'Dedicate yourselves to Kuwait security, stability' Page 3

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Amir receives Justice Minister, Education Minister, officials

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait on Monday, who introduced the newly-appointed Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice Awatif Abdullatif Al-Sanad.

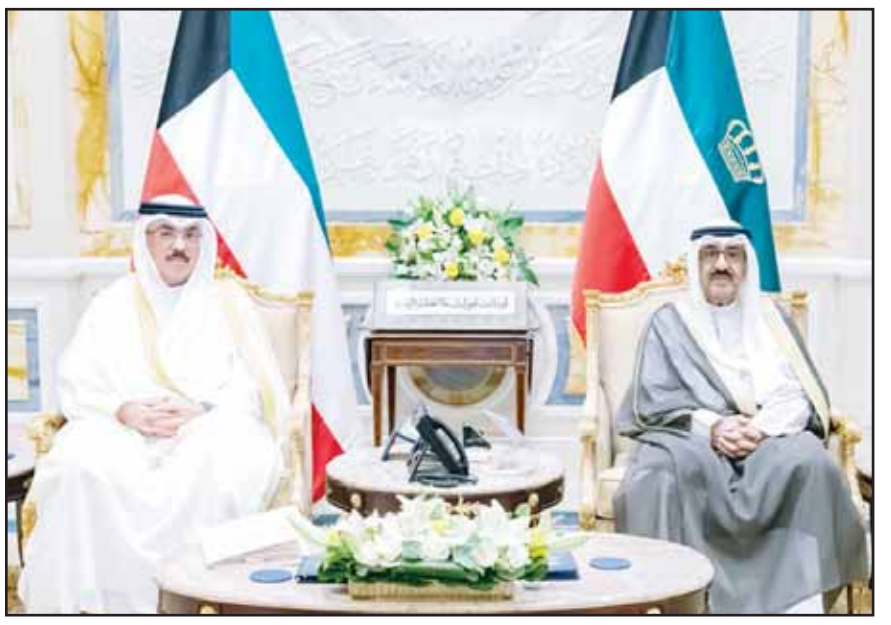
His Highness the Amir also received Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei and senior Ministry of Education officials on Monday.

During the meeting, they presented a report on the first-round examinations for the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year for 10th, 11th and 12th grade students.

His Highness congratulated the officials on the successful conclusion of the current academic year, commending the efforts of all Ministry of Education personnel, particularly teachers, whom he described as the cornerstone of the educational process.

His Highness also outlined directives aimed at advancing the education sector, stressing the importance of field follow-up to identify and address challenges, early preparations for the upcoming academic year through the qualification of educational staff and the readiness of schools and facilities.

Continued on Page 5



Amiri Diwan photos

Left: HH the Amir receives Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait and newly-appointed Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice Awatif Abdullatif Al-Sanad. Right: HH the Amir receives Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei.

COMMUNITY SERVICE NEW LANE FOR TRAFFIC OFFENDERS

Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Tehran is living a mirage and will soon wake up to a bitter reality

ORCHESTRATED crowds cannot build strength and threats aimed at neighbors cannot help a country win a war. The crowds we saw in Iran at Khamenei's funeral are merely a cosmetic attempt to beautify an ugly face of the regime, which will not benefit from displaying false power. The past few months exposed how weak this regime is.

Here, I remember Adolf Hitler, who adopted the Nazi project from the moment he came to power in Germany, relying on an unrealistic vision. The situation is quite similar to what is happening in Iran. It seems that the shared Aryan race between Germans and Persians carries the genes of delusions of grandeur. Both followed the same path, with Hitler allying with the fascists and establishing proxies in several European countries. When Hitler invaded Poland, his plan began to unravel, resulting in the death of about 70 million people and the devastation of the entire European continent.

The countries that allied with Hitler ended with the same fate and shared his crushing defeat that culminated in the Führer's suicide and the hanging of the Italian Il Duce, along with other leaders who pursued genocide.

Racist states, regardless of their form or nature, carry within them the seeds of their own destruction. The world does not accept racial supremacy, which invariably leads to war. Therefore, what transpired during the six years of World War II was sufficient to alter the world's perception of Germany, which continued to pay compensation until recently for Hitler's crimes against humanity. The same should apply to Iran for the atrocities committed by its regime against humanity.

According to figures circulating in reliable reports, the victims of repression, in addition to the human losses in the Iran-Iraq War, reached about 1.1 million people as of last year. This number does not include the victims who fell during Iran's intervention in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria and Yemen, and the terrorist crimes perpetrated by the proxies of Iran around the world. Hence, it is imperative to hold the Iranian regime accountable for what it inflicted upon the world and its own people.

The massive turnout at Ali Khamenei's funeral, in which the proxies attended, dressed in black and the crying Hezbollah and Houthi delegations, along with leaders of Iraqi factions, do not reflect their love for Khamenei. Rather, they express their feelings about what awaits these figures in the coming months. The upcoming months are likely to see a declared dispute over power, especially given the absence of key figures from the mourning ceremonies.

If western reports are accurate regarding the reason behind Mojtaba Khamenei's absence from the funeral of his father, it clearly indicates that the regime is terrified of the moment the truth is revealed.

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Kuwait reroutes traffic penalties

Alternative road to redemption

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, issued Ministerial Decree No. 895/2026 amending certain provisions of Ministerial Decree No. 81/1976 concerning the Executive Regulations of the Traffic Law, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The decree outlines the mechanisms for implementing alternative penalties for traffic violations, effective from the date of its publication in the official gazette - Kuwait Al-Youm.

Published in Monday's edition of the official gazette, the decree amends Article 212-bis of the Executive Regulations, establishing a regulatory framework for alternative penalties that the court may impose instead of imprisonment. These alternatives include community service, participation in awareness, rehabilitation, and training programs and lectures, as well as compensation for damages resulting from the crime.

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Day by Day

A PERSON who has suffered great injustice says with a clear conscience, "Do not seek revenge against those who have wronged you. Instead, watch from a distance and see what fate has in store. Fate has its own way of settling accounts. God may grant respite, but He never neglects. Life has its ups and downs, and the judgment of Almighty God is never mistaken.

What matters is that you are the one who was wronged and that your right remains. Equally important is that you are not the wrongdoer. Be patient, remain optimistic, and continue striving for justice by the will of your Lord."

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Ministry of Public Works photo

Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan during an inspection tour on the Seventh Ring Road.

Heavy haul under watch

'Weigh in Motion' goes live

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan confirmed the implementation of the 'Weigh in Motion' system on the Seventh Ring Road when she visited the project site recently.

This project is part of the road maintenance contracts, with a plan to expand to new locations on various roads that experience high truck

Continued on Page 5

Gang busted

Wire-to-riches dream shatters

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Officers from the Criminal Investigation General Department at the Interior Ministry arrested a gang, consisting of Kuwaitis and Arab and Asian residents, involved in the theft of 400 tons of marine cables, which belong to Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) in Ahmadi.

According to the ministry, investigations revealed that one of the gang members exploited his position at the company, when he erased the serial numbers of the cables and forged documents to release the cables.

Another member of the gang impersonated an engineer to market the stolen goods, while the other purchased the cables and resold them at Amghara scrap yard using forged documents.

Continued on Page 5

Justice Ministry unveils 1st digital penal order platform

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Minister of Justice Nasser Yousef Al-Sumait announced the launching of the first phase of the electronic system for litigation related to penal orders, emphasizing that it is the first system of its kind in Kuwait to issue rulings electronically.

Al-Sumait stated that penal orders are considered a streamlined legal track for resolving minor criminal cases, which can be settled through the payment of fine only, indicating that these cases include traffic violations. He said this eliminates the need for traditional trial procedures, while preserving the right of the person against whom the penal order is issued to appeal it according to the law.

He revealed that the Ministry of Interior electronically transferred around 683,000 penal orders related to traffic violations committed during the years 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 to the Ministry of Justice through the new system. He pointed out that this number reflects the scale of such process within the criminal justice system and the need for electronic tools for handling them quickly and accurately.

Nasser Al-Sumait, Minister of Justice

He explained that these orders will be processed through the new electronic system -- from receiving the request and reviewing it to issuing the order and serving it through legally approved channels.

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait push secures UN humanitarian resolution

GENEVA, July 6, (KUNA): The United Nations Human Rights Council unanimously adopted a Kuwait-sponsored resolution on Monday aimed at preventing the obstruction of humanitarian assistance to ensure the enjoyment of human rights during armed conflict.

Al-Hayen

Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN and other international organizations in Geneva, Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayen, welcomed the adoption of the resolution, saying it addresses the worsening humanitarian conditions faced by civilians in conflict zones and strengthens protection for humanitarian personnel and relief operations.

In a statement delivered during the Council's 62nd session, Al-Hayen said the resolution constitutes an urgent legal and political response to the deteriorating environment for humanitarian work, noting that it aligns with the UN Secretary-General's findings that the previous year was the deadliest on record for aid workers, with 373 humanitarian personnel killed, most of them national staff.

He said the resolution reaffirms the complementary application of international humanitarian law and international human rights law during armed conflict and occupation, stressing that fundamental human rights always remain applicable.

The resolution also condemns the arbitrary obstruction of humanitarian assistance, considering the denial of civilians' access to essential goods, including food, water, medicine and fuel, a grave violation that directly undermines the rights to life, health and an adequate standard of living.

Continued on Page 5

8 Zain GROW program opens meaningful career pathways for graduates with disabilities

9 National Bank of Kuwait allocates KD 1.3 million to develop Kuwait International Airport facilities & enhance its operational readiness

14 ABK and Suffix partner to organize ABK Tour

Public cautioned over Navy drill zones

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Army announced on Monday that the Naval Force will conduct a live-fire exercise from Tuesday through Thursday, daily from 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The Army's Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations said in a press statement that the exercise will take place at the designated naval firing range, extending 16.5 nautical miles east of Ras Al-Julaia to Qaroh Island, and six nautical miles east of Ras Al-Zour to Umm Al-Maradim Island.

The directorate urged citizens, residents, and visitors to avoid the designated land and sea areas during the announced period to ensure their safety.

Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:20	Asr	15:27
Sunrise	04:54	Maghrib	18:51
Zohr	11:53	Isha	20:22

PM Diwan photo

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receives Minister of Justice Nasser Yousef Al-Sumait and the newly-appointed Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice Awatif Abdullatif Al-Sanad.

PM receives Justice Minister and newly-appointed Undersecretary

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Minister of Justice Nasser Yousef Al-Sumait on Monday, who introduced the newly-appointed Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice Awatif Abdullatif Al-Sanad.

Streamlined services at cars auction souk

Two massive projects heading for completion

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: The completion of two vital projects is scheduled for 2028, one of which covers the construction, development and operation of a vehicle auction market.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the report about the two projects, indicating that the vehicle auction market is being implemented by the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP), in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The report indicated that the project is progressing as per the schedule, adding that the current completion rate is 27 percent and the official handover is slated for 2028.

The report explained that this project is the first of its kind in the country, measuring 500,000 square meters spanning Al-Abraq, Al-Na'ayem and Al-Liyah areas. The project includes comprehensive technical services for vehicle auctions in order to better serve the dealers engaged in buying and selling used cars, as well as the public.

It consists of auction lanes, parking areas and a support services building. The goal of this project is to put vehicles for sale in one location for testing to eliminate the practice of displaying such vehicles in public squares and on sidewalks, while mitigating the risks of vehicle exhaust in populated areas.

It is expected to yield economic benefits and boost state revenues, while regulating the work of brokers and saving time and effort. It has a section for establishing car dealership to reduce their presence in residential areas.

The report stated that the other project is the development of the national laboratory network, which has reached 78 percent completion. It is expected to be completed and operational by 2028. It is considered a qualitative leap in testing, monitoring and quality control capabilities, as well as raising the quality of research and strengthening food and health security.

The project contributes to the improvement of emergency preparedness and assessment of the condition of laboratories in the public and private sectors to identify shortcomings and gaps and present solutions. It ensures the optimal utilization of routine physical, chemical and biological tests and analyses related to the environment, life sciences, water, renewable energy, hydrogen science, and radioisotopes for the peaceful uses of atomic energy and multi-fuel applications.

The main objective is to establish a national laboratory network with 10 sub-networks to provide laboratory services in various fields.

KUNA photo

Picture taken at the ceremony to honor the Kuwait Hajj teams.

Awqaf credits Kuwait leadership for successful Hajj mission

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Mohammad Al-Wasmi said Monday the success of Kuwait's Hajj mission was driven by the political leadership's vision of ensuring comprehensive care and support for Kuwaiti pilgrims.

The remarks were delivered on his behalf by Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry Sulaiman Al-Suwailem, during a ceremony honoring members of Kuwait's Hajj mission at the ministry's headquarters.

Al-Wasmi said the mission's success reflected the dedication of its members and their commitment to teamwork and carrying out their responsibilities, praising the ministry's Hajj and Umrah Department for its outstanding performance and describing the achievement as another milestone in the ministry's work.

Speaking to KUNA, Acting Undersecretary Sulaiman Al-Suwailem said the ceremony recognized the efforts of the mission's members, whose dedication and teamwork in serving Kuwaiti pilgrims contributed to the successful performance.

He said all committees carried out their responsibilities with high level of coordination under integrated operational plans and continuous field monitoring, ensuring quality services for pilgrims from their departure from Kuwait until their safe return.

He highlighted the Smart Pilgrim application, which provided direct communication between the mission and pilgrims and facilitated access to services, guidance, reports and essential information, improving response times, operational efficiency and the overall quality of services.

He emphasized upgrading future Hajj missions by utilizing field experience, committee feedback, and digital transformation to maintain high care standards for pilgrims.

Amir congratulates Malawi, Comoros on Independence

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Monday to the President of Malawi, Arthur Peter Mutharika, on his country's Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir expressed his sincere congratulations and wished President Mutharika good health and well-being, and Malawi and its people continued progress and prosperity.

Crown Prince congratulates

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Monday to the President of Malawi, Arthur Peter Mutharika, on his country's Independence Day.

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PM congratulates

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COMOROS

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Monday to President Azali Assoumani of the Union of the Comoros on his country's Independence Day.

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PM congratulates

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Monday to President Azali Assoumani of the Union of the Comoros on his country's Independence Day.

Minister visits multiple public service centers

Dr Al-Huwailah vows to improve nationwide services

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah affirmed on Monday the ministry's commitment to monitor and improve the quality of services provided across all governorates to meet the expectations and needs of the public.

The Minister's remarks came during a field visit to several ministry-affiliated centers in Al-Jahra Governorate, where she reviewed workflow and the procedures for receiving visitors at the Community Development Center, Family Care Center, and Early Childhood Intervention Center.

Al-Huwailah praised the efforts of the staff and their dedication to delivering services to citizens with efficiency and responsibility. She also commended the high level of organization at the Community Development Center, noting that it contributes to smoother operations and improved performance.

She expressed her appreciation for the work being carried out at the Early Childhood Intervention Center, which is affiliated with the Public Authority for Disability Affairs, in serving children with disabilities and their families. She said that what she observed reflected the staff's strong sense of responsibility and humanitarian commitment.

The minister also stressed the importance of adhering to the approved attendance systems at each facility, emphasizing that doing so promotes workplace discipline and ensures the smooth operation of the centers. She concluded by thanking all employees for their efforts and professionalism, noting that their performance reflects the competence and dedication of the country's national workforce.

KUNA photo

Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan receives the outgoing Omani Ambassador Dr. Saleh Al-Kharousi.

Deputy FM meets Oman envoy

Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan received Omani Ambassador Dr. Saleh Al-Kharousi on Monday on the occasion of the conclusion of his tenure as the Sultanate's ambassador to Kuwait. (KUNA)

KUNA photo

The meeting in progress. Inset: Dr. Reem Al-Fulaij

All parties coordination vital: Dr Al-Fulaij

'Together we achieve climate goals'

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): Minister of State for Development and Sustainability Dr. Reem Al-Fulaij stressed on Monday the importance of continued coordination among relevant national authorities to strengthen Kuwait's efforts to address climate change and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Speaking to KUNA following the second meeting of the Supreme Climate Committee, which she chaired at the Environment Public Authority headquarters, Al-Fulaij said committee members were making concerted efforts to highlight Kuwait's role in addressing climate-related challenges.

She said the committee reviewed a decision issued in June amending its membership to include the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) and the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development.

The committee also reviewed the outcomes of the 64th session of the Subsidiary Bodies under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), as well as key findings of Kuwait's Third National Communication, which is scheduled to be submitted in 2026.

Al-Fulaij added that members discussed proposals submitted by government entities represented on the committee, praising the constructive and ongoing cooperation among all participating bodies.

15 named for senior posts

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Minister of Justice, Counselor Nasser Yousef Al-Sumait, has issued a ministerial decree confirming the appointment of 15 individuals to supervisory positions in various sectors of the Ministry of Justice, reports Al-Seyassah daily. The decision aims to strengthen job stability, enhance institutional efficiency, and empower national leaders to continue performing their duties effectively.

In a press statement, the ministry explained that the move is part of its efforts to improve the quality of judicial services and achieve administrative development and institutional excellence. Confirming the appointments of supervisory staff reflects its commitment to investing in national talent, reinforcing administrative stability, and fostering a motivating work environment.

Meanwhile , the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) announced that it processed 2,623 complaints during the second quarter of 2026 as part of its ongoing efforts to address customer grievances and expedite their resolution.

Indian Embassy limits consular services to emergency matters

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): The Indian Embassy in Kuwait announced on Monday that consular, passport and visa services will be limited to emergency cases only until Thursday, July 9, due to administrative reasons.

In an announcement posted on the embassy's official X account, the embassy said services would be restricted to urgent applications supported by documents proving the need for immediate processing.

The services include expedited passport issuance (Tatkal), certificates for non-resident Indians (NRI), short-validity passports linked to expired civil ID cards, emergency certificates and electronic visas.

The embassy said that applications for regular passports, attestation services and standard visas would not be accepted or processed during this period.

It also confirmed that all Indian consular application centers in Kuwait would stop receiving applications until further notice.

Applicants were advised to visit the embassy's consular section only between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m., stressing that emergency cases would be considered only upon submission of supporting documents.

The embassy added that further details would be announced in due course and urged all concerned to follow its official channels and social media accounts for updates.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Eternal neighbors ... what dialogue Iraq's FM wants?

"THE Iraqi Foreign Minister, Fuad Hussein, disclosed that his country is ready to engage in dialogue with Kuwait," Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Fuad Hussein is from the Kurdistan region of Iraq, but I did not know which political party he represents. The Iraqi political landscape is crowded with dozens of parties, organizations, and sectarian groups that are unfamiliar with the principles of politics and seem uncertain whether dialogue should be conducted through words, weapons, or insults and slander.

Hassan Ali Karam

"Kuwait wants its Iraqi neighbor to abide by international law and United Nations Security Council resolutions, especially under the government of Ali al-Zaidi. I would like to congratulate al-Zaidi on assuming this high and critical position in a country that has embraced the democratic system and in which the people have placed their trust. We hope al-Zaidi will begin his tenure by combating corruption and holding accountable those who steal public funds, while the people continue to suffer from unemployment, power outages, and political corruption.

"Congratulations to the Iraqi people on having a prime minister who has placed integrity, transparency, and the fight against corruption at the top of his priorities. After decades of tyranny, injustice, and chaos, a leader has come forward who has accepted this responsibility with a full understanding of its weight. Prime Minister al-Zaidi is expected to visit the Gulf Cooperation Council countries soon, and we hope he will begin with Kuwait. There are still many outstanding issues resulting from the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

"Kuwait suffered enormous losses and damage, in addition to the loss of lives and prisoners of war. The fate of many remains unknown, and their families continue to hold onto the hope of learning what happened to their loved ones. For many years, relations between Kuwait and Iraq have been marked by tensions, complications, and disputes that have persisted under successive Iraqi governments.

"Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein has expressed his readiness for dialogue. That is fine, but dialogue about what, given the suspicious intentions and positions that contradict United Nations Security Council resolutions? How can meaningful dialogue take place when one side seeks to claim half of the other?

"There are voices in Iraq calling for the occupation of Kuwaiti islands and laying claim to Kuwait's rights in shared oil and gas fields. Some agitators and troublemakers go even further, claiming that all of Kuwait - its sea, oil, land, and even its central bank - belongs to Iraq. They seek to deny Kuwait and its people their legitimate rights.

"These groups continue to live in the illusions of Saddam Hussein's era, overlooking the damage he inflicted on Iraq itself. Look at what Saddam Hussein did to Iraq, which is a country blessed with abundant natural resources, including drinking water, high-quality oil, and exceptional palm trees.

"Iraq has no choice but to respect its neighbors and abide by the United Nations Security Council resolutions concerning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The Iraqi government must restrain those who seek to create unrest and provoke crises. Here in Kuwait, we can only hope for good neighborly and brotherly relations. Iraq will not find a closer or more sincere neighbor than Kuwait. The Kuwaiti-Iraqi neighborly relationship is not a temporary situation. It is rather a permanent fact."

Also:

"Is the Cabinet aware that the former Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Yaqoub Al-Sane, signed a decision prepared by one of the ministry's advisers at the time for the benefit of his associates? Decision No. 7/2015, Article 11, stipulates a monthly allowance of KD 300 for an appointed imam to deliver 16 lessons per month at the mosque. This decision contains several violations of the Prophetic methodology," Kuwaiti writer **Mohammad Yousef Al-Mulaifi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The Companion of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Abdullah ibn Masoud (May God be pleased with him), used to preach to the people every Thursday. A man once said to him, "We love your sermons and desire them, and we wish you would preach to us every day." Abdullah ibn Masoud replied, "I fear that you will become bored." He added, "The Messenger of God (PBUH) used to preach to us regularly, but not on every occasion, lest people become bored."

"If this was the practice of the Prophet (PBUH) and his Companions, what, then, of an imam who delivers these lessons for a monthly allowance of just KD 300? Today, people are bombarded with sermons after nearly every prayer, to the point of annoyance. The explanatory memorandum accompanying this decision states that the appointed imam is not obligated to deliver 16 lessons per month. However, if he does, he must submit a report to the ministry specifying the number of lessons delivered in order to receive the allowance.

"The second violation is the burden this places on the state budget, costing tens of millions of dinars without any meaningful benefit. Since this decision was issued in 2015, it has remained in force. A simple calculation reveals the amount spent as a result of it.

"I know of a mosque in West Mishref where the imam continues to deliver these lengthy lessons. Worshippers have repeatedly asked him to stop, and photographs show him giving the lessons in an empty mosque. When they complained, the imam told them that the Ministry of Awqaf required him to deliver 16 lessons each month. When the worshippers contacted the ministry, they were informed that delivering the lessons is not mandatory. If that is the case, then the decision serves no practical purpose.

"The esteemed Council of Ministers should reconsider many of these discretionary allowances if it is serious about reducing the state budget. The Ministry of Awqaf should also rescind any decision that provides personal gain, especially when it inconveniences worshippers."

❑ ❑ ❑

"Not all books are the same; some transcend their time and language to become part of human heritage, carrying ideas, experiences, and values that inspire successive generations," columnist **Bassam Fahad Thunayyan Al-Ghanim** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Therefore, I begin this series of articles titled "Summaries of World Books" to bring the most famous and influential books closer to the Arab reader through faithful summaries that preserve the author's spirit and key ideas.

"I begin this series with "The Last Lecture," one of the most well-known humanistic books of the 21st century, published in 2008. It is based on the famous lecture delivered by its author a few months before his death, which became a global phenomenon. The book has been translated into dozens of languages and topped bestseller lists, due to its sincere messages about life, achieving dreams, willpower, and leaving a positive impact.

"The author is Dr. Randy Pausch (1960–2008), a professor of computer science at Carnegie Mellon University in the United States, and one of the leading experts in human-computer interaction and virtual reality. He collaborated with Disney on several research projects and was known for his passion for education and creativity. In 2006, he was diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer.

"He chose to face the truth with courage, delivering a lecture that later became a timeless classic. He emphasized that a person's worth is not measured by the length of their life, but by the knowledge and impact they leave on others. Pausch begins his book with a clear message - he does not want to write about death, but about life as it should be lived. He stressed that he was not seeking the reader's sympathy, nor did he want to be seen as a victim of a terminal illness, but rather as someone who believed that life may be short, but the message can endure, and that the best thing a person can offer before departure is the experience they have gained and the values they have lived by.

