he's netted 42 goals in 107 games, albeit in an extremely attack-minded team.

Olise's goals took the spotlight off another mediocre performance from Mbappé, who also failed to score in a 2-1 home loss to Ivory Coast last Thursday.

"It's true that he had several chances and wasn't efficient," Deschamps said.

Mbappé has 56 international goals and needs two more to beat Olivier Giroud's France record.

"He told me he's holding back for the United States," Deschamps said with a smile. "So that suits me."

Netherlands fans celebrate World Cup

A street in The Hague is drenched in orange

THE HAGUE, Netherlands, June 10, (AP): As the clock ticks down to the Netherlands' opening World Cup match, soccer fans are gripped once more by orange fever.

Nowhere is the mood of euphoric optimism that descends on parts of this country every time its national team plays at a World Cup more glaringly obvious than on the Marktweg in The Hague, where the local community comes together to crush as much orange as possible into virtually every square inch of their street.

From the thousands of tiny flags fluttering above the road to the facades of houses, trees and streetlights, everything is orange, apart from the few places that choose to display the red, white and blue of the Netherlands' flag.

Depictions of lions - another national symbol - abound, many of them wearing the striking orange soccer shirt of the team known simply as "Oranje" - the Dutch word for orange.

Over the years, this epicenter of orange has become a popular destination for fans and an event that draws together neighbors who spend weeks transforming their street.

"So far, we haven't encountered anyone who said 'we don't like it' or complain about it," organizer Danny van Dijk told The Associated Press on a visit Tuesday. "Up to now, we've only heard positive things."

In a nod to an accommodation option often chosen by Dutch soccer fans, a single small red, white and blue caravan stands at an intersection surrounded by orange mesh and carrying a banner identifying it as the "Hague Orange Campsite."

It will become a focal point for fans who aren't traveling to the United States, where the Netherlands opens its Group F campaign against Japan on Sunday in Dallas, then plays Sweden in Houston on June 20 and completes its group stage against Tunisia six days later in Kansas City.

The country's king, queen and crown princess will be in Houston for the Sweden match - and will watch Curaçao, which is part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, play Ecuador. The national color is a consequence of the royals' family name - Oranje-Nassau.

For a small nation of some 18 million, the Netherlands has often punched above its weight at the World Cup, reaching the final three times - 1974, 1978 and 2010 - but never winning the title.

If there were a world cup for street decorators, the residents of Marktweg would be serious contenders.

"The street is beautifully decorated. All that orange. That must have been a huge task," said Rob van Rosmalen, an amateur photographer who visited the street Tuesday. "And it's great that all the neighbors are working together like that seems to me that's good for the neighborhood atmosphere."

Team making ninth World Cup appearance

Paraguay fans eager for long-awaited return, in country they now call home

WASHINGTON, June 10, (AP): When the first World Cup match in the U.S. kicks off, most eyes will be on the host country's home team. But for the small community of Paraguayans living in the U.S., it's a moment in the spotlight for their own treasured team, returning to the tournament after a 16-year absence.

Paraguayans fans across the United States have been planning barbecues and get-togethers to watch the team's group stage matches. While many balked at the prices for Friday's match against the U.S., with seats selling for more than \$1,000 each, some have already bought tickets to later matches.

Santiago Araujo, 32, is among them. His family owns one of the few Paraguayan restaurants in the U.S., in the seaside town of Pacific Grove, California. He and his brother scored tickets to see the team take on Australia in Santa Clara, California, about 80 miles (129 kilometers) away.

"Every Paraguayan I know wants to go," said Araujo, who moved to California with his family when he was 11. "It's not like there's seasons of any other sports in Paraguay. I used to sleep with a soccer ball as my toy."

There are some 37,000 Paraguayans living in the U.S., according to Census estimates, and they're eager for the team's long-awaited return to FIFA's prized tournament. It's the first time Paraguay has clinched a World Cup spot since

2010, when it had its best performance, reaching the quarterfinals. The team, which FIFA currently ranks 40th in the world, is making its ninth World Cup appearance.