Al-Ghanim

"This is where the idea of the "Last Lecture" originated. It is a university tradition in which a professor imagines it is their final lecture and summarizes the most important lessons they have learned. However, Randy was not imagining it; he was living his reality. Therefore, his words resonated more deeply and powerfully because they came from someone who knew his days were numbered.

"The author emphasized that while one cannot always change the circumstances surrounding them, one can always choose how to respond to them. Pessimism and resignation do not change reality, while optimism and hard work empower individuals to invest their remaining years in doing good and leaving a positive legacy. One of the book's key themes is that childhood dreams are not mere illusions, but the seed of every great achievement.

"Randy recounts several of his childhood dreams, showing that achieving them requires not wishful thinking, but hard work, discipline, and patience. He affirms that the path to success is never without obstacles. He presents his most famous idea - "Walls are there for a reason." Obstacles are not meant to prevent people from reaching their goals, but to test their determination and reveal the difference between those who merely wish for success and those who truly deserve it."

– Compiled by Simi K. Kutty

KUNA photo

Chief of Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Sheikh Mubarak Hamoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attends the swearing-in ceremony for new officers who graduated from King Khalid Military College in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

'Dedicate yourselves to Kuwait security, stability'

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): Chief of Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Sheikh Mubarak Hamoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attended the swearing-in ceremony for new officers who graduated from King Khalid Military College in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, marking their official entry into military service.

KNG Undersecretary Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas was also present at the ceremony.

In a press statement Monday, KNG revealed that Sheikh Mubarak Al-Hamoud congratulated the officers on their graduation and on joining their colleagues at KNG, urging them to contribute to its success, equipped with their academic achievements.

He called on the officers to utilize their acquired academic qualifications and field training to serve in their respective military units.

He advised the graduates to be models of discipline, good conduct and bearing responsibility, and to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to serving the nation and maintaining its security and stability.

Armed Forces starts recruiting Kuwaiti women

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: The Administration and Human Resources Department at the Kuwait Army General Staff announced the opening of recruitment for Kuwaiti women with higher education qualification, diploma, high school diploma or equivalent qualifications, as well as those who passed the Grade 11 examination or lower, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Registration is through the website of the Volunteer Recruitment Unit at the Ministry of Defense (https://vc.kuwaitarmy.gov.kw), starting Monday until July 13.

Kuwaiti abducted, beaten

Asian held with 70 booze bottles

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Security authorities are investigating a report filed by a citizen who claimed he was kidnapped and assaulted by four individuals in Al-Qasr, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the complainant submitted a medical report issued by Jahra Hospital documenting his injuries.

The Public Prosecutor ordered further investigations, and a case has been registered to determine the circumstances of the incident.

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70 liquor bottles: Farwaniya security patrols referred an Asian expatriate to the Drug Control General Department after arresting him with about 70 bottles of liquor intended for sale, reports Al-Anba daily.

The suspect was stopped after security personnel became suspicious of his vehicle. He allegedly attempted to flee before being apprehended.

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Youth doing drugs: A man in his twenties was arrested after security patrols found him driving under the influence of drugs on Arabian Gulf Street, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, patrols from the Hawally Security Command became suspicious after noticing an SUV being driven erratically on Saturday. Officers stopped the vehicle and found the driver to be under the influence of drugs.

A check of his records revealed that he was unemployed and had a criminal record. A subsequent search allegedly uncovered crystal meth, a hashish cigarette, and drug paraphernalia.

The suspect was taken into custody and the necessary legal procedures were initiated.

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Dead man loses cash?: The Commercial Affairs Prosecution has launched an investigation into the withdrawal of funds from the bank account of a deceased man, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, a Syrian resident said his father had been receiving treatment in the intensive care unit at Al-Adan Hospital before passing away.

After his father's death, the son went to collect his personal belongings, including his bank card. However, when he later checked the account, he discovered that the entire balance of KD 902 had been withdrawn.

Raids in Ahmadi, Farwaniya

MoCI detects sale of outdated cosmetics

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) announced that its inspection teams in the Farwaniya and Ahmadi Governorates conducted field inspection tours of several commercial establishments, resulting in the issuance of 25 violation reports for various infractions in Farwaniya, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The violations included commercial fraud involving the use and sale of expired cosmetics at one establishment, as well as the sale of goods of unknown origin that are prohibited from circulation.

In addition, five violation notices were issued to shops operating in a manner inconsistent with their licensed activities. A grocery store found to be selling state-subsidized food items was also closed.

The ministry also noted that its inspection team in Ahmadi Governorate carried out a separate inspection tour of several commercial establishments, resulting in 10 additional violations being recorded.

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Municipality campaigns: Kuwait Municipality announced that its inspection team in Jahra Governorate conducted field visits to several areas as part of ongoing monitoring campaigns, resulting in the issuance of two citations and four warnings, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The campaign recorded two violations - one for displaying an advertisement without a valid permit and another for failing to renew an advertising permit, in addition to four warnings issued within the governorate.

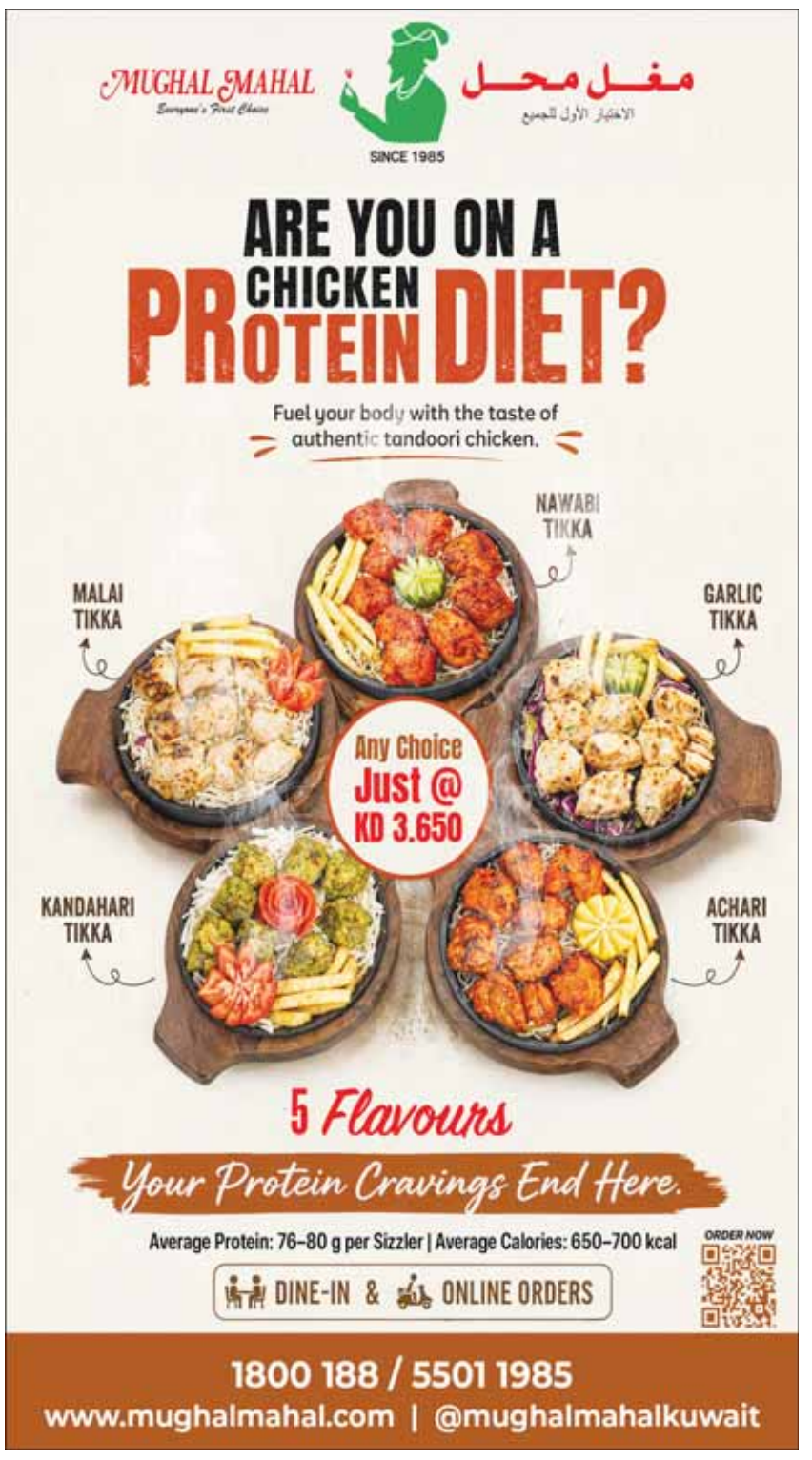
The Municipality stated that its inspection teams from the Audit and Municipal Services Monitoring Departments continue their field campaigns in all governorates, according to a schedule coordinated by the Public Relations Department with the relevant departments.

Asian dead in accident

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: A traffic accident, which occurred Monday morning on Mutlaa Road going towards Jahra, resulted in the death of an Asian man.

A security source revealed that the Operations Unit at the Ministry of Interior received a report about the collision and run over accident on Mutlaa Road. Securitymen and paramedics rushed to the location, where it was confirmed that the accident resulted in the death of a 46-year-old Asian man. His corpse was referred to the Forensic Department.



Kuwait to devise policies, protect rights of workers

Foreign Ministry, PAM hold extensive discussions

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, represented by its Human Rights Affairs Department, and the Public Authority for Manpower discussed the latest developments related to workers' rights.

Both sides also discussed ways to strengthen institutional coordination among relevant national authorities to improve the labor environment and enhance labor protection.

Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Human Rights Ambassador Sheikha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah said after the second joint coordination meeting that the discussions aimed to develop labor market policies and legislation in a way that balances the rights of workers and employers while reflecting Kuwait's commitment to protecting labor rights.

She affirmed Kuwait's commitment to implementing agreements related to the protection of workers' rights under International Labour Organization conventions and international human rights treaties, stressing the importance of continued coordination among national institutions to fulfill the country's human rights and humanitarian obligations in the labor sector.

Sheikha Jawaher

Director General of the Public Authority for Manpower Rabab Al-Osaimi told KUNA that the meeting formed part of ongoing efforts to develop and strengthen governance of labor policies, creating a safe and stable work environment that safeguards the rights of both workers and employers in line with international standards.

Al-Osaimi added that coordination with the Foreign Ministry seeks to develop bilateral memoranda of understanding with labor-sending countries and enhance cooperation with international organizations to facilitate procedures and ensure the smooth implementation of agreements. She stressed that close cooperation between the authority and the ministry is essential to advancing Kuwait's labor market framework and strengthening regulatory mechanisms.

The meeting also reviewed the participation of the Public Authority for Manpower, the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Kuwait Trade Union Federation in the 114th session of the International Labour Conference, held from June 1 to 12.

Representatives from the Foreign Ministry's Legal Affairs and Consular Affairs departments, along with several officials and specialists from the Public Authority for Manpower, attended the meeting.

The meeting was the second of its kind bringing together senior officials from the Foreign Ministry's human rights, legal, and consular affairs sectors with the Public Authority for Manpower.

Venezuela Embassy opens condolence book

THE Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the State of Kuwait presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait and all Diplomatic and Consular Missions and International Organizations and with great sadness regrets to inform of the victims of the double earthquake that struck Venezuela on 24th of June 2026.

The Embassy further would like to inform that a condolence book will be opened at the Embassy located in Surra, Block 5 St. no. 7 House No. 32 on Tuesday 07/07/2026, Wednesday 08/07/2026 and Thursday 09/07/2026, from 10.00 am till 12.30 pm.

The Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait and all Diplomatic and Consular Missions and International Organizations accredited to the State of Kuwait the assurances of its highest consideration.

Municipality begins drive to clean all residential regions

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Kuwait Municipality launched a large-scale field campaign on Monday titled "Hand in Hand for a Clean Environment", which began in the Capital Governorate before expanding to all governorates, and will continue throughout July, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The campaign is aimed to enhance public cleanliness and enforce regulations related to cleanliness and road occupancy in residential areas.

The Municipality explained that teams from the Public Hygiene and Road Occupancy Departments in its six branches will intensify field inspections to monitor cleaning operations, oversee the implementation of contracts with cleaning companies and contractors, and ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations in private and model residential areas.

The campaign will also include removing items that obstruct traffic or affect the city's visual appearance, such as abandoned vehicles, boats, and scrap metal from streets and public squares.

The Public Relations Department confirmed that the campaign aims to promote a healthy and sustainable residential environment.

Kuwait, Turkiye to exchange expertise in customs affairs

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): Director General of Kuwait's General Administration of Customs Yousef Al-Nuwaif discussed with Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait Tuba Nur Sonmez ways to enhance coordination and exchange expertise in customs affairs.

The General Administration of Customs said in a press statement on Monday that the meeting was attended by Deputy Director General of the General Administration of Customs for Ports and Customs Investigation Affairs Saleh Al-Omar.

The talks reviewed existing cooperation between Kuwait's General Administration of Customs and the Turkish Customs Authority. They also explored ways to develop customs procedures, improve operational efficiency, facilitate trade movement and strengthen border security in line with international best practices.

Both sides stressed the importance of maintaining communication and exchanging expertise to serve mutual interests and reinforce bilateral cooperation, reflecting the strong bilateral relations.

SACGC supports Kuwait's participation in Olympiad

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): The Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SACGC), announced Sunday its support for a five-member Kuwaiti student delegation participating in the 2026 International Physics Olympiad (IPhO), hosted by Colombia from July 4 to 12, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education.

In a press statement, Sabah Al-Ahmad Center, one of the centers of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), said the participation marks Kuwait's third consecutive appearance at the International Physics Olympiad under its support and supervision, reaffirming its commitment to preparing outstanding students to represent the country in leading international scientific competitions.

The center wished the participating students success in achieving distinguished results that reflect their capabilities and contribute to raising Kuwait's profile at international scientific events.

Bid to smuggle cigarettes foiled

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: The Nuwaiseeb Border Customs Unit at the Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC) thwarted an attempt to smuggle 481 cartons of cigarettes.

Customs inspectors got suspicious of the driver of a vehicle when he hurried to leave the border, prompting a thorough search. The inspectors then found the cigarettes hidden in various parts of the vehicle, including the interior trim, doors, rear seats, entire floor, roof, air conditioning duct and the spare tyre.

KGAC confirmed that this operation is in line with its ongoing efforts to tighten control over the borders and foil smuggling attempts to maintain national security and strictly enforce the applicable laws and regulations.

A seizure report is being prepared and the case will be referred to the Criminal Investigation General Department to complete the legal procedures against all the involved individuals.

Second round summer tests for Grade 10 to start July 12

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: The Ministry of Education has approved the second-round summer course examination schedules for the 2025/2026 academic year for students in grades 10, 11, and 12 in the science, arts, and religious education streams, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The second-round (summer course) exams for Grade 10 will be held from Sunday, July 12 to Wednesday, July 22.

For Grade 11 students in both the science and arts streams, the exams will also run from Sunday, July 12 to Wednesday, July 22.

Grade 12 science stream exams will begin on Thursday, July 9, and continue until Tuesday, July 21. Grade 12 arts stream exams will start on Thursday, July 9 and end on Wednesday, July 22. Grade 12 religious education exams will begin on Wednesday, July 8, and continue through Wednesday, July 22.

The ministry said the schedules were designed to ensure the smooth administration of the examinations and to provide students with a suitable and comfortable testing environment.

It urged students and parents to review the approved schedules through its official channels and to comply with all examination dates and regulations, wishing all students success.

Other Voices

Direct warning about coffee

By Ahmad alsarraf

I am a big fan of espresso, as they call it in its native land, Italy. I usually have two or three cups of it every day.

Coffee consumption has become popular among people of different ages. However, young people are more inclined to buy expensive varieties from dozens of cafes that were virtually unknown in Kuwait just a few years ago. These cafes have eclipsed the traditional coffee shops, which we know by no other name.

alsarraf

Coffee is now offered under various attractive names, flavors, packaging, and forms. It is served in pre-prepared glass containers, plastic capsules, or even made of aluminum foil.

With the increasing demand and growing competition between Western farmers and those in Africa and South America, children have been exploited in some production chains. These children, along with other farm workers, are exposed to the risks of inhaling agricultural chemicals and working long hours.

Coffee is considered a crop heavily reliant on pesticides. Producers of these coffees do not always employ preventative measures; instead, they involve children in harvesting, pruning, weeding, transporting the crop, and sometimes even spraying pesticides, thus increasing the risks.

It is essential for public health authorities, such as the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN), to require certifications confirming the existence of proper field monitoring of the quantities of hazardous pesticides used in cultivation and processing, and to ensure that producers do not employ children in agricultural work.

Recently, warnings have emerged against consuming pre-brewed coffee of all types due to potential health risks, particularly from the chemicals widely used to remove caffeine.

Safer methods for caffeine extraction exist, such as the Swiss method, which uses pressurized carbon dioxide. This method is very clean but expensive and less common. This information is printed on the packaging. It is preferable to avoid consuming products that do not follow these safe methods.

Coffee capsules, available in various colors, shapes, flavors, and sizes, are not entirely free of chemicals. There are concerns regarding the coffee itself, its packaging, or the roasting process at high temperatures. Tiny pieces of aluminum or plastic may leach into the coffee when it is exposed to normal pressure with boiling water. The coffee can also develop mold, which is not visible to the naked eye, especially if the source is low quality or if it is stored improperly.

It is best to reduce consumption of pre-ground coffee and focus on fresh, organic coffee beans, ground at a café or restaurant, or using a small home grinder.

If you prefer decaffeinated coffee, it is better to choose coffee brewed using the "Swiss water " method with aluminum capsules, rather than plastic ones.

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Deepfakes, fake news prompt stronger response

Kuwait steps up battle against AI-driven misinformation

By Manar Al-Otaibi

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) has fundamentally reshaped the global media landscape, while recent regional security developments have underscored the growing challenge facing media institutions in verifying information amid an unprecedented surge of online content.

The challenge was particularly acute during the first 48 hours of the recent regional crisis, as AI-powered deepfake technology and other synthetic media tools enabled the rapid creation and dissemination of highly convincing false content, raising concerns over misinformation and its impact on public security.

Against this backdrop, Kuwaiti government institutions, academic experts and media organizations have intensified cooperation to safeguard the country's digital space, strengthen public awareness and reinforce responsible, fact-based journalism.

Head of the Cybercrime Department at the Ministry of Interior Lieutenant Colonel Saud Al-Wazzan told KUNA on Monday that the ministry has maintained close coordination with the Kuwaiti Army, National Guard, National Cybersecurity Center and the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority to monitor misleading online content, particularly material generated using AI technologies.

He revealed that authorities detected around 200 violations during the recent Iranian attacks on Kuwait, including the publication of images showing weapons, military sites and other sensitive facilities.

Legal measures were taken against offenders, while misleading AI-generated content was removed to help preserve public security and stability, he said.

Al-Wazzan added that the ministry also launched multilingual public awareness campaigns targeting citizens and residents to limit the spread of harmful digital practices and promote responsible online behavior.

He praised ongoing government efforts to establish governance frameworks for AI that encourage responsible and secure use of emerging technologies while protecting privacy and ensuring the reliability of government data.

Meanwhile, Head of the Media and Mass Communication Department at the Gulf University for Science and Technology, Dr. Ahmad Al-Shallal, said combating misinformation requires an integrated strategy based on public awareness, media training, and updated legislation.

He stressed the need to modernize laws to criminalize the creation and dissemination of AI-generated fabricated content, particularly when it threatens national security, noting that stronger legal deterrence would help curb misuse and reinforce digital responsibility.

Al-Shallal described deepfake technology as one of the most serious challenges confronting modern media because of its ability to produce highly realistic audio and video content capable of misleading audiences.

He warned that AI-generated voice cloning has become increasingly sophisticated, enabling fraudsters to impersonate public officials and request confidential information, making verification of content sources more critical than ever.

Fake news not only spreads false information but also distorts public perception, fuels anxiety, and can be exploited as part of information warfare campaigns aimed at undermining trust in national institutions and official sources, he added.

Director General of News at the Ministry of Information, Lafi Al-Subaie, stressed that the ministry adheres to the highest standards of verification by relying on official and credible sources while continuously monitoring international news agencies and digital platforms.

He said the ministry is also investing in training journalists to better respond to the rapidly evolving digital environment.

Al-Subaie described AI as a valuable tool capable of enhancing journalism by accelerating access to information, improving data analysis and increasing newsroom efficiency, while emphasizing the need for professional and ethical safeguards to preserve accuracy and public confidence.

He added that the Ministry of Information plays a central role in raising awareness about deepfakes and misinformation through specialized media campaigns, educational programs and news coverage highlighting the risks posed by digital manipulation.

He stressed that countering digital misinformation requires close cooperation among government institutions, media organizations, universities and research centers to exchange expertise and keep pace with technological developments.

As AI technologies continue to evolve, experts agree that confronting digital misinformation has become a shared national responsibility requiring coordinated institutional efforts, greater public awareness and updated legislation.

Kuwait improves utility emergency response

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem, held a meeting to review the performance indicators of electricity and water emergency teams during June, in the presence of Undersecretary Dr. Adel Al-Zamil and representatives of the relevant sectors.

The meeting reviewed report handling results, response and repair rates, and compared them with the same period in 2025. Statistics showed a significant improvement in electricity and water emergency handling indicators during June 2026, reflecting the efficiency of emergency teams and increased readiness of field response centers.

The indicators showed a 69.32 percent improvement in response and repair times for electricity emergencies. Water emergencies also recorded a clear improvement in report handling efficiency, with a 61.33 percent improvement in response times.

The ministry affirmed that these results are the outcome of continuous institutional efforts to enhance the efficiency of the emergency system in the electricity and water sectors, through strengthening technical teams, developing mechanisms for receiving and distributing reports, and expediting the deployment of field teams to fault locations.

The statistics also showed that several electricity emergency centers achieved notable performance rates.

The City Center recorded a rate of 89.76 percent, Al-Wafra Center 82.61 percent, and Al-Ahmadi Center 75.17 percent.

The ministry implemented a package of technical measures in the transmission and distribution networks, including the replacement of 950 transformers in the northern region, comprehensive maintenance of overhead lines, trimming trees that are touching or running parallel to overhead line routes, and soil treatment to improve the efficiency of protection systems.

It also intensified maintenance and field inspection work, used thermal imaging cameras to monitor critical points, installed 36 circuit breakers (VCBs) on 33 kV lines, and deployed diesel generators to reduce load.

The ministry affirmed its continued development of the emergency system, improvement of field performance efficiency, and use of operational data and indicators to support rapid decision-making, in line with the state's objectives to improve service quality and enhance the sustainability of electricity and water supply with efficiency and reliability.

Finance Minister taps 4 new directors general

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Minister of Finance Dr. Yaqoub Al-Rifai has issued ministerial decrees appointing four directors general at the Ministry of Finance as part of efforts to complete the ministry's leadership structure and enhance institutional efficiency, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The appointed directors general are:

- Mohammed Noah Al-Osaimi as Director General of Financial and Tax Affairs
- Saad Mohammed Al-Rashidi as Director General of Economic Affairs
- Bader Nasser Al-Salal as Director General of Public Services, Warehousing and Procurement Systems
- Abdullah Hamoud Abu Shaiba as Director General of State Property Affairs

The ministry affirmed that the appointments reflect its commitment to empowering national talent to assume leadership positions, strengthening the financial and administrative system, improving the quality of public services, and enhancing institutional performance in line with its strategic objectives.

PAI, KWFIU ink deal to fight money laundering

Kuwait expands cooperation against financial crime

KWFIU photos

Top: Acting PAI Director General Shamlan Al-Juhaidli and KWFIU Deputy Chairman Yousef Al-Omar after the signing of a cooperation and information-sharing deal. Above: A group photo.

KUWAIT CITY, July 6, (KUNA): Kuwait's Public Authority for Industry (PAI) and Kuwait Financial Intelligence Unit (KWFIU) signed a cooperation and information-sharing deal Monday to strengthen coordination in combating money laundering, related predicate offenses and terrorist financing, as part of efforts to protect the country's financial and economic system.