The U.S. and Paraguay are joined in Group D by Turkey and Australia, which Paraguay will respectively face on June 19 and June 25 in Santa Clara.

One of Paraguay's veteran players, midfielder Miguel Almirón, plays for the MLS' Atlanta United. At 32, he remembers watching that 2010 World Cup as a kid with hopes that someday he, too, would have the opportunity to play on soccer's biggest stage.

It's been a long wait.



Paraguay's fans cheer prior to an international friendly soccer match against Nicaragua in Asuncion, Paraguay. (AP)

"It's going to be something beautiful in that moment, not just for me, but also for my family and for all the Paraguayan fans, and for anyone who's been with us through all the tough moments," Almirón said recently, thinking ahead to the first match. "There are going to be a lot of emotions at that moment. We take it on with responsibility, because we know so many people are depending on us."

Paraguay is among South America's less populous countries, with about 7 million people. Landlocked, it's surrounded by Argentina, Bolivia and Brazil and known for vast savannas, lush landscapes and the indigenous Guarani culture. In the U.S., more concentrated Paraguayan communities can be found in New York and the affluent town of Bernardsville, New Jersey, which Paraguay's President Santiago Peña visited in 2024.

To cheer on the team, Paraguay fans will don their red-and-white jerseys and tubular top hats. In Northern California, Cafe Guarani, which Araujo's family owns, is hosting a celebration to bring together Paraguayan fans between the games with traditional dishes that include manioc empanadas and iced yerba mate. In the Queens borough of New York, they'll gather at the I Love Paraguay Restaurant to watch the games.

Ana Di Sessa, of New Jersey, said she'd love to attend the matches in California but it's too much of a trip.

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KUNA photo
Burgan player is sandwiched between two Al-Khaleej players as he goes for a shot during the Asian Men's Club League Handball Championship in Kuwait.

Sports

Burgan suffers first loss at Asian Club Championship

Kuwait Club hosts champs delegations

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: Burgan suffered its first defeat of the Asian Men's Club League Handball Championship, narrowly losing 26-25 to Saudi Arabia's Al-Khaleej in a closely contested preliminary-round match.

The loss leaves the Kuwaiti side with five points from four matches, having recorded two wins, one draw, and one defeat. Burgan consequently slipped to second place in the standings, while Al-Khaleej strengthened its grip on the top spot with seven points from three victories and a draw.

The competition resumes today with the fifth round of fixtures. Qatar's Al-Arabi will take on Bahrain's Al-Najma at 4:00 p.m., before attention turns to an all-Kuwaiti showdown between hosts Kuwait Club and Burgan at 6:00 p.m. The round concludes with UAE side Al-Sharjah facing Qatar's Al-Duhail at 8:00 p.m.

As part of the activities accompanying the tournament, Kuwait Club hosted a luncheon for club presidents, official delegations, and media representatives participating in the championship.

The event was attended by honorary club president Marzouq Al-Ghanim, chairman Khaled Al-Ghanim, members of the board of directors, officials from the Asian and Kuwait Handball Federations, and heads of participating delegations.

During the gathering, club officials welcomed the guests and reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring a comfortable and professional environment for all participants, reflecting Kuwait's reputation as a successful host of major continental sporting events.

The luncheon provided an opportunity for officials, delegation members, and journalists to strengthen relationships and exchange views in a friendly atmosphere that highlighted the unity of the Asian handball family.

Guests praised the warm hospitality, high organizational standards, and welcoming environment provided by Kuwait Club and the organizing committee, emphasizing that the positive atmosphere surrounding the tournament



Special luncheon for visiting delegations.

reflects the significant efforts being made to deliver a successful championship on and off the court.

The initiative forms part of a broader program of activities designed to

encourage interaction among participating delegations and promote the values of respect, cooperation, and fair play that lie at the heart of the Asian Club Championship.

Kuwait ice hockey team wraps up training camp

DUBAI, June 10: The Kuwait national ice hockey team has completed its training camp in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, as preparations intensify for the 4th International Ice Hockey Tournament of the Islamic Countries Forum, set to be held in Kazan, Russia, from June 20 to 24.