Acting PAI Director General Shamlan Al-Juhaidli told KUNA the agreement marks a vital step in enhancing institutional cooperation within the legal mandates of both entities.

The deal establishes a framework for exchanging relevant information and data in accordance with applicable laws, enabling PAI to provide information that supports financial analysis and enhances KWFIU's ability to detect activities that may require legal action, he said.

Under the agreement, PAI will provide information within its jurisdiction, including data on industrial and craft plots, issued and revoked licenses, usufruct contracts, statistical data and other legally shareable information, while ensuring strict confidentiality and limiting its use to the purposes specified in the agreement.

The deal sets out secure information-sharing mechanisms through official channels, including electronic links between the two entities, designated contact points, and procedures for handling both routine and urgent requests to improve the speed, accuracy and efficiency of coordination, Al-Juhaidli added.

The agreement also includes safeguards to protect the confidentiality of exchanged information in line with applicable laws and regulations, and provides for regular meetings to monitor implementation, evaluate cooperation and explore ways to strengthen joint efforts, he mentioned.

He said the deal reflects PAI's commitment to strengthening cooperation with national institutions, promoting transparency and compliance, protecting the national economy and supporting efforts to combat financial crimes.

Meanwhile, KWFIU Deputy Chairman Yousef Al-Omar said the deal creates a clear framework for institutional cooperation and information exchange in accordance with Kuwaiti legislation, strengthening compliance, oversight and financial crime investigations while enhancing transparency and protecting the national economy.

Information will be exchanged through official requests or approved electronic systems and may include data held by PAI on industrial and craft plots, licenses, statistical information and any information identified during its work that may be linked to money laundering or terrorist financing, within the limits of the law, he added.

The agreement restricts the use of shared information to combating money laundering, related predicate offenses and terrorist financing, while requiring full confidentiality and prohibiting disclosure or sharing with third parties except as permitted under the deal and applicable laws, Al-Omar explained.

Both sides will hold regular consultative meetings to review implementation, strengthen cooperation, improve information sharing and support Kuwait's efforts to combat financial crime in line with international standards, he noted.

Continued from Page 1

Tehran is

Undoubtedly, defeated nations pay the price for the crimes they commit. Thus, countries that suffered from the Iranian aggression must demand compensation. One of the signs confirming the weakness of the Iranian regime is its desperate appeal for mass demonstrations to prove its continuous strength. It has become essential to compel the Iranian regime to pay compensation to neighboring countries to prevent it from committing further terrorist crimes, driven by delusions of a false triumph.

It is true that Hitler committed suicide as an expression of his project's defeat. However, the fate of the pillars of the Iranian regime will be far more difficult, given the public accountability. Perhaps, senior Iranian officials will meet a fate similar to that of Benito Mussolini, who allied himself with the Nazis against his own country and Europe. What the Tehran regime is experiencing today is merely a mirage from which it will soon wake up to face the bitter reality.

Kuwait reroutes

The General Directorate for the Execution of Judicial Rulings oversees the implementation of these penalties. The decree specifies the entities responsible for carrying out community service based on the nature of the crime and the circumstances of the convicted individual.

The Ministry of Interior assigns convicts to participate in traffic awareness campaigns, work in the General Traffic Department, and take part in activities at correctional and rehabilitation institutions as well as civil defense services.

The Ministry of Health involves the convicts in organizing appointments and health awareness campaigns.

Under the Ministry of Education, alternative penalties include organizing school libraries, taking part in student awareness campaigns, and performing cleaning duties.

The Ministry of Social Affairs assigns individuals to social welfare activities, distribution of aid, and work in social development centers and cooperative societies.

Alternative punishments offered by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs include arranging copies of the Quran, cleaning mosques, and assisting with religious activities.

The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy assigns tasks related to documenting electricity meter data.

The Ministry of Public Works assigns participants to field maintenance work, removal of debris from roads, painting sidewalks, and organizing directional signage.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry assigns tasks related to consumer awareness activities, distribution of brochures, and participation in awareness exhibitions.

The Environment Public Authority (EPA) also assigns alternative penalties involving coastal cleanups, tree planting, waste removal, and participation in environmental awareness campaigns.

Alternative punishments offered by Kuwait Municipality include organizing cemeteries, managing funeral affairs, and performing cleaning duties.

The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) offers vocational training in basic skills and the organization of craft workshops.

The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) assigns tasks such as raising awareness among expatriate workers, organizing training courses, and providing translation services.

The Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) assigns penalties including cleaning public parks and planting trees.

Additional alternative penalties include participation in charitable work, humanitarian aid, awareness campaigns, basic vocational training, and administrative support for public benefit associations.

Other assigned tasks also include working at fuel stations operated by the Ministry of Oil.

The decision clarified that rehabilitation programs include educational lectures, training workshops, and psychological and behavioral programs aimed at modifying irresponsible driving behavior.

The General Department for the Execution of Judicial Rulings, in coordination with the General Traffic Department, is responsible for organizing alternative penalties in cooperation with government and private sector entities and public benefit associations.

The decision also stipulates the need to coordinate with the affected party, whether to restore the property to its original condition, repair it, or provide financial compensation.

The value of the damage is determined in coordination between the General Traffic Department and the government entity that owns the damaged property.

The decision emphasized that entities implementing alternative penalties are required to submit reports to the General Department for the Execution of Judicial Rulings on the extent of the convict's compliance.

If the convict refuses to comply with the sentence or violates its conditions, the case is referred to the competent court to complete the original prison term.

Alternative penalties offered by the Ministry of Social Affairs include assigning convicts to social welfare activities, aid distribution, and work in social development centers and cooperative societies.

Kuwait push

Al-Hayen warned that any military escalation threatening freedom of navigation in international waterways, particularly the Strait of Hormuz, could trigger a humanitarian crisis extending well beyond the immediate conflict zone by disrupting global energy and supply chains and hampering international relief operations.

He added that the resolution places a clear obligation on parties to armed conflicts to protect humanitarian workers, particularly local staff and volunteers, combat disinformation and hate speech targeting humanitarian action, and ensure accountability through prompt, independent and comprehensive investigations into attacks on humanitarian personnel and facilities.

Al-Hayen concluded by noting that the resolution mandates the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a comprehensive report on the human rights impact of such violations, calling on the international community to move from political commitment to effective implementation to protect civilians, humanitarian workers and vital international supply routes.

'Weigh in

traffic in order to protect the road network and reduce damage caused by overloaded vehicles.

Al-Mashaan said the Ministry of Public Works selected installation sites for the system near industrial and construction sites and border roads. She explained that the smart system monitors trucks and other vehicles plying through highways, measuring their weight, type and load distribution in accordance with the approved engineering standards for road design.

She added that the 'Weigh in Motion' system is electronically linked to the systems of the Interior Ministry, thereby, enabling the automatic detection of violating trucks and raising monitoring efficiency.

Wire-to-riches

After obtaining a warrant from the Public Prosecution, the officers arrested the suspects, and then conducted a thorough search that led to the discovery of cash and other items obtained through the crime. One of the suspects was found in possession of KD37,000, gold jewelry and a vehicle purchased using the money from the sale of the stolen cables. Another suspect had KD26,210 and $1,000 in his possession.

The ministry said the stolen cables, valued at about KD420,000, were recovered in coordination with KOC. The seal used in the forgery operation was confiscated as well.

It confirmed that the necessary legal measures were taken against the suspects, who were referred to the concerned authorities.

Amir receives

Further, His Highness also underscored the need to strengthen national identity values, enhance students' creativity and innovation skills, improve the school environment, and expand the use of modern technologies and artificial intelligence to prepare future generations capable of competing and contributing to the country's development.

Separately, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei and senior Ministry of Education officials on Monday, who presented a report on the progress of examinations for grades 10 through 12 for the 2025/2026 academic year.

During the meeting, His Highness was briefed on the organization of the examinations and the measures taken by the ministry to ensure their smooth conduct across all educational districts, including the technical and administrative preparations made to provide a suitable environment for students.

His Highness commended the sincere efforts of the Ministry of Education, its leadership, and the educational and administrative staff in overseeing the examinations and ensuring appropriate conditions for students.

The Crown Prince stressed the importance of continuing to work with a strong sense of responsibility and prioritizing students' interests in a way that enhances the quality of education and its outcomes, wishing education officials and all students continued success and excellence.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also received Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait on Monday, who introduced the newly-appointed Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice Awatif Abdullatif Al-Sanad.

Justice Ministry

He added that penal orders constitute around 20 percent of all cases filed in courts annually, hence, the need to develop the electronic system.

He disclosed that the system was developed and implemented by the Ministry of Justice personnel, along with the activation of secure electronic signatures approved by the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) for misdemeanor judges and those executing penal judgments.

US president cares deeply about the party winning: Blair

Trump got Senate candidates he wanted, how much will he spend to help them?

WASHINGTON, July 6, (AP): US President Donald Trump reshaped this year's US Senate map by sidelining some Republican incumbents and promoting loyalists to replace them. Now the question is whether he'll put his money where his mouth is.

With four months to go until November's elections, it's still unclear how much MAGA Inc., the country's largest political war chest with $382 million in the bank as of last month, plans to spend on key races. The silence has persisted even as Senate Republican leaders have urged Trump's team, both privately and publicly, to pick up the tab for the president's decisions.

Front and center is Texas, where Trump successfully endorsed fiery conservative Ken Paxton over Sen. John Cornyn, a choice that some Republicans grumble has turned a safe election into a toss-up that will drain resources away from other battlegrounds. Democratic nominee James Talarico, a state lawmaker, has made Paxton's history of corruption allegations a central target of his campaign.

"The president picked Paxton, and he's got $350 million dollars," Cornyn recently told Semafor. "I think he can spend his money."

Another challenge has emerged in North Carolina, where Sen. Thom Tillis declined to run for reelection after feuding with Trump last year over healthcare spending. Trump backed Michael Whatley, his former handpicked chair of the Republican National Committee, to run instead, and Democrats hope to flip the seat with former Gov. Roy Cooper.

Some in Republican campaign leadership are expecting MAGA Inc. to pitch in for Whatley in North Carolina, where the state's several metro media markets can be pricey.

Republicans will likely be able to count on generous support from well-funded official party committees, which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled earlier this week should be allowed to make unlimited direct contributions to candidates' campaigns. But even that sum falls short of what Trump has stockpiled in MAGA Inc. Even though the president is constitutionally barred from running again, he began raising money shortly after winning a second term, and he's regularly held fundraisers at his resort properties where tickets cost $1 million per person.

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, a Republican candidate for the US Senate, waves as he takes the stage during a primary runoff election night event after winning the Republican party's nomination on May 26, in Plano, Texas. (AP)

James Blair, the former White House political director who left his government job to coordinate the president's midterm efforts, was evasive in an interview with Sean Spicer, a former Republican spokesman who hosts a podcast.

"The president is going to expend substantial resources to win the midterms," said Blair. "He cares deeply about the party winning."

As a super PAC, MAGA Inc. can raise unlimited money from individuals and corporations. However, it is barred from coordinating with individual campaigns or national Republican committees, which adds to the sense of mystery surrounding its plans.

It's been more than two months since Blair, along with White House Chief of Staff Susie Wiles, pollster Tony Fabrizio and political adviser Chris LaCivita huddled at Washington's Waldorf Astoria to discuss MAGA Inc.'s strategy.

The huddle was focused on assembling teams of vendors, such as advertisers, canvassing providers and digital media company leaders who had worked with the Trump team in key states during previous elections and who would be dispatched once plans were in place.

The president has spent much of the year waging a war of retribution against Republicans who have crossed him. He viewed Cornyn as insufficiently loyal, held a grudge against Sen. Bill Cassidy of Louisiana for voting to convict him in an impeachment trial and assailed Rep. Thomas Massie of Kentucky as the "worst Republican Congressman in history." All of them lost their primaries to Trump-backed challengers.

Cornyn's loss weighs heavily on Senate Republicans, who suggest that Paxton could cost the party an extra $100 million to defend the seat.

Senate Leadership Fund, the principal super PAC aligned with Senate Majority Leader John Thune, is still expected to spend money on advertising in Texas but not play a central role given its obligations elsewhere.

Democrats must net four seats to take the majority, and they see Alaska, Maine, North Carolina and Ohio as their best opportunities. The Senate Leadership Fund has already committed to spending $342 million across these four states, plus Iowa, Georgia, Michigan and New Hampshire.

When Paxton came to Washington after winning the nomination on May 26, he had a cordial meeting with Thune focused on moving forward together, according to people with knowledge of the conversation who were not authorized to speak publicly.

Later that day, Thune suggested that Trump should be putting up money for a candidate whom Senate Republicans hadn't asked for.

"We will do what we need to do to make sure the state stays red," Thune told reporters. "But I'm certainly hopeful the president and the resources he can bring to bear will be engaged."

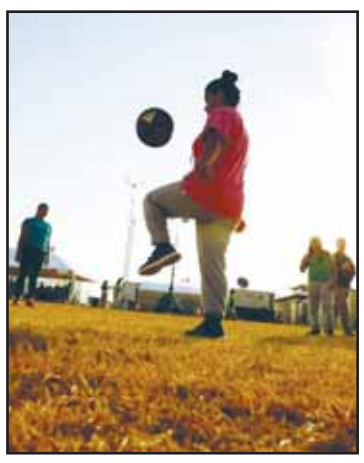
New ICE facility could speed up deportations for families and kids

NEW ORLEANS, July 6, (AP): The Trump administration plans to open a 528-bed holding facility for migrant families and unaccompanied children next to an airport hub, positioning itself to speed up deportations.

The location in Alexandria, Louisiana, would remove logistical headaches caused by wrangling children from foster homes and shelters across the country and not having anywhere to put them during final preparations for flight. Those obstacles were apparent last year when Guatemalan children were awoken at night and given almost no time to get to Harlingen, Texas, where they waited on an airport tarmac for hours.

A federal judge prevented their deportation, but the chaotic episode illustrated the challenges authorities face because they don't have anywhere to put families and children near the airport. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is calling the Alexandria facility a "staging area," not a detention center, and says people would only be there a few days at most.

However, several immigration advocates expressed concern that children could be held at the new facility for weeks or months, which



Immigrants play soccer at a new US government holding center for migrant children, in Carrizo Springs, Texas on July 9, 2019. (AP)

happened at other federal immigration holding sites. These advocates are also concerned about oversight, and say the facility represents a departure from how the government manages those children.

"It's an expansion of the deportation system in ways we haven't seen before," said Leecia Welch, chief legal counsel at the nonprofit Children's Rights. "There's just so much that could go wrong with this facility."

Unaccompanied children who are in the U.S. without parents or close relatives are not taken to facilities overseen by ICE. Instead, the law says they must be swiftly placed in the care of state-licensed shelters and foster care programs.

Those are run by the Office of Refugee Resettlement in the Department of Health and Human Services. However, that agency isn't involved in the Alexandria facility's operation, according to a spokesperson at the airfield where it's being built.

Instead, the facility would be run by a nonprofit arm of LaSalle Corrections, a private prison contractor, according to Ralph Hennessy, executive director of the England Airpark Authority. He said it could be operational as early as August.

ICE officials signed a contract late last month to build the facility at the former military base near Alexandria International Airport, roughly 175 miles (280 kilometers) northwest of New Orleans, Hennessy said.

It would operate as a 72-hour holding center for migrants awaiting deportation, according to records obtained by The Associated Press.

This image taken from video shows a seaplane after it made a rough landing in New York City's East River on July 5, resulting in two minor injuries. (AP)

Seaplane makes rough landing in NYC's East River

A seaplane made a rough landing in New York City's East River Sunday, alarming bystanders and resulting in two minor injuries, according to city authorities.

The sea plane carrying eight people made a "hard landing" around noon, according to the New York City Fire Department. The plane made it upright and was towed back to dock, the department said.

Images shared on social media show a white plane appearing to lean over on its side with the tip of its left wing in the water as a helicopter circled overhead. (AP)

Emergency services personnel work to extinguish a fire following Russian missile attacks in Kyiv, Ukraine on July 6. (AP)

Russian missile and drone attack on Ukraine's capital kills at least 19

KYIV, Ukraine, July 6, (AP): Russia launched waves of missiles and drones at Ukraine early Monday, killing at least 19 people in an attack that exposed widening gaps in country's air defenses, authorities said.

All of the ballistic missiles launched by Russia struck their targets, underscoring Kyiv's need for more Patriot interceptor missiles - a point Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will likely reiterate at a NATO summit in Ankara, Turkey, this week.

Twelve people were killed in the capital, Kyiv, which was Russia's main target, according to local officials. Another six people were killed in the wider Kyiv region, said its head Mykola Kalashnyk.

At least 60 people were wounded, according to Zelenskyy, as emergency workers combed through rubble looking for survivors at residential high-rises in two locations that suffered direct hits in the capital.

Days earlier, on Thursday, a Russian strike killed 31 people in Kyiv, the deadliest for the capital this year. Russia's Defense Ministry said the bombardment was retaliation for Ukraine's recent long-range strikes, which have caused severe fuel shortages and pressured President Vladimir Putin.

More than four years after Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of its neighbor, Ukraine's advances in drone technology have given it an edge in recent months, analysts and Western officials say. Strikes on supply routes behind the front line have stripped the Russian army of momentum on the battlefield, they say, slowing its advance and driving up the cost.

But Russia is now exploiting a different kind of momentum: vulnerabilities in Ukraine's air defenses, which remain heavily reliant on the U.S. Patriot systems to intercept ballistic missiles it can rarely shoot down any other way. The war in the Middle East has strained the global supply of Patriot interceptors, already produced in limited numbers - a shortage now most of all being felt in Ukraine.

Ukraine's air force said Russia fired 351 drones and 68 missiles overnight, targeting mainly Kyiv, and all 29 ballistic missiles struck their targets.

"To intercept ballistics, we need the means for interception," air force spokesman Yurii Ihnat said on national television. "Russians are certainly using the fact that there is a serious deficit of interceptor missiles now, in Ukraine and the world."

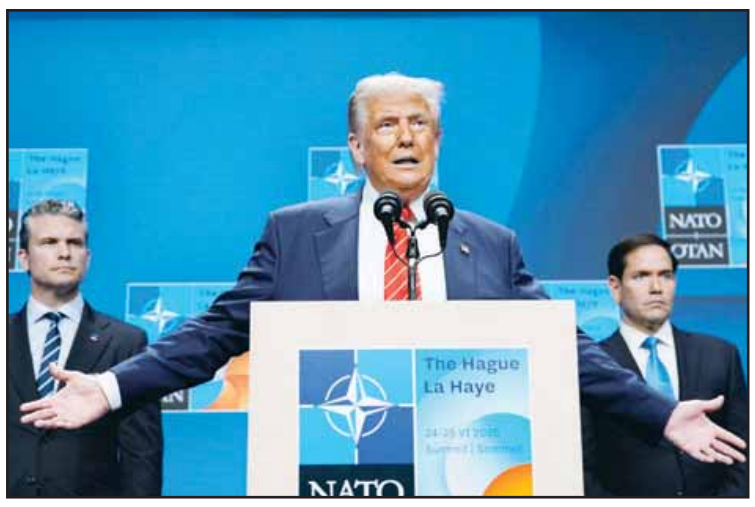
Ahead of the NATO summit in Ankara, Zelenskyy said on X that Ukrainian forces had performed well against drones and cruise missiles but not against Russian ballistic missiles - a shortfall he blamed on insufficient interceptor supplies. He urged US and European partners to leave the summit with strong decisions to bolster Ukraine's air defense and protect civilian lives.

"As long as Patriot missiles remain in our allies' stockpiles, Russia is only encouraged to keep 'vanquishing' residential buildings. The United States and Europe have enough strength to stop this terror," he said in a statement following the attack.

Trump to meet with Ukraine's Zelenskyy, Syria's al-Sharaa during NATO summit

WASHINGTON, July 6, (AP): US President Donald Trump plans to meet with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa on Wednesday while attending the NATO summit in Turkey, the White House said. Those discussions will come as Kyiv tries to refocus Trump's attention on the conflict with Moscow and as Trump has publicly mused about Syria's role in the Middle East.

White House spokesperson Anna Kelly confirmed the meetings in a call with reporters while previewing the upcoming summit in Ankara, where Trump also plans to meet with Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday. Before returning to the United States on Wednesday, Trump is scheduled to have a news conference, Kelly said.



US President Donald Trump speaks during a media conference at the end of the NATO summit as Secretary of State Marco Rubio, (right), and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth listen in The Hague, Netherlands on June 25. (AP)

Greek authorities warn of toxic smoke

Wildfires rage in Portugal and Greece

ATHENS, Greece, July 6, (AP): Hundreds of firefighters battled wildfires in Portugal, Greece and Spain on Sunday, with Spain and Italy sending reinforcements to Portugal to help with a massive blaze burning for more than three days.

Authorities urged residents in parts of Thessaloniki, Greece's second largest city, to remain indoors and shut their windows and doors due to toxic smoke from a burning recycling plant that was engulfed by a wildfire.

Another major wildfire broke out Sunday afternoon west of the Greek capital, Athens. The fire department said 210 firefighters, backed up by volunteers, specialized teams and 29 aircraft, including water-dropping planes and helicopters, were deployed to battle the blaze burning through pine forest in the Mandra area. Authorities were racing to contain the blaze before nightfall, when aircraft can no longer perform firefighting operations.

In central Portugal's Vouzela area, more than 1,200 firefighters backed

Locals try to extinguish a wildfire on the outskirts of the northern city of Thessaloniki, Greece on July 4. (AP)

up by nearly 400 vehicles and 15 aircraft tried to put out a blaze that broke out Thursday, according to the Civil Protection authority. The wildfire had burned across an area of 12,000 hectares (30,000 acres) by Sunday, information from the European Union's Copernicus satellite mapping agency showed.

The EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid said that Spain sent 120 firefighters and 45 vehicles as reinforcements to Portugal on Friday, while three firefighting aircraft from Italy and Spain were also dispatched to help.

Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, (left), and Fiji's Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka display a new bilateral defense alliance they have just signed at State House in Suva, Fiji on July 6. (AP)

Albanese to visit Solomon Islands

Australia and Fiji seal new mutual defense alliance

MELBOURNE, Australia, July 6, (AP): Australia and Fiji on Monday signed a new bilateral defense alliance in a second major diplomatic win within a year for Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese against Chinese influence in the South Pacific.

Chinese official media later reported a Chinese submarine had test-launched a long-range ballistic missile in the South Pacific, a move criticized by Australia.

Albanese and his Fijian counterpart, Sitiveni Rabuka, signed the Ocean of Peace Alliance in Fiji's capital, Suva. They also signed an economic treaty, the Vuvale Union, under which Australia will invest more than 1 billion Australian dollars ($693 million) in its island neighbor over a decade.

The alliance is Fiji's first mutual defense treaty. It is Australia's fourth, following a treaty with the United States and New Zealand signed in 1951 and the bilateral treaty signed with Papua New Guinea last year.

"The Ocean of Peace Alliance introduces a mutual defense obligation and there's no higher obligation than to come to each other's aid at a time of need," Albanese told reporters.

Rabuka did not expect a negative reaction from Beijing to the new treaties.

"I do not expect China to have any severe pushback on either government. And I believe that they will welcome the understanding that is between Australia and Fiji," Rabuka told reporters.

"It does not threaten Fiji's relationship with China nor Australia's relationship with China," he added.

The Chinese missile launched Monday was tested as part of routine training and carried a dummy warhead, according to the Xinhua News Agency. China last conducted a missile test in the Pacific two years ago, then firing an intercontinental ballistic missile with a dummy warhead.

Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, who was in Fiji for the signing, did not comment on whether China had attempted to send a message by launching the missile on the same day as the security treaty was signed.

"I'll leave China to speak to its intent," Wong told reporters.

Wong said Beijing had informed her government in advance of the launch. She spoke before the launch was confirmed.

"Australia has been clear with China that we regard this as destabilizing to the region," she said.

"Australia has been clear that this ... proposed test is in the context of a rapid military buildup by China which is lacking in the transparency and reassurance as to intent that the region expects," she added.

In Beijing, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told reporters that the test launch was a routine military arrangement and that it was not directed at any specific country.

Albanese will fly to the Solomons on Tuesday to meet with his counterpart Matthew Wale after the two nations agreed to further discussions on a security pact.

Wale said while visiting Australia last month that his new government would review the deal with Beijing.

Another Philippine senator arrested for alleged large-scale corruption

Philippine Senate opens politically volatile impeachment trial of VP Duterte

MANILA, Philippines, July 6, (AP): The Philippine Senate, acting as an impeachment court, opened the trial of Vice President Sara Duterte on Monday in a politically volatile event that will unfold with the backdrop of her bitter political feud with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

More than 6,000 police officers, including anti-riot squads, were deployed to secure the Senate, where about 400 anti-Duterte demonstrators converged, chanting "convict Sara now." Duterte did not appear but was represented by her lawyers at the start of the trial, which will run for 92 days, according to a pretrial plan seen by The Associated Press.

If convicted of the charges, which include amassing unexplained wealth and publicly threatening to have Marcos assassinated, Duterte may be permanently disqualified from holding public office. She denies the charges.

A conviction would be a lethal blow to her announced plan to seek the presidency in mid-2028, when Marcos ends his six-year term. They were running mates in the 2022 elections in a whirlwind alliance that combined the vote-getting power of two of the country's most formidable political dynasties, but the union rapidly fell apart.

The vice president is the daughter of former President Rodrigo Duterte, Marcos' predecessor. He was arrested last year on orders of the International Criminal Court and flown to The Hague, where he remains detained and was scheduled to face trial over alleged crimes against humanity on Nov. 30.

The charges stem from the ex-president's brutal anti-drugs crackdowns that left thousands of mostly poor suspects dead, alarming Western governments and human rights groups. Rodrigo Duterte has denied authorizing extrajudicial killings but repeatedly threatened suspects with death while in office.

The vice president has blamed Marcos for her 81-year-old father's arrest and handover to the ICC.

Marcos and the Dutertes have contrasting geopolitical leanings. Marcos has expanded defense engagements with the United States, his country's treaty ally, as his administration stood up to China's increasingly aggressive actions in the disputed South China Sea.

Rodrigo Duterte had nurtured cozy ties with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian leader Vladimir Putin while threatening to sever ties with Washington. The vice president has come under fire for not condemning China's assaults, including with the use of powerful water cannons, against Filipino forces and fishermen in the disputed waters.

Philippine Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian, center back, presides during the opening of the impeachment trial of Philippine Vice President Sara Duterte at the Senate in Pasay, Philippines on July 6. (AP)

Last month, the House of Representatives, which is dominated by Marcos' allies, voted overwhelmingly to impeach the vice president over alleged unexplained wealth, misuse of confidential state funds and a public threat to have the president, his wife and a former House speaker and ally assassinated if she herself were killed due to their political disputes.

She has generally denied the charges but has refused to publicly answer the allegations in detail ahead of the impeachment trial. Her supporters have accused Marcos and his key aides of politically persecuting the vice president and her senatorial allies to ensure her impeachment.

Two-thirds of the 24-member Senate, or 16 votes, are needed to convict the vice president.

Meanwhile, a Philippine senator was arrested Monday and charged under the country's anti-corruption statutes, becoming the latest member of the upper legislative chamber to be arrested in more than a month over suspicion of large-scale graft.

Sen Rodante Marcoleta, who denies committing any wrongdoing, was taken into police custody at the Sandiganbayan special anti-graft court in suburban Quezon city, where he went with his lawyers to question the charges and seek a delay in his arrest.

Marcoleta was accused of plunder, a charge under Philippine laws for illegally amassing huge amounts of money through a series of criminal acts. A plunder charge does not allow for bail.

"Let's respect that," Marcoleta, a 72-year-old lawyer, said outside the courtroom, referring to the court's decision to order his arrest based on a preliminary finding on his case. He was later whisked away by police officers.

Marcoleta belongs to Iglesia ni Cristo, or Church of Christ, which staged a three-day rally by more than 15,000 members in a democracy shrine along metropolitan Manila's busiest main road to protest the filing of charges against him and his impending arrest. The rally sparked a huge traffic jam.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. canceled two official engagements outside his office Tuesday due to alarm over the protest by the religious group, which known for its ability to organize huge rallies.

The Office of the Ombudsman, a special anti-graft prosecutor, said it filed the plunder charge against Marcoleta last week for receiving 75 million pesos ($1.2 million) in what were supposed to be campaign contributions from three supporters that he did not declare in his assets statement as required by law.

Two of the three donors, including former House of Representatives member Mike Defensor, also were arrested Monday, according to Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla.

Early last month, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, a political ally of Marcoleta, was arrested and detained also on a nonbailable charge of plunder for allegedly pocketing a huge kickback in a flood-control project.

Estrada, 63, has strongly denied allegations mainly by a former government public works engineer, that he received more than 570 million pesos ($9.3 million) in kickbacks from flood control projects.

Security personnel escort prisoners to a bus in the compound of a prison where deadly clashes broke out on Sunday, in Negombo, 35 kilometers (22 miles) north of the capital Colombo, Sri Lanka on July 6. (AP)

Deadly clashes in Sri Lanka prison kill 25

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, July 6, (AP): Clashes broke out inside a prison in the outskirts of Sri Lanka's capital, killing at least 25 people and injuring more than 100, officials and a TV station reported Monday.

Police said the unrest at the prison in Negombo, about 35 kilometers (22 miles) north of the capital, Colombo, began on Sunday and continued on Monday. Spokesman Chandana Herath said there were fatalities but could not immediately confirm the toll reported by local television station Hiru. Victims include both inmates and prison officials, the TV reported.

Prison spokesman A.C. Gajanayake said the violence started among inmates and when prison guards attempted to intervene on Monday, "they (inmates) started attacking the prison officials."

He told reporters that some inmates attempted to escape but were stopped.

The clashes left several officials and inmates dead while several were hospitalized, Gajanayake said, without giving the exact numbers.

Subcontinent

6 dead in India building collapse: At least six people were killed and one injured after a portion of a three-storey residential building collapsed amid heavy rains in India's financial capital, Mumbai, officials said Monday.

The building, which housed many residential units, collapsed on Sunday night in the Mankhurd area of Mumbai, the capital city of Maharashtra.

According to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), the city's civic body, the incident took place in the Janta Nagar area when a section of the building gave way. Following the incident, rescue teams rushed to the spot and launched an operation to pull out those trapped. (Xinhua)

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Afghan bus accident kills 1, injures 28: At least one commuter lost his life and 28 others sustained injuries after a passenger bus veered off the road and overturned in southern Afghanistan's Zabul province on Monday, a local police official announced.

The incident occurred on the outskirts of Shah Joy district when the bus, en route from western Herat to the capital Kabul, veered off the road and flipped over due to a technical malfunction, said Zabihullah Jawhar, the provincial police spokesman. (Xinhua)

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Gas cylinder fire kills 2 in Afghanistan: Two children were killed and a 16-year-old teenager was injured recently after a gas cylinder caught fire in eastern Afghanistan's Logar province, a local official said on Sunday.

The incident occurred in Honi Sayyidan area of Pul-e-Alam, the provincial capital, when a gas cylinder ignited due to what authorities described as negligence by the family, Mawlawi Mirwais Abdali, spokesperson for the provincial governor, told Xinhua. (Xinhua)

2 nationals killed during violence in South Africa, says Nigeria

LAGOS, Nigeria, July 6, (AP): Nigeria said Sunday that two of its nationals were killed last month in South Africa following violent anti-immigrant protests targeting African workers in the country.

The Nigerians were killed June 28, two days before an unofficial deadline by protesters for foreigners to leave, the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. One was allegedly killed by police officers and the other by unidentified attackers, it said.

South African police did not immediately respond to a request for comment from The Associated Press.

Anti-immigrant protesters in April and May blamed foreigners for high levels of unemployment, crime and pressure on public services. The violence at the protests and attacks on Africans prompted Nigeria, Ghana and Malawi to repatriate their citizens and summon South African diplomats.

"These two killings come at a time when foreigners are being unduly targeted in South Africa. This raises questions about deliberate attempt by some elements to wrongfully generalise and tag well-meaning, hard-working, and respectable Nigerians as criminals," Nigerian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Kimiebi Imomotimi Ebienfa said.

Nigerian nationals repatriated from South Africa, following concerns about unrest, arrive at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport in Lagos, Nigeria on June 30. (AP)

A woman and a child, displaced from North Darfur's capital, el-Fasher or other conflict-affected areas walk in the newly established El-Afadh camp in Al Dabbah, in Sudan's Northern State, Sudan on Nov 13, 2025. (AP)

More than 300 children killed or injured in Sudan war in 6 months, says UNICEF

CAIRO, July 6, (AP): More than 300 children have been killed or injured in the last six months in the war in Sudan, mostly from drone strikes, the UN children's agency said Monday.

Sudan has been mired in a war between the Sudanese military and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces since April 2023.

The war is now concentrated in the Kordofan, Darfur and Blue Niles states, with drone warfare causing 60% of casualties, according to UNICEF.

The UN, US, UK and others have expressed alarm about potential atrocities as the RSF and the military fight for control of the strategic city of el-Obeid, in North Kordofan.

In Geneva on Monday, the UN-backed Human Rights Council approved a measure, which was brought by five European countries, condemning the escalating violence by the RSF and its allies in and around el-Obeid.

The measure, which was approved without a vote, also encourages greater support for countries hosting refugees from Sudan and condemns "all forms of external interference" in the war, among other things.

The conflict has killed at least 59,000 people, displaced some 13 million and pushed many parts of Sudan into famine. More than 30 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance.

Drone strikes and shelling have targeted civilian infrastructure including schools, markets, fuel and water stations putting over 500,000 people at risk. Civilians have faced almost siegelike conditions for over a year.

"Children are being caught in a relentless cycle of violence, displacement and deprivation," said Sheldon Yett, UNICEF Representative for Sudan.

The UN called on parties "to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, allow and facilitate safe, rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access, and take all possible measures to protect children from harm."

Meanwhile, the United Nations human rights chief on Friday sounded a "red alert" about possible atrocity crimes in and near a strategic city in central Sudan, calling on world leaders to do more to help stop the bloodshed in the country's ongoing war between the army and paramilitary forces.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk told the Human Rights Council at the UN office in Geneva that signs from the city of el-Obeid were "clear and unmistakable: Another human rights catastrophe is unfolding in Sudan."

The comments came as the council, the UN's top human rights body, held an urgent debate on the situation in el-Obeid about concerns expressed by diplomats, advocacy groups and others that another wave of atrocities may loom against civilians in Sudan's war, which is now in its fourth year.

"This is not a drill. It is a red alert that needs to land on the desks of heads of state and government around the world," Türk said. "Their phones should be running hot in the coming days and weeks, with ideas on how to prevent atrocity crimes in el-Obeid and in other places in Kordofan."

Civilians have faced siegelike conditions for 18 months, battered by "relentless drone strikes" as Sudan's armed forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces battle for control of areas near the city, he said.

The council's 47 member countries were considering a draft resolution - brought by Britain, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and Norway - that condemns the escalating violence by the RSF and its allies in and around el-Obeid, encourages greater financial and logistical support for countries hosting refugees from Sudan, and condemns "all forms of external interference" in the war, among other things.

The war erupted in April 2023 out of long-simmering tensions between the army and RSF forces. The conflict has killed at least 59,000 people, displaced some 13 million and pushed many parts of Sudan into famine. More than 30 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance.

Trading value near KD 97 mln

Boursa ends higher, premier market leads gains

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Boursa Kuwait closed Monday's trading session on a positive note, with the All Share Index rising by 41.85 points, or 0.48 percent, to settle at 8,738.98 points. Trading activity saw 392.7 million shares change hands through 22,815 transactions, with a total value of KD 96.9 million (approximately USD 315.5 million).

The Premier Market led the gains, advancing 55.92 points, or 0.61 percent, to reach 9,173.40 points. A total of 140.1 million shares were traded across 9,637 transactions, valued at KD 55.9 million (around USD 182 million).

In contrast, the Main Market Index edged lower by 14.14 points, or 0.16 percent, closing at 8,828.93 points. Trading volumes in this segment reached 252.6 million shares through 13,178 transactions, with a total value of KD 41 million (approximately USD 133.5 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index recorded a marginal increase of 4.12 points, or 0.04 percent, to close at 10,061.64 points. The index saw 231.9 million shares traded in 10,771 transactions, valued at KD 37.9 million (around USD 123.4 million).

In partnership with Omniya

InvestGB hosts employee sustainability session

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Gulf Capital Investment Company KSCC "InvestGB", the investment arm of Gulf Bank, hosted a dedicated environmental awareness session for its employees as part of its ongoing partnership with Omniya,a leading recycling company in Kuwait.The Omniya partnership and employee awareness program represent the latest steps in the company's broader sustainable development strategy.

The session was led by Omniya's Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Sana'a AlGhemlas, which brought together InvestGB staff to deepen their understanding of plastic recycling, sustainable waste management, and the role each individual can play in building a cleaner environment.

The awareness session covered a range of topics, including the types of plastic collected through Omniya's recycling program, best practices for waste segregation in the workplace and how employees can extend their recycling efforts beyond the office and into their homes and communities.

Attendees were also introduced to the Omniya mobile application, which enables users to locate nearby collection points and track their recycling activity, and were provided with the company's dedicated referral code to begin participating immediately.

The session follows the formal announcement of the partnership between InvestGB and Omniya, under which dedicated bins for collecting plastic and recyclable materials have been installed across InvestGB's offices. These materials are collected by Omniya on a scheduled basis for recycling, significantly reducing environmental impact and encouraging employees to adopt sustainable practices as part of their daily routines.

Commenting on the session, InvestGB's Director of Marketing and Corporate Communications, Mr. Nazem Yousef AlGhabra, said: "Hosting this session is a natural extension of our partnership with Omniya and reflects our belief that real environmental change begins with awareness. We want our employees to feel empowered to make a difference, both at work and in their personal lives, and we are proud to give them the tools and knowledge to do so."

Ms. AlGhemlas expressed her enthusiasm for the collaboration, noting that engaging employees directly is central to building a genuine culture of recycling. She added that InvestGB's commitment to embedding sustainability into its day-to-day operations makes it a model for other institutions in Kuwait.

Al-Awadhi and AlGhemlas in a group photo with the InvestGB team.

Highlights IP strategies for business growth

AmCham Kuwait organizes webinar on 'Protecting Intellectual Property'

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: The American Business Council – American Chamber of Commerce Kuwait (AmCham Kuwait) hosted a webinar titled "Protecting Intellectual Property", highlighting the importance of intellectual property (IP) protection in supporting innovation, business growth, and international expansion.

The session featured Ms. Rasha Abdelmagid, IP Specialist at the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) – Abu Dhabi, UAE, who provided participants with an overview of intellectual property fundamentals, including patents, trademarks, copyrights, industrial designs, and trade secrets, while highlighting their role as valuable business assets.

Ms. Abdelmagid emphasized that protecting intellectual property allows businesses to safeguard their innovations, strengthen their market position, create licensing opportunities, and enhance their long-term competitiveness. She also discussed the importance of developing an IP strategy aligned with business goals and securing protection in each relevant market, noting that IP rights are territorial and require separate protection based on each country's legal framework.

The discussion covered common IP challenges faced by businesses, including infringement, counterfeiting, unauthorized use of creative works, and online piracy. Ms. Abdelmagid highlighted the importance of proactive measures such as early filing, market monitoring, proper agreements with third parties, and seeking professional legal guidance to effectively protect intellectual property rights.

The session also explored key differences between the U.S. and Kuwait IP frameworks, including protection methods for trademarks, copyrights, industrial designs, and trade secrets, while introducing available USPTO resources that support businesses and entrepreneurs in managing their intellectual assets.

The webinar concluded with an engaging Q&A session, allowing participants to discuss practical questions related to IP protection, enforcement, and strategies for safeguarding their business assets.

AmCham Kuwait continues to support initiatives that provide businesses with valuable knowledge and resources to navigate global markets, protect innovation, and create sustainable growth opportunities.

About AmCham Kuwait: Founded in 1985, AmCham Kuwait is a non-profit organization composed of Fortune 500 corporations, SMEs, and prominent business leaders from both the United States and Kuwait. As a key advocate for American business interests in Kuwait, AmCham Kuwait works to strengthen the commercial and economic ties between the two nations. For more information, please visit www.amchamkuwait.org or follow us on social media @abck1985.

Zain GROW program opens meaningful career pathways for graduates with disabilities

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Zain Group, a leading TechCo providing innovative ICT and digital lifestyle communications in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, celebrated the graduation of a new cohort of GROW, its training program dedicated to fresh graduates with disabilities, in a step that reflects the company's firm commitment to building a more inclusive and empowering workforce.

The ceremony was attended by Zain Kuwait CEO Nawaf Al-Gharabally, Zain Group executive management, and representatives of the program's partners. This underscored the importance of integrating roles between the public, private, and academic sectors to support people with disabilities and contribute effectively to empowering their entry into the private sector.

In Kuwait, the program was delivered in collaboration with leading academic institutions, including Kuwait University (KU), Australian University (AU), American University of Kuwait (AUK), American University of the Middle East (AUM), Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST), INJAZ Kuwait, and CODED Academy.

GROW is one of Zain's key initiatives dedicated to empowering young talent with disabilities to effectively enter the workforce and excel in the market. It offered athree-month paidinternship experience that focused on developing practical skills across telecommunications, technology, and business administration, combining training, professional guidance, and hands-on experience in real work environments.

This year, the program attracted over 620 applicants groupwide, with 20 participants from Kuwait, Bahrain, Sudan, and South Sudan joining a three-month training and internship journey.

In Kuwait, participants were placed across five key teams: Customer Value Management (CVM), Channels, Human Resources, Infrastructure, and Corporate Affairs and Relations. The cohort included participants with different types of disabilities, including physical, visual, neurodivergent, and speech disabilities.

The first month featured intensive training in mindset transformation, artificial intelligence and data analysis, behavioral skills, technical skills, and disability confidence in the workplace, alongside an innovation camp delivered by INJAZ.

Each trainee was also assigned a mentor with a disability from Zain Masters, the company's Employee Resource Group (ERG) for employees with disabilities, throughout the duration of the program. This mentorship aimed to strengthen disability confidence and support a culture of advocacy within the workplace.

In addition to receiving the program certificate from Zain, participants earned six additional certificates from the program's partners: INJAZ Kuwait, CODED Academy, and PurpleSpace, the global networking and professional development platform for disabled employees.

The program cementsZain's belief that digital progress must be driven by purpose and create a lasting positive impact. This is aligned with the company's 4WARD strategy, which aims to build a more sustainable and inclusive future, guided by its purpose: Better Lives. Lasting Connections.

Nawaf Al-Gharabally and Zain Group's IDE team with the graduates and the GROW team.

Group picture with the program's success partners.

■ WE ABLE 2030 vision continues to expand Zain's inclusive efforts in employment, professional development, and customer experience.

■ The company introduced 'Freedom to Move', the innovative indoor navigation solution in partnership with GoodMaps for the first time in the Middle East

GROW also represents a pillar of WE ABLE 2030, Zain's leading regional strategy shaped by its own employees with disabilities to embed inclusion and accessibility into the organization's decisions and business practices. It aims to strengthen opportunities for inclusion and empowerment, advance data-driven leadership, and present a realistic, modern view of the capabilities of people with disabilities that challenges traditional stereotypes.

Guided by this vision, Zain embraces a firm commitment to building a more inclusive and equitable society, one founded on equal opportunity and on recognizing people for their skills, abilities, and true potential. By providing an inclusive workplace that embraces everyone, the company gives each individual the opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities and contribute meaningfully toits shared success.

Through WE ABLE 2030, Zain aims to expand its initiatives across employment, professional development, inclusive design, customer care, and innovation. The vision also focuses on building strategic partnerships with government entities, academic institutions, and civil society organizations, creating an integrated ecosystem that supports the participation of people with disabilities and empowers them economically and professionally.

The success of GROW goes beyond the graduation of a new cohort of promising talent. It stands as a practical model for transforming the principles of inclusion into tangible outcomes and real opportunities for professional growth and development. The program has succeeded in connecting talented graduates with disabilities to quality training opportunities that help them gain the experience needed to join the market with confidence and competence.

'Freedom to Move', an innovative indoor navigation solution

At the event, Zain took the opportunity to launch the first phase of its innovative indoor navigation solution, titled "Freedom to Move." Developed by global innovator GoodMaps, the solution is one of the first specialized technologies of its kind designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities. This also marks GoodMaps' first collaboration with an organization in the Middle East. The solution was showcased in the main hall during the event as an initial phase, paving the way to explore the possibility of expanding it across a number of Zain branches in the future.

The application provides an inclusive smart navigation experience that serves different groups of people with disabilities. It offers voice guidance for blind and visually impaired users, simplified maps that support people with neurodivergent needs, barrier-free routes for wheelchair users, and vibration alerts for deaf and hard-of-hearing users.

This allows users to reach their destinations inside buildings with ease and independence through accurate, step-by-step guidance. The initiative comes as part of Zain's ongoing efforts to leverage technology and innovation to enhance accessibility and create more inclusive environments for everyone.

Zain also recently conducted Kuwait's first comprehensive strategic digital and policy accessibility audit. The audit covers the company's digital platforms, customer experiences, digital communications content, and key HR policies, with the aim of developing a clear roadmap to enhance accessibility and ensure that services, products, and workplace environments are designed to meet everyone's needs from the outset.

Zain's initiatives for people with disabilities embody its firm commitment to enabling access to professional development opportunities and active inclusion in the workplace. GROW serves as one of the practical pathways that translate inclusion principles into tangible results.

GROW also complements a series of impactful initiatives launched by Zain to advance accessibility and empowerment, including its partnership with Be My Eyes to support blind and visually impaired people, and The Masters initiative, which gave Zain employees with disabilities a broader platform to participate in decision-making and express their professional needs. Together, these efforts reflect the Group's vision of building a more inclusive environment, one that removes barriers and expands opportunities for participation and contribution across all groups.

Reaffirming its steadfast national mandate & supporting the efforts to upgrade the infrastructure of vital facilities

National Bank of Kuwait allocates KD 1.3 million to develop Kuwait International Airport facilities & enhance its operational readiness

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) announced the allocation of KD 1.3 million to develop Kuwait International Airport's facilities and enhance its operational readiness, driven by its steadfast national commitment and in support of efforts aimed at upgrading the infrastructure of the State's vital facilities.

This initiative reflects NBK's deep sense of responsibility toward the nation and its vital assets, and its firm belief that national institutions play an integral role in supporting the State during times that call for genuine solidarity. It also reflects NBK's commitment to supporting efforts to develop vital facilities and enhance their operational efficiency in line with the highest standards.

NBK highlighted that Kuwait International Airport represents a sovereign gateway that reflects Kuwait's image, security, and stability to the world. Supporting this vital facility at this stage constitutes a national duty, demonstrating the private sector's commitment to standing alongside the State during exceptional circumstances. This contribution aims to support the development of the airport facilities, enhance operational readiness, and improve service efficiency.

This initiative further affirms NBK's leading position in national and social responsibility, which it demonstrates through tangible contributions and initiatives that serve the community and support Kuwait's development journey. It also underscores the Bank's commitment to continuing its role as an active national partner in supporting the State and its institutions, driven by its belief in the importance of fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors in a manner that serves Kuwait and helps preserve its national assets.

NBK expressed its deep appreciation for the significant efforts undertaken by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in recent weeks, and for the high level of efficiency and swift response it demonstrated in addressing exceptional challenges. NBK also commended the outstanding achievement made in developing Terminal 1 (T1), upgrading its facilities, and restoring it with a distinguished renewed appearance.

The Bank further extended its sincere gratitude to Kuwait's wise political leadership for graciously approving this national contribution, which reflects its continued support for initiatives aimed at serving Kuwait, and reaffirms its deep belief in the importance of integrating the roles of state institutions and the private sector in advancing national development and safeguarding the country's resources.

Isam Al-Sager with the Chairman of the General Authority of Civil Aviation, Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Jaber.

Isam Al-Sager and Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Jaber.