Head of delegation and President of the Kuwait Winter Games Club, Fahed Al-Ajmi, said the three-week camp featured a demanding training schedule, with players taking part in three sessions daily to enhance both their technical and physical readiness ahead of the competition.

Al-Ajmi noted that the team benefited from three friendly matches against UAE sides Dubai Camels, Galaxy, and Abu Dhabi Storm, with the encounters helping improve team cohesion and match fitness.

He expressed confidence in the squad's ability to produce strong performances and achieve positive results in the upcoming tournament, while praising the continued



KUNA photo
Players pose for the camera before training session.

support provided by Minister of State for Youth Affairs Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma, the Kuwait Olympic Committee, and the Public Authority for Sports. He added that such backing plays a key role in advancing winter sports in Kuwait and expanding their popularity across the country.

'Mourinho has agreed a move to Real after Arbeloa departure announced'

MADRID, June 10, (AP): Benfica said that its coach José Mourinho had agreed to return to Real Madrid, which earlier announced that it had parted ways with coach Álvaro Arbeloa.

Madrid President Florentino Pérez had vowed to bring Mourinho back as part of his campaign promises that led to his re-election on Sunday.

In a note to shareholders, Benfica said that Madrid had formally agreed to pay Benfica 15 million euros (\$17.3 million) for Mourinho with the Portuguese coach agreeing to the move.

Benfica added: "Thank you, José Mourinho."

Madrid has made no official announcement.

Benfica said it had agreed a two-year deal with former Fulham manager Marco Silva to replace Mourinho, with the option of an extra year.

Mourinho, who was featured in promotional material for Pérez during the campaign, would be back for a second stint at Madrid. He coached the club from 2010-2013.

Arbeloa's departure was already expected and he had talked about it at the end of the season.

Madrid said Tuesday it was "deeply grateful" to Arbeloa, "who throughout his career at the club, from the time he joined our academy, has always demonstrated loyalty, commitment, and professionalism."

Arbeloa took over the helm in January to replace Xabi Alonso amid the team's struggles.

Arbeloa was not able to put Madrid back on track and the club endured a second straight season without a major trophy.

Last month, Arbeloa gave his blessing to former boss Mourinho's return to Madrid, saying he would "be happy to see him back home."

Arbeloa played for Madrid when Mourinho was in charge of the club - a tumultuous time in which Madrid won Spanish league and Copa del Rey titles but was overshadowed by Pep Guardiola's great Barcelona side. Mourinho's abrasive attitude to opponents like Guardiola as well as some of his own players turned off many in Spain. He also had his faithful backers, like Arbeloa and some hardcore fans.

Arbeloa saw Madrid struggle toward the end of the season and watched some of his players get into altercations during training. The team was eliminated by Bayern Munich in the Champions League and couldn't catch up with Barcelona in the Spanish league.

Pérez's campaign promises included a high-profile signing. On Tuesday, the club said that city rival Atletico Madrid rejected an offer of 150 million euros (\$173 million) for Argentina forward Julián Álvarez.

FIFA World Cup kicks off under global spotlight

NEW YORK, June 10 (KUNA): Soccer fans around the world will turn their attention on Thursday to the start of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, which will be jointly hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

The tournament marks the largest edition in World Cup history and will run until July 19, featuring 48 national teams for the first time.

The opening match will take place at Mexico City's iconic Azteca Stadium, where Mexico will face South Africa.

Under the new format, the 48 teams are divided into 12 groups of four. The top two teams from each group, along with the eight best third-placed teams, will advance to the Round of 32.

Matches will be staged across 16 cities in the three host nations - 11 in the United States, three in Mexico, and two in Canada. The United States will host the majority of the fixtures, including the final stages of the tournament.

Mexico City will host World Cup matches for the third time, having previously staged games in 1970 and 1986. Canada, meanwhile, will host the tournament for the first time, marking a historic milestone.

The expanded edition will feature 104 matches, up from 64 in previous tournaments that included 32 teams.

FIFA has allocated record prize money of around USD 871 million for this edition, the largest in the tournament's history.