- Kuwait International Airport stands as a sovereign gateway to the State, reflecting its image, security, and stability, and supporting it is a national duty
- The approval of Kuwait's political leadership for this national contribution underscores its steadfast support for initiatives that serve the country and advance the public interest
- DGCA has made significant efforts to develop Terminal 1 (T1), giving it a renewed appearance

Up to KD 500 cashback

Travel more, worry less this summer with 25% cashback

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Reflecting its commitment to delivering exceptional value to its customers, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), in collaboration with Visa, has launched its 2026 summer campaign, featuring an exclusive suite of offers designed to make summer travel more convenient and rewarding. Tailored specifically for travel enthusiasts, the campaign's standout benefit is up to KD 500 in cashback on flight bookings.

Running from July 7 through September 30, the campaign offers customers an exceptional opportunity to benefit from its exclusive offers during the peak travel season and maximize the value of every journey.

Earn Cashback Twice

The campaign enables customers to earn cashback when booking directly through the websites and mobile applications of participating airlines, including Kuwait Airways, Emirates, Qatar Airways, Turkish Airlines, and Jazeera Airways.

To further enhance the value offered, customers may earn cashback on two separate occasions during the campaign period, providing greater opportunities to save and making their travel experience even more rewarding. To benefit from the offer, customers must optin to the campaign in advance through the Bank's website at nbk.com.

Instant Issuance with Flexible Terms

In support of the campaign, the Bank is offering customers the opportunity to apply for the NBK KWT Visa Infinite Credit Card and the NBK–Kuwait Airways Visa Credit Cards for only KD 25. The offer is available exclusively through NBK Mobile Banking App during the campaign period, with instant issuance against salary transfer or collateral where the customer's salary is not transferred to NBK, enabling customers to quickly access and benefit from the cards' features.

Integrated Travel Benefits

The campaign offers extend beyond cashback to include a broad range of benefits covering various aspects of the travel journey, including:

- Up to 10% cashback on monthly spending for KWT Visa Infinite cardholders
- Unlimited Oasis Club Miles and Avios Points
- Additional cashback through Q'Go and OFFTO for KWT Visa Infinite cardholders
- Hotel discounts through Visa Luxury Hotel Collection
- Special car rental rates from Avis
- Airport lounge access, dining offers and experiences through the Visa Airport Companion app
- Complimentary travel insurance coverage of up to $2.5 million

The Bank also provides customers with greater flexibility in managing their expenses by allowing them to convert all purchases into installment plans through NBK FlexiPay for up to 12 months at 0% interest.

Hisham Al-Nusif

- **Al-Nusif:** We have placed customer experience at the heart of this year's campaign by offering tangible benefits that make travel more rewarding and enjoyable
- We remain focused on delivering integrated solutions that make travel planning easier, smoother, and more convenient
- Strategic partnerships with leading international and regional airlines
- Additional rewards through Q'Go and OFFTO for KWT cardholders.

Simple Registration Process

To benefit from this exclusive campaign, customers are required to register in advance through the Bank's website at nbk.com.

Commenting on the campaign, Mr. Hisham Al-Nusif, Chief, Consumer Banking at NBK, said: "Through this campaign, we aim to deliver a comprehensive travel experience that provides genuine value to our customers, not only through generous rewards, but also through an integrated suite of benefits designed to make every journey more convenient and flexible. We remain committed to continuously developing our offers in line with our customers' aspirations and lifestyles."

"This campaign reflects our philosophy of listening closely to our customers' needs and delivering solutions that help them achieve their aspirations. We believe that travel should be an enjoyable experience, which is why our comprehensive offering covers every aspect of the journey, from booking and accommodation to transportation and dining," Al-Nusif added.

"The campaign reflects NBK's strategy of delivering innovative offers that extend beyond traditional banking services to become an integral part of customers' lifestyles, particularly during the peak travel season,"he noted.

7 OPEC+ nations raise August output

Brent holds below $72

NEW YORK, July 6, (AP): A handful of countries in the OPEC+ oil-producing alliance plan to increase their outputs modestly next month, which would bring more oil online after fuel prices have fallen to levels not seen since before the U.S. and Israel's war with Iran.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies - collectively known as OPEC+ - announced on Sunday that seven countries would expand oil production by a combined total of 188,000 barrels per day in August. It was the fifth consecutive month OPEC+ agreed to raise oil outputs.

The participating countries in Sunday's decision are Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iraq, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Algeria and Oman.

"The countries will continue to monitor and assess market conditions, and in their continuous efforts to support market stability, they reaffirmed the importance of adopting a cautious approach," the group of oil producers said in a statement.

A Kuwaiti oil worker talks on his radio at Mina Abdullah Oil Refinery, 50 kms South of Kuwait City in this file photo taken April 2005. (AP)

In the last month, market optimism caused crude oil prices to tumble before and after the U.S. and Iran reached an interim deal to end their fighting. As part of a broader memorandum of understanding, Iran agreed to allow ships to pass unimpeded through the Strait of Hormuz, and the U.S. agreed to end its blockade of Iran's ports.

More and more commercial vessels have since transited the strait, which before the war was a conduit for roughly a fifth of the world's oil. But ship traffic remains below prewar levels, and tensions over the waterway continue. Iran's joint military command warned as recently as Thursday that all oil tankers moving through the strait must use its approved routes or face a "forceful response."

Oil prices have continued to decline while negotiators for Iran and the U.S. try to reach a final peace agreement. Brent crude, the international benchmark, was going for under $72 a barrel when shortly after commodities trading opened Sunday night. That's close to what it cost before the U.S. and Israel launched strikes on Iran in late Feburary - and far below soaring prices that in March climbed to nearly $120 per barrel.

The war created an energy crisis in much of the world. With most shipping blocked in the Strait of Hormuz, the limited production hikes pledged by OPEC+ in previous months could not counteract the impact on global oil supplies.

Early in the war, many major oil producers across the Middle East had to cut production because their crude had no where to go. S&P Global Energy said in a recent estimate that it did not expect Gulf oil production to rebound fully until at least the first quarter of 2027.

Energy experts have repeatedly warned that fuel prices and the cost of consumer good were likely to stay elevated long past the conflict's end.

'Inconsistent rules, rising risk'

Maritime sanctions drift from finance to force at sea

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

By John Calabrese

American University

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With more than 80% of global trade by volume being transported by sea, maritime shipping lanes are indispensable to the world economy. That fact was starkly illustrated by the war in Iran, which saw Tehran effectively close the Strait of Hormuz to commercial traffic and Washington respond with a blockade of Iranian ports.

Yet such recent events are an aberration from much of the post-Cold War period, during which economic sanctions were enforced far from the sea. Governments relied on financial infrastructure - bank messaging systems, insurance markets, shipping registries and port access rules - to restrict trade without physically stopping ships.

But that system is now under strain. As the United States and its partners have relied more heavily on sanctions as a tool of geopolitical conflict, targeted countries have developed effective evasion networks. In response, the U.S. and its partners are increasingly returning to a more direct form of economic pressure: boarding ships at sea.

Since late 2024, naval forces in Europe and among NATO partners have detained or inspected numerous vessels suspected of carrying sanctioned cargo. These operations have focused on so-called shadow fleet tankers transporting Russian oil. Since the U.S. blockade of Venezuelan oil began in late 2025, interdiction has spread beyond Russian-linked tankers to Iranian and Venezuelan vessels, and now European and Indian authorities have joined in that effort. These ships often operate in legal gray zones, using opaque ownership structures, frequent flag changes and alternative insurance arrangements to avoid sanctions enforcement.

As a longtime observer of international security and geopolitical risk, I believe this trend suggests not a coordinated global policy but a broader shift in practice: Sanctions enforcement is moving from financial systems back into physical space.

Modern sanctions have long relied on control over key nodes in global commerce. U.S. and European sanctions on Iran and Russia show how restrictions on dollar clearing, the SWIFT banking network and maritime insurance can severely disrupt trade without physically intercepting cargo. If banks cannot process payments, ships cannot be insured and ports cannot legally receive cargo, then trade can be effectively halted without direct enforcement.

But that leverage depends on visibility and compliance. Over time, sanctioned states have become more effective at bypassing these channels.

Russia's shadow fleet is the clearest example. Hundreds of tankers now operate outside Western insurance and registry systems, moving oil through complex ownership chains that obscure responsibility and destination.

Iran provides a parallel case. Under sustained U.S. and European sanctions - targeting dollar clearing, SWIFT and maritime services - Tehran has developed evasive shipping networks using ship-to-ship transfers, flag-hopping and opaque intermediaries to sustain oil exports, largely to Asia and especially China.

At nearly 1,000 tankers, the global shadow fleet amounts to roughly between 17% and 18.5% of global tanker capacity, according to a 2025 S&P Global estimate.

As financial enforcement becomes less reliable, states face a familiar problem: how to enforce sanctions when financial systems no longer provide full visibility or control.

Increasingly, many countries feel the answer to declining sanctions leverage is physical interdiction at sea.

While boarding ships is not new, how often it is now used as a tool of sanctions enforcement is. A number of cases since late 2024 have illustrated this broader pattern of European and U.S. interdictions targeting shadow fleet vessels across the Baltic and Mediterranean. They include Finland's boarding of the Eagle S, Germany's seizure of the Eventin, and Estonia's detention of the stateless Kiwala.

Most recently, the EU expanded a naval operation launched in 2020 meant to enforce a United Nations embargo against Libya. By June 2026, the so-named Operation IRINI was conducting shadow fleet inspections and had boarded the Oneiroi, the Nelsa and the Sandhya - all EU-sanctioned tankers operating in international waters.

Other countries are using similar methods for different political purposes. In June 2025, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps captured the Talara in the Gulf of Oman, citing national security concerns.

The legal language differs, but the operational logic is similar in that it involves using naval power to interrupt commercial shipping for strategic effect.

This global expansion of maritime interdiction is colliding with an international legal framework that was not designed for it.

Under the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, ships on the high seas fall under the jurisdiction of their flag state. This principle was intended to ensure predictability and limit interference with global shipping.

There are narrow exceptions. Warships may board vessels suspected of piracy, slave trading, statelessness or false flagging. Outside these cases, boarding is generally prohibited.

Modern sanctions enforcement is increasingly being fitted into these exceptions. Shadow fleet vessels often exploit legal ambiguity through frequent flag changes or unclear ownership structures. This allows nations to argue that a ship is effectively stateless or fraudulently flagged.

But sanctions evasion itself is not a legal basis for boarding. As a result, enforcement depends heavily on interpretation, especially around what counts as a valid flag or legitimate registration. The result is a growing gap between a legal system built on clear categories and a maritime economy built to blur them.

A striking feature of the current system is its lack of consistency.

Some vessels are detained and released. Others are fined, seized or redirected. Outcomes vary depending on domestic law, political context and enforcement priorities. Even among countries aligned on sanctions, there is no shared answer to what "successful enforcement" looks like.

This is very different from earlier periods of coordinated maritime enforcement. During U.N. sanctions on Iraq in the 1990s and early 2000s, naval operations were carried out under a single Security Council mandate, with standardized procedures and shared rules.

No equivalent framework exists today for shadow fleet enforcement. Nations are acting in parallel rather than through a unified system, producing uneven and sometimes contradictory outcomes.

Although current activity is concentrated in Europe and surrounding the Strait of Hormuz, the implications extend further. Once maritime interdiction becomes a normal tool of economic statecraft, it is unlikely to remain confined to one region or one political context. (AP)

Beyond the immediate opportunity in Kuwait, JV plans to open a Doha office

Action Energy and Kellton form strategic JV to accelerate AI-led digital transformation across the GCC energy sector

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Action Energy Company K.S.C.P. (AEC, Boursa Kuwait Premier Market: ALFTAQA), Kuwait's leading local partner for integrated upstream services, owner and operator of one of the youngest rig fleets in the region, today announced a strategic joint venture (JV) with Kellton, a global AI-led digital transformation and enterprise technology company, to drive AI-led digital transformation across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) energy sector.

Joint Venture Details:

■ Ownership: Action Energy Company will hold a 51% stake, while Kellton will hold the remaining 49%.

■ Term: An initial term of five years, automatically renewable for successive three-year periods.

■ Geographic Scope: The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, with initial plans to establish an office in Qatar as the first step.

■ Business Lines:

1. Oil & Gas: Digital oilfield solutions and services, including the deployment of Kellton's OPTIMA platform, a digital oilfield management platform.

2. Information Technology: IT products and services across multiple sectors, including enterprise software, cloud computing, cybersecurity, enterprise resource planning (ERP) implementation, systems integration, and managed services.

The JV brings together AEC's industry relationships, and operational expertise with Kellton's capabilities in artificial intelligence, digital engineering, cloud, cybersecurity, and data. Together, the partners aim to help energy operators across the GCC modernize their operations, sharpen decision-making, and unlock greater value from their assets. Beyond the immediate opportunity in Kuwait, the JV also plans to establish a presence in Doha, Qatar, where it has identified business potential. The Doha office will serve as an early step in the JV's broader ambition to grow across the GCC market, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Oman.

A central focus of the partnership is the regional deployment of OPTIMA, Kellton's proprietary digital oilfield platform. Built for intelligent operations, workflow automation, asset performance optimization, real-time visibility, and AI-driven decision-making, OPTIMA helps energy companies improve operational efficiency, optimize asset utilization, and advance their digital oilfield initiatives. By pairing the platform with AEC's deep operational experience and long-standing relationship with Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), the joint venture is positioned to bring intelligent, data-driven field operations to clients across the region.

Ivan Chikunov, General Manager of Services & BD of Action Energy Company, said: "This JV advances AEC's strategy to expand its oilfield services by digitally modernizing field operations and enhancing quality. The addressable market for oil and gas digitalization across the GCC exceeds US$1 billion annually, and our objective is to capture at least 5% of this market over time. By combining AEC's broad operational footprint, strong industry relationships, and commitment to local content development and knowledge transfer with Kellton's advanced AI and digital capabilities, we are well positioned to deliver intelligent, data-driven solutions that improve operational performance, create long-term value for our clients and shareholders, and support the modernization of the GCC energy sector."

Ivan Chikunov, General Manager of Services & BD, Action Energy Company

Krishna Chintam, Managing Director, Kellton

Krishna Chintam, Managing Director at Kellton, said: "The GCC is becoming one of the world's most ambitious markets for AI adoption and enterprise transformation. This joint venture pairs local market strength with global technology expertise so organizations can transform at scale. Together with Action Energy Company, we can bring AI-led innovation, industry-specific solutions, and the full capabilities of OPTIMA to customers across the region, and deliver measurable outcomes for enterprises entering the next phase of digital transformation. The joint venture establishes a long-term platform for AI-powered innovation across the GCC energy ecosystem, positioning energy organizations to modernize operations and unlock new opportunities for growth and efficiency.

We are delighted to partner with Action Energy Company to bring these capabilities to market at scale. Together, we look forward to helping operators across the region modernize their operations and unlock new opportunities for growth and efficiency."

Mishustin highlights shipbuilding, microelectronics

Kuwait joins INNOPROM 2026 to enhance industrial cooperation

MOSCOW, July 6, (KUNA): The 2026 edition of the INNOPROM International Industrial Exhibition kicked off on Monday in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg, bringing together the prime ministers of Russia, Armenia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, along with ministers, senior officials and representatives of major industrial companies from around the world.

Kuwait participated through its embassy in Russia, represented by Counselor Ahmad Abdulrahman Al-Buaijan, reflecting the country's interest in following global industrial developments, strengthening economic and industrial cooperation, and exchanging expertise with friendly nations.

The exhibition's opening plenary session focused on the development of modern industry, production and supply chains, wider use of advanced technologies and industrial transformation.

In his speech, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin said Russia remains open to cooperation with all countries on the basis of equality and mutual respect, stressing Moscow's commitment to developing joint industrial projects, particularly in shipbuilding and advanced technologies. He highlighted cooperation with Indonesia on multipurpose vessels and underwater robotic systems.

He said Russia had significantly strengthened key sectors despite sanctions through coordinated efforts between the government and the private sector, with the country's industrial sector continuing to post positive growth.

Mishustin noted that Russia's manufacturing sector had expanded by around 23 percent over the past three years as part of efforts to build an independent industrial base and strengthen technological sovereignty in strategic sectors.

He added that the government aims to launch a new investment cycle before next year, with the engineering sector continuing to make a positive contribution to economic growth.

He said deliveries of medium-range Tupolev-214 passenger aircraft are expected to begin by 2027, while international demand for Russian Ansat and Ka-226T helicopters is increasing. He also pointed to ongoing work on a fully domestically built liquefied natural gas carrier for use along strategic routes of the Northern Sea Route.

Mishustin added that Russia is localizing the entire semiconductor production chain in the microelectronics sector, noting that non-oil exports rose by more than 11 percent in 2025, with the strongest trade growth recorded with China, India, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

Official Russian data indicate that the country's manufacturing sector is expected to grow by around one percent in 2026, supported by continued expansion in the engineering and machinery industries despite global economic challenges.

INNOPROM is one of Russia's leading international industrial exhibitions, held annually in Yekaterinburg with participation from dozens of countries and hundreds of companies. It serves as a major platform for discussing investment opportunities, technology transfer and industrial cooperation. Indonesia is the official partner country for this year's edition.

S&P 500 up 10% in 2026

Trump rings NYSE, Nasdaq bells from Oval Office to boost stocks message

WASHINGTON, July 6, (AP): President Donald Trump on Monday gets to ring the opening bells for the New York Stock Exchange and the Nasdaq from the golden confines of the Oval Office, a symbolic act that reflects how he has increasingly tied his presidency to the stock market.

With high inflation hurting Trump's popularity, the Republican president has tried to get more Americans to focus on their 401(k) investments, claiming that his policies should get the credit for any gains, particularly as the November midterm elections draw closer.

"It's all going well - the stock market is setting records virtually every day," Trump told reporters last week before boarding Air Force One. "Thank you, President Trump."

Only 33% of U.S. adults approve of Trump's economic leadership, according to a June survey by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

The act of ringing the opening bell suggests why the president's emphasis on the stock market might not help his party much with voters this fall.

The Oval Office event is aimed at promoting the launch of Trump Accounts, which were created as a vehicle for children to have investments in stock indexes as part of Republicans' big 2025 tax and spending cuts bill. In championing the accounts, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has emphasized that many Americans have no direct exposure to stocks.

This means that millions of people are not benefiting from investments that largely accrue to more affluent households or that the benefits they're receiving are for retirements decades away.

"Today, 38% of American adults do not own stocks," Bessent said last December. "But with Trump Accounts, over time, we can get that number down to zero."

The S&P 500 stock index posted gains of 17.9% in 2025, but that came after annual returns of 25% in 2024 and 26.3% in 2023, during the presidency of Democrat Joe Biden. The benchmark stock index has risen roughly 10% so far this year.

But just as inflation crushed public support for Biden, Trump has also seen his approval fall prey to a cycle of rising prices. Trump won the 2024 election by promising to bring down costs, but his tariffs and the start of the war in Iran created new inflationary pressures.

The consumer price index has climbed 4.2% over the past 12 months, up from 3% when Trump started his second term in January 2025.

Hanwha pushes jobs in sub bid war

Canada poised to pick German or South Korean bid for 12-sub fleet

TORONTO, July 6, (AP): Canada was expected Monday to choose between German and South Korean bids to build a fleet of 12 submarines in one of its biggest-ever military procurements.

Germany's ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems and South Korea's Hanwha Ocean are competing for the contract to build 12 conventionally powered submarines worth tens of billions of dollars.

The announcement is expected before Prime Minister Mark Carney departs to the NATO summit in Turkey as NATO allies boost defense spending.

Carney is scheduled to tour a Canadian Armed Forces base in the Atlantic-coast province of Nova Scotia on Monday before announcing "new measures to make Canada more secure, resilient, and prosperous."

A spokesperson for Carney declined to confirm the submarine announcement will be made on Monday.

But Carney said in May a decision would be announced within weeks.

Canada's current fleet of four Victoria class submarines are barely in operation.

German-Norwegian consortium ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems has pitched its submarines as strengthening NATO, noting it has supplied much of the alliance's conventional submarine fleet.

South Korea's Hanwha Ocean has mounted an aggressive advertising campaign and highlighted economic benefits for Canada.

Last month, Hanwha showcased its KSS-III diesel-electric submarine in British Columbia after the vessel completed the South Korean navy's first-ever trans-Pacific crossing.

Both companies say their proposals would generate jobs and investment in Canada.

Carney's government has pledged to meet NATO's higher defense spending targets, committing to spend 5% of Canada's gross domestic product on defense by 2035 after reaching the alliance's previous 2% benchmark this year.

Trump earns $1.2 bln as crypto surpasses real estate

NEW YORK, July 6, (AP): The real estate mogul has become the billion-dollar crypto man.

President Donald Trump's latest financial disclosure report showed he took in about $1.2 billion last year from various crypto holdings, overshadowing a real estate business that brought him fame and helped propel him to the nation's top office.

Whereas it took decades for Trump to amass his various properties, the rise of crypto in his portfolio was done in just over a year, a stunning development sped along by his own friendly policies toward the industry and help from billionaires and other actors with important business before the presidency.

Running over 900 pages, the mandatory annual report showed Trump struck several other new veins of wealth last year, raising questions about whether he is profiting from his high office.

He took in tens of millions from new property holdings in foreign countries eager to please a man with power over where to deploy the U.S. military and how much to charge in tariffs. And he got tens of million more suing media companies worried they could lose their broadcast licenses or not get deals approved by his regulators.

Ever the salesman, Trump even made big money off the smallest of things, pulling in millions by slapping his name on Bibles, guitars and watches - the latter alone bringing in $4.7 million.

Trump got more than $500 million from his World Liberty Financial business selling "governance tokens" and "stablecoins" and other crypto assets. Another crypto business, CIC Digital LLC, took in more than $600 million from sales of souvenir-type "meme" coins stamped with his face.

Both the tokens and the meme coins have plunged in value since his sales, partly because they are so difficult to value. Governance tokens, for instance, confer to holders only the power to vote on certain management policies at a company, not equity stakes, and so typical valuation measures don't apply.

Buyers pounced on Trump crypto anyway, including a Chinese billionaire who spent $75 million on the tokens and $200 million on the souvenir coins. In February 2025, a federal lawsuit charging the billionaire, Justin Sun, with duping investors was paused before being settled for a $10 million fine.

Sun has denied his spending on Trump businesses had anything to do with his federal case, while World Liberty has dismissed the notion of a conflict of interest.

Separately, a company linked to the United Arab Emirates government bought a stake in World Liberty for $500 million shortly before Trump's inauguration. The disclosure says nothing about the deal explicitly, but notes Trump received his share of a "capital contribution" amounting to nearly $200 million.

Subsequently, the UAE got access to advanced U.S. chips that it had been previously banned from importing because of national security concerns.

The White House has repeatedly said that Trump has acted only in the public interest, never gets involved in a family business run by his two oldest sons and has zero conflicts of interest.

Trump took in tens of millions in fees from a flurry of new hotel, resort and condo deals overseas, amounting to the biggest property expansion ever in the century since the family business was founded.

Many of those countries were negotiating with the U.S. over tariffs, military aid and other important matters while the family business was striking the deals.

A property in the UAE generated $10.4 million for the Trump business last year. One in Saudi Arabia being built by a real estate developer close to the ruling family sent the president's company $9 million. And one in Bucharest, Romania, and another in Qatar sent him $5 million each.

A big winner last year was Trump's Mar-a-Lago club in Florida, generating $77 million as heads of state and business people flocked to what Trump has dubbed his Winter White House. That's up 50% from a year earlier when Trump was just another citizen.

His golf club in Bedminster, New Jersey, also is doing well from the glow of the presidency. Trump got $38 million from his so-called Summer White House, up nearly 20%.

In total his 16 golf courses and clubs around the world brought in more than $470 million in fees and licensing income.

Trump took in millions last year from selling Trump books and various other Trump-branded goods in another unprecedented move for the presidency.

Trump Bibles made $208,486, but the Word of God didn't sell as well as a trio of other literary offerings. His "Save America" book took in $1,893,965, "Letters to Trump" generated $590,730, and "A MAGA Journey," $552,685.

His brand of guitars generated $35,920. Trump sneakers and fragrances took in $67,634.

It's anyone's guess why exactly various media companies decided to settle Trump lawsuits alleging fraud and defamation, but settle they did - and paid up.

Lawsuits against ABC, CBS, Meta, and others took in more than $80 million, much of which went to Trump's planned Miami library.

Where Trump hasn't prevailed so far is with E. Jean Carroll, the advice columnist who won millions accusing Trump of sexual abuse and defamation. The disclosure says Trump owes her $50 million, pending appeal.

This image released by Universal Pictures shows a scene from Illumination's 'Minions & Monsters.' (AP)

July Fourth box office sees mixed results for top releases

'Toy Story 5' slips as 'Minions' take lead

LOS ANGELES, July 6, (AP): The Minions have taken down "Toy Story 5" at the July Fourth weekend box office, but not by much.

"Minions & Monsters," the seventh film in the "Despicable Me" franchise, earned $36.4 million at the holiday weekend box office, according to studio estimates for North America. "Toy Story 5," a juggernaut that last week beat "Supergirl," earned an estimated $31 million.

The Minions movie, which has the devious henchlings seeking movie glory in Hollywood's Golden Age, opened on Wednesday and earned an estimated $61.4 million in its first five days, according to studio estimates. The Minions are a popular franchise globally and "Minions & Monsters" has earned $160 million worldwide in its debut week.

Audiences looking for patriotic fare amid the United States' 250th birthday celebration had "Young Washington" to consider; it opened in third place with nearly $21 million. The movie focuses on George Washington's service during the French and Indian War.

That left "Supergirl" in fourth with just under $10 million at the box office, a steep 74% drop from its disappointing opening weekend.

The weekend box office was down year-over-year about 24%, according to figures compiled by Rentrak, though this summer is up from 2025 by nearly 12%. That's due in part thanks to the low-budget Gen-Z sensations "Obsession" and "Backrooms," which took the sixth and seventh spots, behind Steven Spielberg's "Disclosure Day."

With final domestic figures being released Monday, this list factors in the estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Rentrak:

1. "Minions & Monsters," $36.4 million.
2. "Toy Story 5," $31 million.
3. "Young Washington," $20.8 million.
4. "Supergirl," $9.6 million.
5. "Disclosure Day," $6 million.
6. "Obsession," $5.3 million.
7. "Backrooms," $3.3 million.
8. "Jackass: Best and Last," $2.7 million.
9. "Scary Movie," $1.1 million.
10. "The Invite," $800,708.

Variety

LONDON: **Kate**, the Princess of Wales, visited Wimbledon on Thursday in her latest public appearance since announcing her cancer was in remission.

Kate

As the patron of the All England Club, Kate last year was at Centre Court on consecutive days to present the winners' trophies to singles champions Iga Swiatek and Jannik Sinner.

In May, the 44-year-old Kate traveled to Italy for a two-day tour focused on early childhood education. The trip was part of what her office called a "fact-finding mission" to explore different approaches to supporting young children and their carers.

The princess, who spent a gap year in Florence when she was younger, spoke a few words of Italian to a group of preschool children, introducing herself as Caterina.

A year ago, Kate offered consoling words to women's runner-up Amanda Anisimova after a 6-0, 6-0 loss to Swiatek.

In 2024, while recovering from cancer, Kate did not attend the women's final but was on hand for Carlos Alcaraz's win over Novak Djokovic at the All England Club. (AP)

❑ ❑ ❑

NEW YORK: The FBI has discounted some of the ransom notes that surfaced after the disappearance of Nancy Guthrie as nothing more than extortion attempts, but the agency said Wednesday it's still evaluating others that might be legitimate.

The FBI did not specify how many ransom notes have been received, other than saying "several."

"This case continues to be investigated as a kidnapping for ransom case," the FBI said in a statement.

The Pima County Sheriff's Department is also investigating the case. The department declined to comment on the notes Wednesday but said it's taking every tip in the investigation seriously.

Tucson TV station KOLD has said it received two notes, one demanding millions in Bitcoin in exchange for Guthrie's return and another that said she had died. TMZ also received a note.

Guthrie is the mother of longtime "Today" show host Savannah Guthrie. Authorities believe she was kidnapped, abducted or otherwise taken against her will on Feb. 1. They found blood near the front doorstep of her home just outside Tucson, and the FBI later released surveillance videos showing a masked man on the porch that night. (AP)

Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce's love story, from friendship bracelets to wedding rings

What started with a friendship bracelet has resulted in wedding rings. Taylor Swift, the pop superstar, and Travis Kelce, the football champion, have officially tied the knot.

The couple, both 36, were married Friday at Madison Square Garden, according to Swift's publicist. The news was announced to the public with the marquee outside the Midtown Manhattan arena reading "JUST&T MARRIED."

It is the latest chapter in the couple's love story, one that has spanned three years, two Super Bowls, an album announcement and the highest-grossing tour of all time.

Here is a look at some of the major events in their relationship.

It started, fittingly, with a friendship bracelet.

It was way back in July 2023 that Kelce attended Swift's Eras concert at Arrowhead Stadium, where the Chiefs play.

After, on his "New Heights" podcast with brother Jason Kelce, he professed to being disappointed - well, his word was "butthurt" - that he couldn't meet Swift and present her with a bracelet with his phone number on it.

"She doesn't meet anybody, or at least she didn't want to meet me, so I took it personal," he quipped. The podcast asked on Instagram: "Anyone know how to get a bracelet to @taylorswift13? … asking for a friend."

But by that September, Kelce was hinting his efforts had achieved some success. He declined to elaborate amid speculation, telling an interviewer: "It is what it is."

Clearly, though, something was happening. Soon, Kelce revealed he'd invited Swift to a game at Arrowhead. "I threw the ball in her court," he said on another talk show.

Swift took Kelce up on his offer, appearing for all the world to see at the Chiefs-Bears game, cheering next to his mom, Donna Kelce. The two left the stadium in Kelce's purple Chevelle "getaway car" - forgive the pun, but Kelce himself used it.

"Pretty ballsy," Kelce said a few days later of Swift's appearance, adding how much he loved seeing her cheer next to his mother.

It was the launch of a long series of appearances by Swift at Chiefs games. There was some online angst over whether Swift was distracting from football - while the NFL itself capitalized on her fandom. A day after the flashy Los Angeles premiere of her "Taylor Swift: Eras Tour" movie, she was back at Arrowhead.

And now it was time for Kelce to be the adoring fan. In November 2023, after a hiatus of two months, Swift brought her tour to Argentina, where she changed the lyrics of "Karma" to salute her beau. "Karma is the guy on the Chiefs, coming straight home to me," she sang. Scott Swift, next to a beaming Kelce, applauded his daughter's new flame.

Travis Kelce, left, and Taylor Swift pose after the AFC Championship NFL football game against the Buffalo Bills, Jan. 26, 2025, in Kansas City, Mo. (AP)

When Time magazine announced its person of the year, few were surprised. In the Time interview, Swift spoke about her relationship.

"This all started when Travis very adorably put me on blast on his podcast, which I thought was metal as hell," Swift said, adding that they'd already been a couple before that first Chiefs game cameo.

Soon after, things were heating up on the football field - meaning the Chiefs were heading to the Super Bowl. At the AFC championship game, the couple made it clear they were fine with whatever attention was coming their way. In the middle of the field in Baltimore, after the Chiefs beat the Ravens, Swift and Kelce kissed. "I love you," Kelce said. "So much it's not funny."

There was one game left. Fans wondered: How would Swift make it from her Tokyo shows to the Super Bowl in Las Vegas?

"This week is truly the best kind of chaos," Swift posted on Instagram.

Chaos indeed. In one week of February 2024, Swift attended the Grammys in Los Angeles, jetted to Tokyo for four concerts, then jumped back onto her private plane to make the Super Bowl with time to spare. To get there, she crossed nine time zones and the international dateline.

"She's rewriting the history books herself," Kelce said a day after the Grammys, where Swift had won album of the year for a record fourth time. "I told her I'll have to hold up my end of the bargain and come home with hardware, too."

And he did. The two kissed on the field again after the Chiefs beat the San Francisco 49ers, Swift in her "87" necklace.

Within days, Swift was on the road again, with Kelce joining her in Australia for some koala-cuddling at the zoo.

In Paris, Swift introduced a section from "The Tortured Poets Department," her new album. Fans wondered if Kelce had made his way into some of its lyrics - like "You knew what you wanted and, boy, you got her," from "So High School."

But the highlight came in June, during a celebrity-packed set of concerts in London. There, Kelce made his Eras stage debut, donning a tuxedo and top hat and carrying Swift in his arms during a choreographed bit before "I Can Do It With a Broken Heart."

"I'm still cracking up/swooning," Swift wrote later on Instagram.

As for Kelce, he spoke with pride about the relationship, noting on the "Bussin' with the Boys" podcast that he had no desire to hide anything.

"That's my girl," he said. "That's my lady. I'm proud of that."

Swift echoed that emotion when she accepted an MTV Video Music Award last September, shouting out "my boyfriend Travis" in her speech.

"Everything this man touches turns to happiness and fun and magic," she said.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2024, Kelce attended a number of Swift's remaining tour dates and mentioned her on "New Heights," officially referring to her as "his girlfriend" in a July episode.

"She is every bit of what everyone makes her out to be. She's so awesome. Some of these people you meet, and you're just like, 'I don't know what I'm doing here,'" he said. "You are unbelievable, your talent is unbelievable, how you present yourself is unbelievable and I am just a jamoke supporting his girlfriend."

Swift, too, was regularly photographed attending Kelce's games - including the 2025 Super Bowl.

A month post-Super Bowl, the couple made their red-carpet debut at the Tight End University in June, an annual three-day training summit founded by Kelce, George Kittle and Greg Olsen.

They were then spotted at Brooklyn Bowl in Nashville, where Swift hopped on stage to perform "Shake it Off" with country singer Kane Brown. For fans, it marked yet another moment of the couple showing very public support and admiration for one another.

A couple that collaborates together, stays together.

Swift announced her highly anticipated 12th studio album, "The Life of a Showgirl," in mid-August and included Kelce in the rollout. It began with a tease from "New Heights," which later revealed Swift would appear in an episode the following day.

Swift told the Kelce brothers she wanted to show them something, revealing a mint-green briefcase that featured her initials in orange. Jason Kelce asked what was in it, prompting her to pull out a vinyl record.

In the two-hour "New Heights" episode featuring Swift, she went into detail about the pair's summer following the Super Bowl. She said she spent considerable time in Florida with Travis Kelce. She also said "our jobs are very similar": They revolve around entertaining "people for three hours in NFL stadiums."

On her self-described "favorite podcast," Swift credited "New Heights" for getting her a boyfriend. "This is sort of what I've been writing songs about wanting to happen to me since I was a teenager," she said of their romance.

And Kelce credited the tour for, well, getting him a girlfriend. "I see you on that stage and see how you can get an entire stadium going, and then I get you in a room and it's like I've known you forever," he said. "It's the easiest conversation I ever had, and it was just so much fun that it knocked my socks off."

In late August, in a five-photo carousel shared to both Swift and Kelce's official Instagram accounts, the couple announced their engagement. "Your English teacher and your gym teacher are getting married," she wrote in her caption.

The idea seemed too crazy for even the most open-minded Swifty - a wedding at Madison Square Garden? Really? Yet as the July Fourth weekend approached, one of New York's iconic venues began buzzing with activity as crews shuttled equipment into the giant, private space and a law enforcement official confirmed to the AP that Swift and Kelce's wedding would be taking place on Friday, July 3.

The couple did not have bridesmaids or groomsmen, instead opting for Swift's brother to serve as her man of honor and Kelce's brother Jason serving as his best man. Actor Adam Sandler officiated the star-packed ceremony.

According to Swift's publicist, Swift and Kelce's outfits were designed by Christian Dior Haute Couture and its designer Jonathan Anderson with shoes custom-made by Christian Louboutin. Swift wore Cartier jewelry.

'I was always fascinated by the kitchen'

Anissa new cookbook spotlights war-scarred Lebanese villages

Anissa Helou, 74, one of the Middle East's most acclaimed cooks and food writers, signs a copy of her new book at her late mother's apartment in the Mount Lebanon town of Ballouneh, Thursday, July 2, 2026. (AP)

Anissa Helou, 74, one of the Middle East's most acclaimed cooks and food writers, holds her new book during a ceremony at the Lebanese Ministry of Tourism, in Beirut, Lebanon, Tuesday, June 23, 2026. (AP)

Anissa Helou, 74, one of the Middle East's most acclaimed cooks and food writers, prepares awarma, a traditional Lebanese lamb confit, at her late mother's apartment in the Mount Lebanon town of Ballouneh, Thursday, July 2, 2026. (AP)

BALLOUNEH, Lebanon, July 6, (AP): Before becoming one of the Middle East's most acclaimed cooks and food writers, Anissa Helou had no intention of either path. She entered the world of cooking and writing almost by accident when she was in her late 30s.

Now 74, Helou has a wide following in the region and elsewhere and has released nearly a dozen books since the 1990s about food in the Middle East and beyond. Last month she received Britain's prestigious Guild of Food Writers Lifetime Achievement Award.

The daughter of a Lebanese mother and a Syrian father, Helou was born into a Christian family and grew up watching her mother, grandmother and paternal aunt cooking. It opened her eyes to the food traditions of the two countries, both widely known in the region for their varied and flavorful cuisine.

"I was always fascinated by the kitchen, by their movements (and) by how they put things together, by the chopping," Helou said about her mentors. "I love being in the kitchen with them and of course I loved eating."

Helou's latest book, "Lebanon: Cooking the Foods of My Homeland," was officially released in late June in Beirut in a ceremony at Lebanon's Tourism Ministry attended by scores of people including food critics and restaurant owners.

The book, which comes as the country has been battered by two wars in the past three years between Israel and the Hezbollah militant group, includes a section about food in some of the southern Lebanese villages that have suffered the worst destruction.

During her repeated visits there, most recently in October 2023, she found residents had their own regional variations of traditional cuisine. They include mujadara, a dish mainly consisting of lentils that is often cooked with rice, but in southern Lebanon is more likely to be made with bulgur.

"I discovered more, like, variations and added dishes, rather than something that was a complete revelation," Helou said.

She has picked walnuts from a tree growing along the giant wall separating southern Lebanon from northern Israel and met residents who have lost their homes and businesses in the Hezbollah-Israel conflict.

Helou recalled Moussa Ibrahim from the southern village of Dibbine, which has been the site of intense clashes between Israel troops and Hezbollah fighters. Fighting there in 2024 caused Ibrahim to lose his business producing mouneh: vegetables, fruits, grains and dairy preserved with traditional Lebanese techniques including sun-drying, salting, pickling or submerging in olive oil.

Helou, who has traveled the world to sample food, said she loves Korean and Japanese in addition to Middle Eastern cuisine.

"Lebanese, Iranian and Moroccan are among the greatest cuisines," Helou said earlier this month in her late mother's apartment in the Mount Lebanon town of Ballouneh.

"Lebanese cuisine is kind of a little bit more sophisticated, a lot fresher, more vibrant" compared with some other Middle East food, Helou said as she prepared a traditional Lebanese lamb confit called awarma.

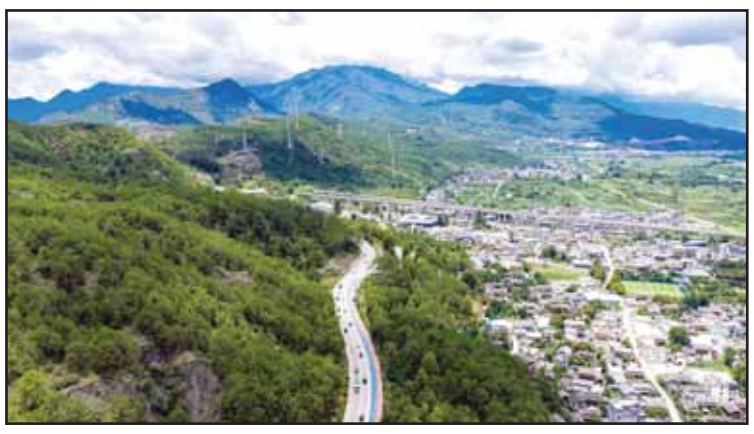
Asked for the home of the region's best food, Helou did not hesitate to move outside Lebanon and name Syria's largest city, Aleppo.

Famed for its centuries-old covered market, which was badly damaged during Syria's civil war beginning in March 2011, Aleppo is known for varied and elaborate cuisine with influences from Persia, North Africa and Armenia. "I think that Aleppo is undoubtedly the gastronomic capital of the Middle East, regardless of me being Syrian," she said.

Global anti-Islamic sentiments rose dramatically after the Islamic State group took large parts of Syria and Iraq and declared a caliphate in 2014, launching deadly attacks in the region and the world.

Travel

An aerial drone photo taken on July 1, 2026 shows a view along the Yunnan-Xizang Highway in Mangkam County, Qamdo, southwest China's Xizang Autonomous Region. (Xinhua)



An aerial drone photo taken on July 4, 2026 shows a view of the section between Baihanchang to Lijiang along the Yunnan-Xizang Highway in southwest China's Yunnan Province. (Xinhua)

An aerial drone photo taken on July 2, 2026 shows bridges along the Lijiang-Shangri-la railway which connect Lijiang City and Deqen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, southwest China's Yunnan Province. (Xinhua)

An aerial drone photo taken on July 4, 2026 shows a view of the ancient town of Dali along the Yunnan-Xizang Highway in southwest China's Yunnan Province. (Xinhua)

China's alpine highway turns 50

Remote passage turns into a world-class travel route

KUNMING, July 6, (Xinhua): Fifty years ago on this day, the Yunnan-Xizang Highway, a vital trunk road in China's southwestern border regions, was fully completed and opened to traffic.

Stretching 715 kilometers from Xiaguan County in Yunnan Province to Mangkam County in Xizang Autonomous Region, the route crosses the Jinsha and Lancang rivers, traverses the rugged and geologically complex Hengduan Mountains, and climbs over snow-capped passes. Connecting to the southern section of the Sichuan-Xizang Highway to Lhasa, it has forged a crucial land artery linking Yunnan and Xizang, ending the extreme geographical isolation of China's frontier southwest.

Half a century on, the once primitive lifeline built by manual labor has evolved into a modern alpine highway. More than just a traffic route, the upgraded Yunnan-Xizang Highway weaves together world-famous landscapes and millennia-old ethnic culture, fueling cultural tourism along the route. It has grown into a world-class tourism corridor that powers coordinated regional development and common prosperity for people of various ethnic groups.

Perilous construction

Back in the 1970s, building the Yunnan-Xizang Highway was an extremely arduous engineering endeavor. Constrained by harsh high-altitude cold, complex fractured geology, scarce supplies and lack of large-scale machinery, generations of road builders carved the road out of sheer cliffs with hammers and pickaxes.

Wu Junsheng, an 89-year-old retired maintenance worker, is a witness to those extraordinary years. "We survived on dried corn seeds, boiled and shared among workers. We even stored leftover seeds in our pockets to chew on while working."

All excavation was carried out by manual labor. Workers lived in cramped tents on steep slopes, enduring freezing temperatures and extremely harsh living conditions.

When the highway opened to traffic in 1976, Wu was overwhelmed with joy.

The Yunnan-Xizang Highway has undergone three systematic upgrades over five decades. In the 1970s and 1980s, it was a temporary mountain road with merely 6-meter-wide gravel surfaces. Without standardized drainage and protection systems, it barely met basic seasonal passage. From the 1990s to 2010, the route was paved with asphalt and upgraded to a mountain highway with formal maintenance standards. Since 2010, the completion of secondary highway on certain sections and three tunnels crossing the snow mountains has eliminated the bottleneck of high-altitude blizzard-prone passes, promoting the whole route to a modern alpine highway.

These upgrades have effectively addressed longstanding challenges such as mudslides, permafrost damage, and heavy snow blockages, laying a solid foundation for the rapid growth of tourism along the route and for the economic development in the region.

"From dirt roads to asphalt roads, people no longer suffer from tough travels," Wu said. "The changes over the past 50 years are beyond imagination."

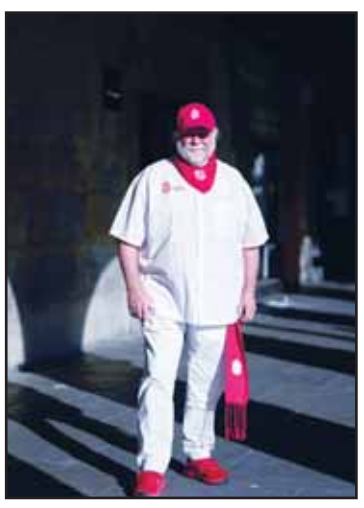
'The Sun Also Rises' inspires modern bull runners

PAMPLONA, Spain, July 6, (AP): Bill Hillmann has been gored three times while running with the bulls in Spain, but he wouldn't miss this year's San Fermin festival for anything.

It marks the 100th anniversary of the publication of Ernest Hemingway 's book that launched the future Nobel Laureate to literary fame and put Pamplona on the map for millions of people around the world.

Hemingway's 1926 novel "The Sun Also Rises" has captivated generations of readers with its sexy Jazz Age tale of American and British bohemians trying to fill some inner void with the distractions of exotic travel, vast quantities of alcohol and the anguishing pursuit of impossible love.

Its success established "The Sun Also Rises" as a cornerstone of the American literary canon, right up there with F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby." It also popularized the term "lost generation" to describe the tight-knit group of early 20th-century writers expatriated in Paris. Hemingway's terse style forever changed American literature. In Spanish, its title is translated as "Fiesta."



San Fermin tour operator Bruce Anderson poses in Pamplona, northern Spain, Thursday, July 2, 2026. (AP)

Hillmann, who hails from Chicago, was 19 when Hemingway's vivid depiction of the bull running festival first enthralled him, especially descriptions of average Spaniards risking their lives sprinting through the streets to guide the bulls to the bull ring during the nine-day festival. It kicks off with a firework blast over a packed plaza on Monday, and the first of eight bull runs is on Tuesday.

"It was the first book I ever read," Hillmann told The Associated Press in Pamplona as he looked down on the pen where the bulls are held before being set free on the cobblestoned route. "I sat there for about six hours, well past midnight, reading the book. And by the time I was done with that book, I was going to be a writer and I was going to be a bull runner."

Since that literary encounter, the 44-year-old Hillmann has run with the bulls in Spain hundreds of times, counting both his trips to Pamplona and his participation in dozens more bull runs in other Spanish towns. His infatuation with Hemingway and Pamplona has never waned, even though he nearly died one time that he was gored by a bull horn.

Hillmann's appreciation led him to earn a doctorate in English, and now it is his turn to teach "The Sun Also Rises" at East-West University in Chicago, and write about bull running.

Artifacts dating back 2,000 years

Thailand archaeological dig reveals ancient gold rings

BANGKOK, July 6, (AP): Two gold rings aged around 2,000 years old were discovered during an excavation at a new archaeological site in western Thailand, officials said.

The rings were found with human bones during an ongoing dig at the Don Yai Thong archaeological site in Phetchaburi province last week, the Thai government's Fine Arts Department said in a statement.

One ring found Thursday was engraved with characters believed to be Brahmi script, an ancient Indian writing system. An initial assessment by experts identified the script reading as "pusarakhitasa," meaning "the one protected by Pushya," said to be one of the most auspicious zodiac signs in Indian astronomy, the department said.

The other ring found with the same skeletal remains is a plain gold ring without any pattern. Experts believe the rings' owner may have been a merchant of the Indian ancient caste system Vaishyas, the department said.

The Don Yai Thong archaeological site, about 130 kilometers (80 miles) southwest of the capital Bangkok, was discovered early this year after residents found pieces of ancient bronze drums in a rice field, leading to further excavation.

The site was dated to a late prehistoric era in Thailand, a period of human settlement also known as the Iron Age, established to be around 1,500 to 2,500 years ago.

Since February, archaeologists have discovered eight human skeletons, bronze and gold jewelry, pottery and other artifacts indicating a ceremonial burial of wealthy people or members of the society's upper classes.

The excavation is expected to be complete in another month, with plans to showcase the archaeological finds to the public, the Fine Arts Department said.

This photo released by The Fine Arts Department, shows a gold ring at the Don Yai Thong archeological site in Phetchaburi province, Thailand, Thursday, July 2, 2026. (AP)

In this photo released by The Fine Arts Department, an archaeologist shows two rings with human bones during an ongoing dig at the Don Yai Thong archeological site in Phetchaburi province, Thailand Thursday, July 2, 2026. (AP)

23,000-year-old Côa Valley rock art found in Portugal

LISBON, July 6, (Xinhua): Archaeologists have discovered several prehistoric rock engravings estimated to be more than 23,000 years old at Portugal's Coa Valley Archaeological Park, according to the reports of Lusa news agency on Sunday.