The World Cup winners will receive USD 50 million, while the runners-up and third-place finishers will earn USD 33 million and USD 29 million respectively.

Brazil remains the most successful nation in World Cup history with five titles, followed by Germany and Italy with four each, Argentina with three, and France and Uruguay with two apiece.



FIFA President Gianni Infantino holds the World Cup trophy as he makes comments during the opening ceremony of the International Broadcast Center in Dallas. (AP)

Defending champion Argentina won the 2022 World Cup in Qatar after defeating France on penalties in the final.

A record eight Arab nations will compete, marking the largest Arab representations in the tournament's history.

Morocco heads in to the competition carrying the hopes of both Arab and Africa after its historic run to the semifinals at the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

Egypt returns for its fourth World Cup campaign after previous appearances in 1934, 1990 and 2018. The Pharaohs, who were the first Arab and African nation to compete at the World Cup, will face Belgium, Iran and New Zealand in Group G.

Algeria will feature in the tournament for the

fifth time, having previously qualified in 1982, 1986, 2010 and 2014. Their best performance came in Brazil 2014 when they reached the Round of 16. Algeria has been placed in Group J with defending champions Argentina, Austria and Jordan.

Jordan, meanwhile, will make its long-awaited World Cup debut after years of steady progress on the international stage. The Nashama will share Group J with Argentina, Algeria and Austria, with the Algeria-Jordan clash set to be the first all-Arab encounter of the tournament.

Tunisia will make its seventh World Cup appearance, continuing its consistent presence among football's elite. The Carthage Eagles will be aiming to reach the knockout rounds for the first time as they take on the Netherlands, Sweden and Japan in Group F.

Saudi Arabia also returns for a seventh World Cup campaign. The Green Falcons, whose best result remains a Round of 16 appearance in 1994, face a difficult task in Group H against Spain, Uruguay and Cape Verde.

Iraq is back on football's biggest stage for the first time since its lone previous appearance in Mexico in 1986. The Lions of Mesopotamia have been drawn into a challenging group featuring France, Senegal and Norway.

Qatar will participate in its second consecutive World Cup after debuting as hosts in 2022. The Qataris are seeking their first World Cup victory and a maiden qualification to the knockout stage. They will compete in Group B alongside Canada, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Switzerland.

With eight representatives spread across the tournament, Arab football will enjoy unprecedented visibility on the global stage as the region looks to build on Morocco's historic achievement in Qatar four years ago.

Al-Shabab, Al-Jahra open Round 18 as league returns

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 10: The Zain Premier League resumes today following a 10-day international break, with Al-Shabab taking on Al-Jahra in the lone fixture of Round 18 at Al-Ahmadi Stadium.

The round will continue tomorrow with Kuwait SC facing Al-Salmiya and Al-Nasr meeting Kazma, before concluding on Friday with the much-anticipated derby between Al-Qadsia and Al-Arabi. Al-Tadamon will also square off against Al-Fahaheel.

Kuwait Club remains firmly on top of the standings with 43 points, 12 ahead of nearest challenger Al-Qadsia. Al-Arabi occupies third place with 29 points, level with Al-Salmiya but ahead on head-to-head record. Kazma sit fifth on 27 points, while Al-Fahaheel is sixth with 21.

Al-Nasr holds seventh place with 16 points, one ahead of both Al-Shabab and Al-Tadamon. At the bottom of the table, Al-Jahra has collected just eight points from their campaign.

Tonight's encounter carries major significance for both sides. Al-Jahra enters the match determined to avenge their 2-1 defeat to Al-Shabab in the first phase of the season

and keep alive its slim hopes of avoiding relegation. Victory is essential for the struggling side, while any other result would officially condemn them to the First Division.

Al-Shabab, meanwhile, is chasing its first win in eight matches. Its most recent victory

came against Al-Jahra earlier in the season, after which it endured six defeats and two draws. A positive result would also boost its chances of climbing back to seventh place after slipping to ninth following a disappointing run of form.



Players battling for the ball during Zain Premier League match.