The findings were made on the so-called "Rock 9" of the Fariseu archaeological site, where excavation work began in 2020 and where the world's largest known aurochs engraving -- a 3.5-meter depiction of a wild bull on a schist -- was found on the same year, said the reports quoting researchers.

Two new complete engravings were discovered, along with others still under study, bringing the total number of motifs recorded on Rock 9 to 40.

The new engravings belong to the Solutrean period, a cultural stage of the Upper Palaeolithic characteristic of Western Europe and the Iberian Peninsula, broadly dated between 20,000 and 15,000 BC.

The Fariseu site is part of the Coa Valley Archaeological Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site spanning 20,000 hectares across the Guarda and Braganca districts.

Namibia art show reimagines African history and heritage

WINDHOEK, July 6, (Xinhua): Colorful chitenge fabric, carved and painted surfaces, and portraits of African historical figures filled the upper gallery of the National Art Gallery of Namibia on Saturday, where visitors gathered to reflect on the continent's past through contemporary art.

Titled "Giants of Africa," the exhibition ran from May 21 to July 4 and formed part of the gallery's Emerging Artists Program.

Organized by the National Art Gallery, it featured works by two young female Namibian artists, Jodine Strauss and Esneya Zulu, both graduates of the College of the Arts class of 2024.

Framed as a "sacred grove," the exhibition transformed the gallery into a meeting place between past and present.

Across fabric, carved surfaces and layered images, African queens, rulers and spiritual figures appeared not as distant names in history books, but as enduring voices speaking to questions of power, belonging and freedom today.

Speaking at an artist talk on the closing day of the exhibition, Chief Curator Ndeenda Shivute-Nakapunda said the show was significant not only for its artistic approach but also for providing two emerging female artists with a platform at the national gallery.

State aiming to cut down on confusion

Did the milk expire? California bans 'sell by' food labels to cut food waste

SAN FRANCISCO, July 6, (AP): In Kimberley Kausen's home, a passed "sell by" date on a jug of milk means different things to different family members. For her daughter, it means the jug belongs in the trash. For her husband, it means the milk is still good for a few more days.

Kausen, a chef and cooking teacher in Irvine, California, is more discerning and often uses her sense of smell before deciding what to do with the milk.

"I'll put some thought into it, and if we're talking about meat and poultry, I'm very cautious about that and for sure will do the smell test and the touch test," she said.

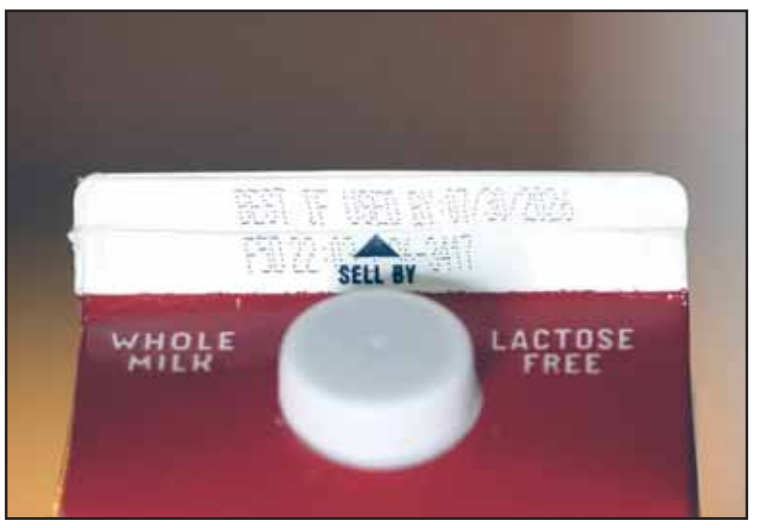
The debate playing out in Kausen's kitchen is repeated in homes across California and the country, where varying phrases on food packaging have long left shoppers unsure whether food is simply past its peak quality or unsafe to eat. The state is aiming to cut down on confusion - and the food waste it creates when people throw away food early - with a new food labeling law starting Wednesday.

It bans the use of "sell by" labels on food packaging, which experts say act as a guide for retailers on how long to display products on the shelves but are not an indicator of whether they are still safe to consume. Now, manufacturers selling food in California must use two standardized labels - a "Best if Used By" label for peak quality and "Use By" label for product safety.

Food manufacturers can choose to use either label or both, said Democratic Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin, the author of the bill.

California became the first state in the US to standardize food labels when it approved the law in 2024 that seeks to reduce food waste and the state's climate-warming emissions. New York state lawmakers recently approved a similar law that is awaiting Gov. Kathy Hochul's signature.

Legislation addressing food labeling also has been proposed in Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey and South Carolina, though it has not passed in those states.



A Best If Used By date is stamped above a Sell By label on a milk carton on June 30, in San Francisco. (AP)

Nick Lapis, director of advocacy at Californians Against Waste, which co-sponsored the bill, said food labels are the leading cause of household food waste. The "sell by" date labels have also been a problem for food banks in California because people consider those dates as meaning the food has expired, he said.

"We don't need to build some kind of huge infrastructure and invest tons of money to solve this. We just need companies to use the same words across brands," he said.

There are more than 50 different date labels on packaged food sold in stores, according to a 2022 report on food waste published by the University of Maryland. The information in the labels is largely unregulated and often does not relate to food safety.

"Consumers get confused and they just default to assuming that whatever date is on the package means 'don't eat it and throw it away'," said Kumar Chandran, policy director at ReFED, a nonprofit focused on reducing food waste.

Chandran said California and New York's approval of food-labeling laws has added momentum to the push for a national standard. A bipartisan bill that would establish uniform food labels is pending in Congress. The US Department of Agriculture recommended a decade ago that food sellers should switch to "Best if Used By" labeling.

Currently, the only product that is regulated federally with date labels is infant formula.

With no federal regulations dictating what information labels should include, the stamps have led to consumer confusion - and nearly 20% of the nation's food waste, according to the Food and Drug Administration. In California, that's about 6 million tons of unexpired food that's tossed in the trash each year.

Nate Rose, a spokesperson for the California Grocers Association, said some grocers have had to overhaul their labeling systems, but as a whole, the association has been supportive of the change.

The new labels will result in "a win-win where we can reduce food waste and consumers will find these decisions a little bit simpler," he said, adding that shoppers will still find old labels in stores for months to come as grocers sell through the products that already have them.

Lifeguards recommend raising an arm to signal for help

When rip current sucks you out to sea, try not to panic

SAN DIEGO, July 6, (AP): To someone who is getting sucked out to sea by a rip current, "Don't panic!" may be difficult to heed, even if that's exactly what you should do. But lifeguards say to not only relax but flip over and float out of the danger.

Rip currents are one of the coast's greatest dangers and account for the most beach rescues every year. About 100 people drown from rip currents along US beaches each year, according to the United States Lifesaving Association. And more than 80% of beach rescues annually involve rip currents.

Already this year, there have been at least 21 people killed from rip currents in U.S. waters, according to the National Weather Service.

Here are some things to know about rip currents:

Rip currents are narrow columns of water flowing rapidly away from the beach. They don't pull swimmers under water, but can carry them out a fair distance from shore.

"A rip current is like a river that pulls out to sea," said San Diego Lifeguard Marine Safety Lt. Charlie Knight. "So when the waves come into the beach, it needs somewhere to go. And so it takes these little channels out that we call rip currents to put all that water back into the ocean."

A 'Danger Rip Current' flag flies as Tropical Storm Imelda passes offshore on Sept 29, 2025, in Cocoa Beach, Fla. (AP)

Low spots along the beach, or areas near jetties or piers, are often where rip currents form. They can be connected to stormy weather but also sometimes occur during sunny days. They can be hard to detect because the surface water often appears calm.

The current can flow as fast as 8 feet (3.2 meters) per second, faster than even a strong swimmer can overcome, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The most frequent advice from beach rescue teams and weather forecasters is to "'flip, float and follow." Flipping over to float makes it easier to stay calm, conserves energy and keeps the airways open while the swimmer is in the rip current's grip.

It's nearly impossible to fight the current directly. Many swimmers who get in trouble tire themselves out trying to get back to the beach, lifeguards say.

"People tend to panic when they can't get into the beach, and that's when we have problems," Knight said. "So if you are caught in a rip current, the biggest thing is don't panic, stay calm, flip over onto your back, float and allow the rip current to take you out."

Once the rip current dissipates, it might leave the swimmer out in deeper water. Lifeguards recommend raising an arm to signal for help.

Flags with different colors are used to warn beachgoers of various hazards.

Red means a high hazard, yellow means a moderate threat and green means low danger. There's also purple for dangerous sea life, such as jellyfish, and double red when a beach is closed for any reason.

The National Weather Service posts rip current risks on its websites around the coasts and has developed a computer model that can predict when conditions exist that may lead to their formation up to six days in advance for the US East and Gulf Coasts, Puerto Rico, Hawaii and Guam.

If possible, it's best to swim near a lifeguard station.

It can be dangerous to try to rescue someone caught in a rip current, officials say. Often the people trying to perform the rescue can get into trouble themselves.

It's best to find a lifeguard, if there is one, or call 911 if a struggling swimmer is spotted.

A Long March-8A rocket carrying a new satellite group blasts off from the Hainan commercial spacecraft launch site in Wenchang, in south China's Hainan Province, July 5. (Xinhua)

Long March-8A launches sat group

China sent a new satellite group into space on Sunday from a commercial spacecraft launch site in the southern island province of Hainan.

The satellite group was launched at 9:43 p.m. (Beijing Time) and entered its preset orbit successfully. (Xinhua)

Health workers disinfect themselves after preparing the body of an Ebola victim at Citadelle Clinic in Bunia, Congo on June 12. (AP)

Uganda says Ebola outbreak contained and seeks lifting of travel restrictions

KAMPALA, July 6, (Agencies): Uganda has contained the spread of Ebola nearly two months after the outbreak was declared following the importation of cases from the neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a senior health official said on Sunday.

Diana Atwine, permanent secretary at the Ministry of Health, said in a post on social media platform X that the outbreak had been contained through the treatment of all imported confirmed cases and those they infected, the tracing and quarantine of contacts, and the provision of the required supportive care.

The ministry has also implemented preventive measures to curb the spread of the disease from eastern DRC, the epicenter of the ongoing outbreak, said Atwine.

She added that Uganda had begun engaging countries that imposed Ebola-related travel restrictions to have the measures lifted.

Earlier on Sunday, Atwine said a large team of medical personnel, two mobile laboratories and logistical support from Uganda were on their way to the DRC to support the country's Ebola response.

"This joint Uganda-DRC initiative aims to strengthen the cross-border Ebola response by reducing the movement of Ebola patients into Uganda seeking care, curbing cross-border transmission, and ending the outbreak sooner," she said.

According to the Ministry of Health, as of July 5, Uganda had recorded 20 cumulative confirmed Ebola cases since the outbreak was declared on May 15, including 15 imported cases from the DRC and five locally transmitted cases. Of the total, 16 patients have recovered, two remain hospitalized and two have died.

The ministry said the 42-day countdown to declaring the country Ebola-free will begin only after the last confirmed patient is no longer capable of transmitting the virus. If no new cases are confirmed during the 42-day period, the outbreak will be declared over.

Meanwhile, the second Chinese anti-epidemic medical expert team arrived in Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), on Friday to carry forward international cooperation in ebola prevention and control.

Luku Maleyo Marius, a representative of the DRC health ministry, welcomed the team at the airport.

The friendship between the DRC and China spans more than half a century, with particularly fruitful cooperation in the health sector, he said, noting that high-level health cooperation between the two countries has effectively helped the DRC strengthen its public health capacity.

According to Marius, the current ebola outbreak in the country remains complex and the DRC government looks forward to continued strong support from the second Chinese expert team in its epidemic response.

Greater Bay Area emerges as launchpad for China's biotech rise

GUANGZHOU, July 6, (Xinhua): In the humid heat of July in southern China, the Akeso Greater Bay Area Technology Park in Zhongshan, Guangdong Province, is running at full speed.

Signal lights flash on precision instruments as researchers monitor streams of automatically generated experimental data inside a drug-discovery laboratory, while a newly completed automated filling line is turning out medicines at a pace of more than 20,000 bottles an hour in a production building.

This busy scene offers a glimpse into the rise of Guangdong's biopharmaceutical industry, which is becoming an increasingly important force in China's push to move up the global pharmaceutical value chain.

Akeso, Inc., a Zhongshan-based biopharmaceutical company, drew international attention after its self-developed cancer drug, Ivonescimab, outperformed blockbuster therapy Keytruda of MSD, which is known as Merck in the United States, in a head-to-head Phase III clinical trial, according to **Li Baiyong**, co-founder and chief scientific officer of Akeso.

A Wall Street Journal columnist described it as the DeepSeek moment for China's biotech industry, albeit in a more "incremental" fashion.

Li

Li said the company has developed more than 50 innovative drug candidates with full independent intellectual property rights.

Eight of its self-developed drugs have entered commercial sales, including two first-in-class bispecific antibody drugs for cancer immunotherapy, he added.

Akeso's rise reflects the broader expansion of the biopharmaceutical industry in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in south China.

Covering a total area of 56,000 square kilometers, the Greater Bay Area comprises the Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions and nine cities in the Pearl River Delta of Guangdong Province.

It has one of China's most complete biopharmaceutical industrial chains and one of the country's strongest concentrations of scientific and technological innovation resources.

Zhongshan and Guangzhou, both in Guangdong, are two examples of this strength. Zhongshan is home to over 650 biopharmaceutical companies and has nurtured firms, including Akeso, through its biomedical industry parks. In neighboring Guangzhou, the provincial capital, more than 6,500 biopharmaceutical companies have taken root, with annual research and development spending exceeding 3.8 billion yuan (about 558 million US dollars).

Industry observers say the region's strength lies not only in the number of companies, but also in its ability to connect research, manufacturing and market access.

A health worker fumigates a home for mosquitos to help mitigate the spread of dengue in Caranavi, Bolivia, on March 2, 2023. (AP)

Sri Lanka dengue cases rise to 61,060 – NDCU

COLOMBO, July 6, (Xinhua): Sri Lanka has recorded 61,060 dengue cases so far this year, with 2,604 new infections reported during the past 24 hours, the National Dengue Control Unit (NDCU) said Monday.

The Western Province remains the center of the outbreak, accounting for 32,054 cases, or 52.5 percent of the national total. The Southern Province has reported 9,674 cases, followed by Sabaragamuwa with 5,237, Central with 4,823, Eastern with 2,979, and North Western with 2,778.

The NDCU has identified 142 Medical Officer of Health (MOH) divisions across the country as high-risk dengue zones. June recorded the highest monthly case total so far this year, with 21,546 infections.

Several hospitals in the Western Province have reached maximum capacity amid the increase in dengue patients, according to the NDCU. Acting Director Dr. Kapila Kannangara said the rise in infections has placed severe pressure on hospitals and made patient care increasingly difficult.

Kannangara said authorities have prepared a three-phase strategy covering short-term, medium-term, and long-term measures to manage the outbreak.

Historic cycling initiative in Kuwait to create investment opportunities

ABK and Suffix partner to organize ABK Tour

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: In a pioneering step aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting sports, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) and Suffix signed a three-year strategic partnership agreement to launch the ABK Tour cycling race from 2026 to 2028, marking the first initiative of its kind in Kuwait.

This strategic partnership represents a significant milestone and a turning point in Kuwait's community initiatives landscape, combining the financial strength and extensive reach of the banking sector with the operational expertise and innovative capabilities of the private sector.

The collaboration reflects a model for creating a sustainable environment that enhances quality of life and community well-being. By launching Kuwait's first cycling event of its kind, both parties will strengthen their leadership in corporate social responsibility, reinforce their position as drivers of positive change, generate meaningful economic and social impact, and create new opportunities for investment and development that support Kuwait's national vision.

The agreement was signed at ABK's Head Office by ABK's Acting Chief Executive Officer – Kuwait, Ahmad AlDuwaisan, and Chief Operating Officer of Suffix, Ahmed Al Majed, in the presence of Dr. Abdulaziz Jawad, ABK's Chief Strategy Officer at ABK, Sager Albenali, ABK's Chief Communications Officer, along with representatives from both organizations.

The partnership will introduce a unique sporting experience unlike any previously held in Kuwait. More than just a competitive cycling race, the event will serve as an integrated platform that promotes health awareness, environmental sustainability, and social responsibility.

The race will feature categories for professional cyclists, amateurs, and families to encourage broad community participation. Valuable prizes will be awarded to top finishers, while the event will also include a variety of activities, such as entertainment programs, free medical check-ups, and educational workshops on nutrition and cycling road safety.

An Exceptional Initiative

On this occasion, AlDuwaisan said, "We are delighted to organize this exceptional initiative, which reflects our unwavering commitment to corporate social responsibility and to investing in the health and well-being of our community. This race is more than just a sporting event; it is an invitation to embrace a more active and vibrant lifestyle in Kuwait."

Ahmad AlDuwaisan

Ahmed Al Majed

He added, "This initiative holds exceptional significance as it represents a tangible expression of our steadfast commitment to Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles, which are a cornerstone of ABK's identity and long-term strategy. It also reflects our belief that our role extends beyond providing financial solutions to creating lasting environmental and social impact."

AlDuwaisan highlighted the importance of the race as an innovative platform for raising awareness of the need to reduce carbon emissions, encourage environmentally friendly practices, and invest in initiatives that enhance quality of life while contributing to a more sustainable future for Kuwait.

He continued, "Our partnership with Suffix goes beyond traditional sports sponsorship. We are not simply launching a cycling race; we are helping build a new community culture that places health and sustainability at its core. As a leading financial institution, we believe that genuine, sustainable investment begins with investing in people and their well-being. Through this exceptional initiative, we aim to inspire young people and encourage society to adopt a more active and positive lifestyle."

He added, "We are proud to lead this transformation and promise an exceptional event that will strengthen Kuwait's position on the map of innovative sporting initiatives while further reinforcing ABK's leadership across multiple levels."

Al Duwaisan noted that organizing this unique initiative stems from the Bank's belief in the power of private sector collaboration to serve the community. He explained that the partnership combines ABK's strengths with Suffix's operational expertise to deliver a model for developing innovative, high-impact initiatives that create lasting value for Kuwaiti society.

He further stated, "We view this initiative as the foundation of a long-term vision to make community sports an integral part of Kuwait's cultural identity. At ABK, we remain committed to supporting and developing projects that promote human development and quality of life while contributing to Kuwait's national development vision of building a healthy, dynamic, innovative, and productive society."

Concluding his remarks, Al-Duwaisan said, "Launching this first-of-its-kind race marks an important milestone in strengthening ABK's role as an active partner within the fabric of Kuwaiti society. It also reinforces our identity as an innovative brand that resonates with younger generations, helping us strengthen our relationship with customers and build lasting trust, while continuing to lead positive change and sustainable development in the local market."

A Shared Vision

For his part, Al Majed expressed his pride in the partnership between Suffix and ABK, saying, "We are united by a shared vision of innovation and community service. We are proud to be part of this first-of-its-kind initiative, which aims to promote cycling as an environmentally friendly mode of transport and an excellent way to enhance physical fitness for people of all ages and backgrounds in Kuwait."

He added, "Signing this partnership with a leading financial institution of the caliber of ABK marks a significant milestone in our journey to becoming a leader in innovative events and community initiatives. We see this unique race as an ideal opportunity to transform our ambitious vision into a tangible reality that benefits society. By combining our operational expertise with the Bank's sustainable vision, we will deliver a world-class event worthy of Kuwait."

Strategic deal signed between Al-Duwaisan and Al-Majed.

Key figures pose for group photo during race announcement.

He continued, "Over the next three years, Suffix will leverage its full logistical and technical capabilities to deliver the race to the highest standards of professionalism and excellence. We will implement the latest smart crowd management systems and route safety measures, while providing an integrated interactive experience for both participants and spectators, making this event a benchmark for sports and recreational event management."

Al Majed emphasized that the true value of this initiative lies in its ability to inspire people to break away from their daily routines and embrace healthier, more active lifestyles. He noted that the event is not designed solely for professional athletes, but also aims to create an inclusive and welcoming environment where families and young people can enjoy cycling as a source of recreation, community engagement, and physical well-being, ultimately contributing to an improved quality of life.

Concluding his remarks, Al Majed said, "We hope this first-of-its-kind race will mark the beginning of a series of joint initiatives with ABK. Our ambition extends far beyond the success of a single event, we aim to build a sustainable partnership driven by continuous innovation, enabling us to deliver impactful initiatives that leave a lasting positive mark on Kuwaiti society while supporting the country's development plans in the fields of sports, health, and clean energy."

Further details regarding the inaugural 2026 ABK Tour, including the event date, race routes, and the official registration process, will be announced jointly by ABK and Suffix in due course.

Crowd of 350,105 spectators witness one of closest and most unpredictable editions

TOYOTA RACING claims sixth victory at 24 Hours of Le Mans

PARIS, July 6: TOYOTA RACING secured victory at the 94th running of the 24 Hours of Le Mans, the third round of the 2026 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC). Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and Nyck de Vries took first place in the No. 7 Toyota TR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercar, while teammates Sébastien Buemi, Brendon Hartley and Ryō Hirakawa completed a memorable result for the team by finishing third in the No. 8 Toyota TR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercar. The victory marks Toyota's sixth triumph at the legendary French endurance race.

Kamui Kobayashi, Team Principal and driver, vehicle No. 7, said: "It was very challenging for us, but we never gave up. Vehicle No. 7 has had a lot of second places at Le Mans but finally we got our second win. We have waited so long for this victory and it feels amazing. The whole week was not easy, including the race which was not smooth. We had a puncture early and that made it tough for us. But Mike, Nyck, our engineers and our pit crew did a great job. It was an incredible day. Thank you to everyone who made it happen, including all the fans who make this such a special event."

A crowd of 350,105 spectators witnessed one of the closest and most unpredictable editions of the 24 Hours of Le Mans in recent years. Despite starting from modest grid positions following Hyperpole, the Toyota TR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercarsmade early gains through an aggressive fuel strategy that brought both crews closer to the front. The No. 7 Toyota TR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercarrecovered from an early puncture and steadily moved up the order, while the No. 8 crew overcame several setbacks after leading during the opening stages of the race.

TOYOTA RACING celebrates victory at 24 Hours of Le Mans.

Drivers in action during the race.

A safety vehicle with less than six hours remaining brought the field back together and set up an intense battle in the closing stages. Bold overtakes from the Toyota crews put TOYOTA RACING into a one-two lead with three hours to go. After 381 laps of competition, Conway, Kobayashi and de Vries secured victory in the No. 7 Toyota TR010 Hybrid Electric Hypercarby 10.913 seconds, while Buemi, Hartley and Hirakawa completed the race in third place to deliver a double podium finish for the team.

The result extends TOYOTA RACING's lead in the manufacturers' World Championship to 36 points, while Conway, Kobayashi and de Vries move to the top of the drivers' standings.

Toyota's history in motorsports dates back more than 60 years, competing worldwide across various disciplines. Guided by the concept "roads build people and cars," the knowledge and technologies gained through motorsports support the development of "ever-better" cars. In endurance racing, TOYOTA RACING competes in top-level categories such as the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) also held in Bahrain and Qatar, supporting vehicle and technology development through extreme conditions.

Round four of the 2026 FIA WEC is 6 Hours of São Paulo (July 12), held at the Interlagos circuit in Brazil. Known for its undulating layout and technical corners, Interlagos is one of South America's most iconic motorsport venues.

Al Mulla Automobiles hosts media test drive event for All-New Mercedes-Benz CLA

KUWAIT CITY, June 6: Al Mulla Automobiles, the sole authorized distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait, hosted an exclusive media test drive event on June 20th at the distinguished venue of Dar Hamad. The event brought together members of the media and automotive-focused social media personalities for an intimate showcase of the all-new Mercedes-Benz CLA – offering guests a first-hand experience of the model that is redefining the modern luxury compact segment.

Set against the warm ambiance of Dar Hamad, the event was elevated by live musical entertainment and the renowned hospitality that has made the venue a landmark of Kuwaiti culture. Guests were immersed in an atmosphere that complemented the sophistication of the CLA, before taking to the scenic Gulf Road for an exhilarating test drive that brought the vehicle's extraordinary capabilities to life.

The new CLA offers more to customers in every dimension: more space, more refinement, more comfort, more intelligence, and more efficiency compared to its predecessor – and is the first model in a completely new family of vehicles. Its exterior is equal parts sporty and stylish, featuring a shark-nose front, powerdomes, frameless doors, and aerodynamically optimized wheels up to 19 inches. The long wheelbase of 2,790mm, short overhangs, and a distinctive GT rear are complemented by a flowing roofline and an optimized rear diffuser, with many details across the body engineered specifically to enhance aerodynamics. The optional MULTIBEAM LED headlights feature an illuminated star pattern and stage animations when unlocking and locking the car, while the LED rear lights and full-width light strip carry through the same animations from front to rear, giving the CLA a distinctive and unmistakable presence at all times of the day or night. All CLA models come as standard with a fixed panoramic roof without B-pillar bows, extending seamlessly from the windscreen frame to the rear, maximizing headroom and filling the cabin with natural light.

At the heart of the all-new CLA is MB.OS – the in-house developed Mercedes-Benz Operating System – marking the next step in vehicle digitization. Thanks to its new chip-to-cloud architecture, MB.OS connects the powertrain, infotainment, and various other vehicle systems, while keeping the CLA constantly up-to-date via over-the-air updates. MB.OS also introduces the fourth generation of MBUX, the first in-car infotainment system to integrate artificial intelligence from both Microsoft and Google. The optional MBUX Superscreen extends across the entire width of the dashboard, with the combination of three seamless screens enabling both driver and passenger to access entertainment, information, and third-party apps. The redesigned center console sits high for a sporty feel and features two levels, including an optional wireless charging spot, with trim options ranging from anthracite matte to wood, aluminum, or recycled paper finishes. The CLA is available with a high-tech 48-volt hybrid drivetrain with an electric motor integrated into the transmission, capable of electric-only driving at urban speeds and up to around 100 km/h, with recuperation of up to 25 kW across all eight gears.

To learn more about the all-new Mercedes-Benz CLA and to register your interest, please visit Al Mulla Automobiles Mercedes-Benz showroom in Al Rai, Mercedes-Benz Boutique in The Avenues, or call the customer center at 1887888. For the latest news and updates, follow the account on Instagram @MercedesBenzKuwait, or visit the website at https://www.mercedes-benz-mena.com/kuwait/en

Announcement

Regarding the list of debtors of Ghazal Insurance Company - K.S.C. Closed (under bankruptcy proceedings).

This announcement is in connection with the issuance of the decision dated June 22, 2026, in application No. (23 / 2024) – bankruptcy proceedings, published in the Kuwait Gazette (Kuwait al-youm) on July 5, 2026, filed by the Insurance Regulatory Unit against Ghazal Insurance Company.

Attached is the provisional list of debts owed by Ghazal Insurance Company, accessible via the barcode attached to this announcement.

Bankruptcy Trustee : Abdullah Marwan Al-Issa

McIntosh breaks 200-meter butterfly world record

MONTREAL, July 6, (AP): Summer McIntosh broke the longest-standing individual women's swimming world record, finishing the 200-meter butterfly in 2 minutes 1.65 seconds at the Canadian trials.

The 19-year-old McIntosh broke the mark of 2:01.81 set by China's Liu Zige in 2009 during what's known as the super-suit era.

A three-time champion at the 2004 Paris Olympics, McIntosh slammed her fists into the water in celebration while smiling ear-to-ear as the crowd erupted inside the Olympic pool.

"That was the one world record that I've always dreamt of as a kid," McIntosh said. "To now do it is really incredible."

McIntosh has long targeted the record, coming within 0.18 seconds with a time of 2:01.99 last year in the world championships.

"I could tell on the last 50 that I must have been close to the world record just based off how loud the crowd was," said McIntosh, who finished 8.5 seconds ahead of runner-up Mary-Sophie Harvey.

The All-New Mercedes-Benz CLA.

Salah meets Messi

Egypt faces toughest test against Argentina

ATLANTA, July 6: Fans are eagerly awaiting a blockbuster clash between Egypt and Argentina in the Round of 16 of the 2026 FIFA World Cup today, a meeting that goes beyond tactical battle to spotlight two of the modern game's greatest icons: Argentina captain Lionel Messi and Egypt star Mohamed Salah.

Egypt has made history in this tournament by reaching the Round of 16 for the first time, producing standout performances that have captured global attention. The Pharaohs now face their toughest test yet against the reigning world champions in a high-stakes knockout encounter.

The spotlight, however, falls on the renewed rivalry between Salah and Messi, who have met only twice before in their careers.

Mohamed Salah celebrates Egypt's last 16 win over Australia.

Their first meeting came in the 2015-2016 UEFA Champions League group stage, when Salah was at Roma and Messi represented Barcelona. The match at the Stadio Olimpico ended 1-1, with both players completing the full game.

In the return fixture at Camp Nou, Barcelona won emphatically 6-1, although Salah did not feature in that match, postponing a second direct showdown.

Their next encounter arrived in the 2019 Champions League semi-finals, when Barcelona defeated Liverpool 3-0 in the first leg, with Messi scoring twice, including a memorable free-kick.

Salah missed the second leg at Anfield due to injury, as Liverpool produced a stunning 4-0 comeback to reach the final and eventually lift the trophy.

Now, the Egypt-Argentina clash in the World Cup Round of 16 represents the third chapter in the Salah vs Messi narrative—this time on the biggest stage in world football. Salah will aim to inspire Egypt to a historic quarter-final place, while Argentina continues its bid to defend the world title they won in Qatar.

Elsewhere in the tournament, Switzerland and Colombia meet at BC Place Stadium in Vancouver in another Round of 16 fixture.

Queiroz quits as Ghana coach after World Cup elimination

KANSAS CITY, Mo., July 6, (AP): Carlos Queiroz has quit as Ghana coach after the team's World Cup campaign ended with a disappointing 1-0 loss to Colombia at the first knockout stage.

"We cannot claim complete sporting satisfaction, but we can proudly say that we honored the colors of Ghana and restored respect and credibility to the Black Stars on football's greatest stage," Queiroz wrote in an Instagram post addressed to the country late on Sunday.

Ghana was on a four-game losing run when the 73-year-old Portuguese coach was appointed in April as the fired Otto Addo 's replacement.

Ghana lost to Mexico and drew with Wales in World Cup warmups before the team started the tournament with a win over Panama in Group L. A scoreless draw against England was enough for the team to progress as one of the best third-place finishers despite a loss to Croatia in their final group game.

Against Colombia, the team could only muster eight shots. None of them were on goal.

"Football, like life, teaches us one timeless lesson: you either win or you learn," Queiroz wrote. "I leave this journey with pride in what we achieved, but also with the healthy dissatisfaction of those who always wanted more. Reaching a higher level should never be the destination - it should be the beginning of even greater ambitions."

He appeared to blame the Ghana Football Association for not doing enough to support the team.

Fan Zone

Fans express joy and drama during Last 16 matches across venues in USA and Mexico City. (AP)

UEFA calls FIFA decision to allow US forward to play 'incomprehensible'

It's a bad decision that will hurt the World Cup

GENEVA, July 6, (AP): European soccer body UEFA criticized FIFA for an "incomprehensible and unjustifiable decision" to let United States forward Folarin Balogun play at the World Cup against Belgium on Monday despite a red card in his previous game.

UEFA said in a statement FIFA "crossed a red line" with its decision not to enforce Balogun's mandatory one-game ban, after the world soccer body came under pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump.

FIFA's ruling Sunday - to defer Balogun's ban for one year of probation - shockingly deviated from soccer's traditional rule of law and drew stinging criticism globally including from former World Cup stars and coaches at this tournament.

"It's a bad, bad, bad, bad, bad decision that will hurt the World Cup," Norway coach Ståle Solbakken said Sunday after his team beat Brazil to reach the quarterfinals.

UEFA, whose member federations include Belgium, insisted: "Sometimes rules are open to interpretation. In this case not."

"When the certainty of rules is no longer guaranteed by its guardians, the integrity of the game is at stake and the credibility of a competition is undermined," said the European soccer body, which has often clashed with FIFA President Gianni Infantino during his decade in power.

"We express our disbelief at such an unprecedented, incomprehensible and unjustifiable decision," said UEFA, where Infantino was its CEO-like general secretary from 2009 until being elected to lead FIFA in February 2016.

The Belgian soccer federation was preparing an appeal in Seattle in the early hours of Monday to challenge the Balogun ruling before a FIFA-appointed appeals judge. The round of 16 game against the U.S. is due to kick off at 5 p.m. local time.

Balogun was sent off directly for planting his cleated foot on the ankle of Bosnia-Herzegovina defender Tarik Muharemovic during a 2-0 win for the U.S. in the round of 32 last Wednesday.

That kind of challenge has been a routine red card all season in competitions worldwide, and Balogun could have expected a two-game ban for serious foul play.

Still, similar challenges by star players have gone unpunished at this World Cup - by Lionel Messi for Argentina against Algeria and Morocco's Achraf Hakimi vs. Brazil. Bernardo Silva of Portugal got just a yellow card against Congo.

United States' Folarin Balogun (20) fouls Bosnia's Tarik Muharemovic (4), resulting in a red card to Balogun, during the World Cup round of 32 soccer match between the United States and Bosnia in Santa Clara, Calif., near San Francisco. (AP)

"I think a yellow card would have been fair," Balogun later suggested.

This World Cup has been remarkable for FIFA seeming to rewrite the norms of disciplinary action even before the tournament began.

A pattern of pardons opened FIFA to suggestions of executive intervention in the statutory independence of its judicial bodies.

Cristiano Ronaldo was cleared to play in Portugal's opening World Cup game despite getting a red card for serious foul play in a qualifying game against Ireland last November. He struck an opponent with an elbow.

Ronaldo served his mandatory ban in Portugal's final qualifying game but he was reprieved from an expected two-game ban because FIFA introduced the idea of probation. An imposed three-game ban was less meaningful as two games were deferred during a one-year probationary period.

At the opening game on June 11, South Africa's Themba Zwane got a red card against Mexico for a similar offense to Ronaldo's and FIFA imposed a three-game ban with no probation. Zwane did not play again at the World Cup.

Three players sent off in their teams' qualifying games last year were surprisingly told by FIFA in May they could serve their bans in a future competition instead of at the World Cup, which was the long-standing norm.

Ecuador midfielder Moisés Caicedo, Argentina defender Nicolás Otamendi and Qatar defender Tarek Salman all had their bans waived for the World Cup.

This, FIFA said in May, was to ensure teams "can compete with their strongest possible squads on the biggest stage of men's international football."

The Balogun decision simply took this policy further, though not for other players shown a red card so far who were mandated to miss at least one game.

"It is a principle embedded in regulations, which cannot be made subject to exceptions," UEFA said, "let alone in the middle of a tournament where several other players have been in the same situation and regularly served their suspension."

President Donald Trump on Monday took credit for getting FIFA to review a red card issued against the United States' star forward Folarin Balogun at the World Cup but said he did not demand an outcome.

"All I did was ask for a review," Trump said when asked about it during an unrelated Oval Office event. "I didn't say, 'You have to do this.'"

Trump confirmed that he called FIFA President Gianni Infantino and asked for a second look at the punishment against Balogun in the United States' 2-0 win against Bosnia-Herzegovina last week in Santa Clara, California, near San Francisco. But he said FIFA made the final call to lift Balogun's mandatory one-game ban for a foul tackle, allowing him to play in Monday's round of 16 match with Belgium in Seattle.

FIFA's decision to suspend the one-game ban was celebrated by many in the United States but brought condemnation in the international sports world, where some called it an improper intrusion.

In remarks on Monday, Trump called the referee's decision a "horrible" call. He added that it would have been a stain on the tournament if Balogun, the U.S.' leading scorer at this year's World Cup with three goals, was held out against Belgium and the U.S. lost. He praised FIFA for making what he described as a brilliant decision in suspending the punishment.

"I didn't think it was a foul," Trump said. "I thought it was two great athletes that crashed into each other and got entangled."

The Republican president, who said he understands sports "really well," acknowledged that he did not initially know what a red card is or the consequences it brings. When he learned it would lead to a one-game suspension for Balogun, he said, he decided to step in. He also took issue with the use of video review to issue the red card, arguing that slowed-down reviews can make plays look aggressive.

Among those joining Trump for the Oval Office event was Republican Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, who thanked Trump for stepping in.

"On behalf of all Americans, thank you for getting rid of that ridiculous red card," Cruz said. "It was spectacular. There was a reason the FIFA trophy sat here for as long as it did."

Cruz appeared to be referring to a White House event last year at which Infantino visited and brought the World Cup trophy.

Chung Mong-gyu steps down as president of Korea Football Association

After Asia's World Cup stumble, resignations pile up from Seoul to Riyadh

SEOUL, July 6, (AP): The fallout in Asian football continues as the continent comes to terms with an underwhelming World Cup performance.

On Monday, Chung Mong-gyu stepped down as president of the Korea Football Association.

His departure follows harsh criticism from the country's president and the resignation of coach Hong Myung-bo last week after South Korea's group-stage exit that culminated in a 1-0 loss to South Africa.

"There were moments when I lived up to expectations and moments when I left you deeply disappointed," said Chung, who has held the role since 2013. "All the success is thanks to our players and fans, and all the mistakes are my responsibility.

"I am convinced that Korean football will overcome adversity and reach great heights once again, as it always has."

South Korea's soccer superstar Son Heung-min apologized for the team's performance in a long social media post where he said he was "indescribably hurt" and eager to "win the hearts" of the nation once again.

Chung Mong-gyu

The day after Hong stood down as South Korea's coach, Yasser Al-Misehal quit as Saudi Arabia Football Federation president as the team fell at the first hurdle at its seventh appearance.

"The national team's failure to qualify for the next round of the World Cup is a result that falls short of all our ambitions," Al-Misehal wrote on social media. "I bear full responsibility for it, apologizing to everyone who hoped to see our team in a better position."

Teams from within the Asian Football Confederation managed just three wins in 29 matches at the expanded 48-team World Cup. Of the nine representatives, only Australia and Japan advanced from the group stage. Iran was unbeaten but three draws were not quite enough to take the team into the knockout stage.

Australia and Japan were eliminated in the round of 32, the very first stage of knockouts.

The Socceroos, the AFC's last hope, lost in a penalty shootout to Egypt. Australia head coach Tony Popovic's job was already safe after he signed a contract extension on the eve of his team's opening win over Turkey.

Japan was the best performer with a 4-0 win over Tunisia 4-0 and draws with the Netherlands and Sweden to place second in its group. Then after leading Brazil 1-0 at halftime, the Samurai Blue lost to a 96th minute goal from the five-time champion.

"Through the three group-stage matches and the hard-fought game against Brazil, I sensed that what we have built can compete on the world stage," coach Hajime Moriyasu said. "If we continue this growth steadily, a day will come when we can be the best in the world."

Slovenia's Tadej Pogacar celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the third stage of the Tour de France cycling race with start in Granollers and finish in Les Angles, France. (AP)

Sports

England spoils Mexico's party at fortress Azteca

Three Lions seal last 8 spot

MEXICO CITY, July 6, (AP): Jude Bellingham and Harry Kane carried England to the World Cup quarterfinals, overcoming a raucous crowd, the elevation of Estadio Azteca and a man disadvantage in the second half to beat Mexico in a 3-2 thriller.

In the same stadium where England fell victim to Diego Maradona's controversial goal in the 1986 World Cup against Argentina, it was the foot of Kane that gave the nation redemption 40 years later.

"I am just proud of the mentality and the attitude ... round of 16 it is a moment in tournaments when you find a way to win and we did it with pure mentality and heart," England coach Thomas Tuchel said. "We overcame every obstacle that was thrown our way."

Bellingham scored two goals 98 seconds apart in the first half. And six minutes after Jarell Quansah was sent off, Kane converted a penalty to restore England's two-goal lead.

England's Harry Kane (9) and Mexico's Johan Vasquez (5) battle for the ball during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between Mexico and England in Mexico City. (AP)

England moves on to face Norway on Saturday in Miami Gardens, Florida, for a spot in the semifinals.

"It was a crazy game. We had to fight," Kane said, his voice hoarse. "I can't really talk, but the occasion, the team, everything against us, we found a way."

Bellingham stunned the crowd of 80,824 at a venue where Mexico was unbeaten in 10 World Cup matches, including three this tournament, when he scored on a header in the 36th minute and again in the 38th on a pass from Kane.

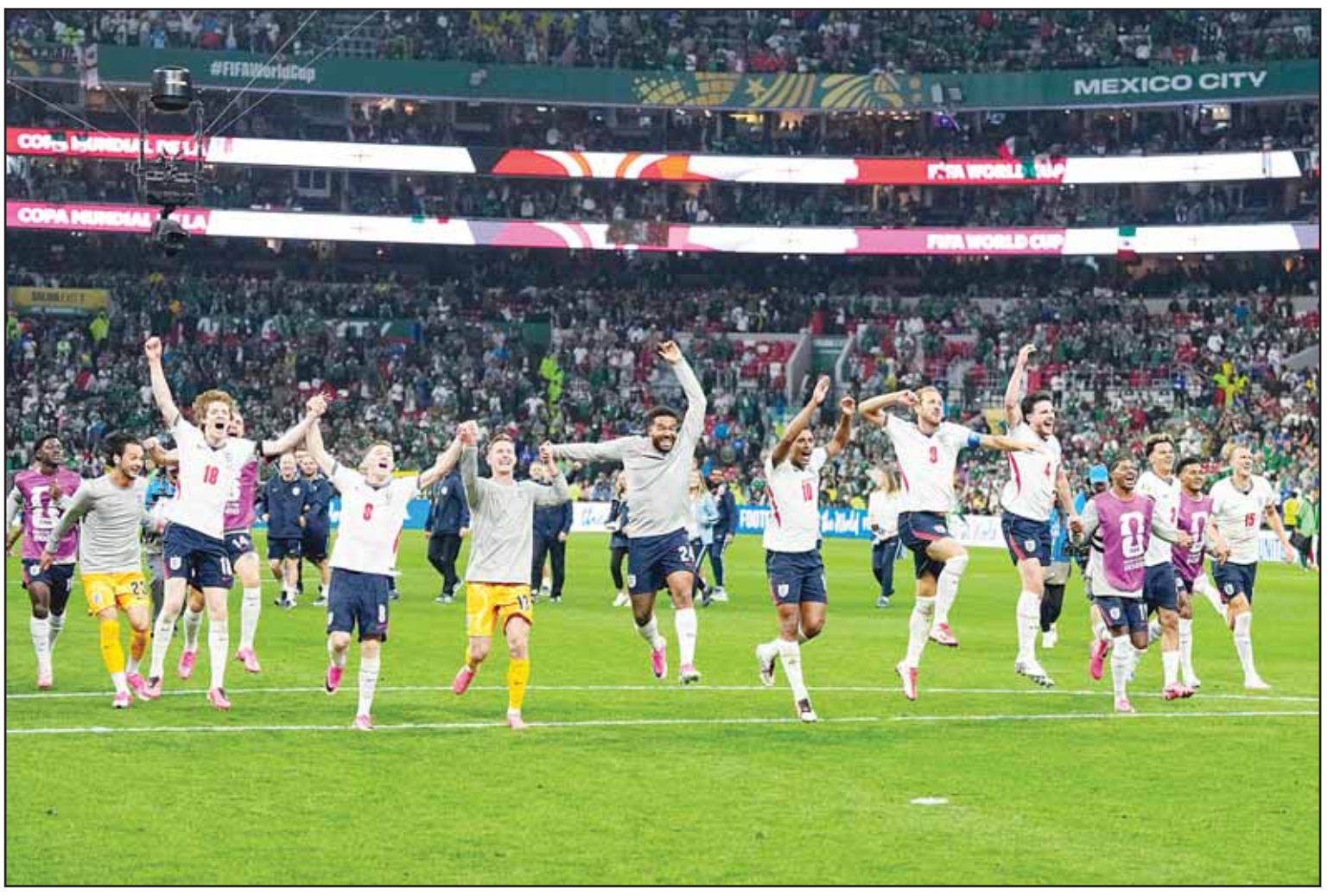
"We've done something incredible tonight, no doubt about it, and we'll enjoy it. And we'll sing songs until we lose our voices on the plane and whatnot, but we'll have a couple of days recovering, then it's straight back to business in terms of facing Norway," Bellingham said.

Julián Quiñones scored for El Tri in the 42nd minute, and the game appeared to turn in Mexico's favor when Quansah was shown a red card in the 54th for a dangerous foul on Jesús Gallardo.

But England was awarded a penalty for a challenge by Mexico goalkeeper Raúl Rangel, and Kane converted for his sixth goal of this tournament and 14th of his World Cup career, matching Gerd Müller of West Germany for fifth on the scoring list. Kane sits one behind Lionel Messi, Kylian Mbappé and Erling Haaland in the Golden Boot race.

Kane then committed a foul that made him the first player since at least 1966 to score and concede a penalty in a World Cup game. Raúl Jiménez converted the kick with a stutter-step approach to move El Tri within 3-2.

"Forty, 50 minutes with 10 men - even on sea level it's almost impossible to overcome but we did it. We did it in altitude," Tuchel said. "They're almost too exhausted to celebrate. It's just beautiful that players on that kind of level just give everything for the win and for the country and for that shirt."



England players celebrate after the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between Mexico and England in Mexico City. (AP)

Mexico attacked relentlessly over the final 21 minutes, plus 11 minutes of stoppage time, but goalkeeper Jordan Pickford and England's defenders held steady.

"This is probably one of the biggest England wins in a while, probably the biggest one I can remember as a fan or player," Bellingham said. "The best night of my England career."

Midfielder Jordan Henderson was taken to a hospital after the match with a wrist injury, Tuchel said. He was hurt when he tumbled over an advertising board during the post-game celebration.

"I have mixed feelings; I am sad because Jordan injured his wrist and it is quite serious. It just does not fit with the evening that Jordan is not with us," Tuchel added. "I do not know the procedure; the doctor told me that he is in the hospital."

Mexico has not reached the World Cup quarterfinals since hosting in 1986. Since then, it has lost in the round of 16 eight times, failed to advance past the group stage in 2022 and was disqualified from the 1990 tournament.

"Dreaming and falling like this hurts a lot, but the players should leave with their heads held high," Mexico coach Javier Aguirre said. "They left everything on the pitch, but today it just wasn't meant to be. The fans had high hopes, and we couldn't get the job done and give them another night of joy."

It was Mexico's third competitive loss at Azteca, which opened in 1966, after a pair of 2-1 defeats in World Cup qualifiers, to Costa Rica in 2001 and to Honduras in 2013.

The stadium sits 7,300 feet (2,200 meters) above sea level and England's travel schedule gave it no opportunity to get used to the altitude. Mexico's passionate fans blasted horns outside the England hotel to disrupt players' sleep, and the start of the match was delayed an hour because of a thunderstorm.

No matter. England is on to the quarterfinals as it seeks its first title since 1966, and its outnumbered fans continued to serenade the victorious Three Lions with Oasis' "Wonderwall."

Nyland penalty save sets tone

Historic night for Norway as Haaland brace dumps out Brazil; Neymar ends int'l career

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J., July 6, (AP): Erling Haaland scored, and Andreas Schjelderup jumped on his teammate's back. Haaland scored again, and Schjelderup leapt up again.

Heading in the go-ahead goal in the 79th minute and scoring again before the end of regulation time, Haaland put Norway on his back and carried it into the World Cup quarterfinals for the first time with a 2-1 defeat of Brazil on Sunday that showcased the towering striker on soccer's biggest stage.

"Maybe this will write history in Norway," Haaland said. "Everyone just need to enjoy themselves. This is just an insane day. It's one of the most insane days in Norwegian history. Just enjoy it, embrace it and enjoy the moment."

After being a nonfactor for much of the afternoon and having limited touches, Haaland spoke at the second-half hydration break with coach Ståle Solbakken, who told him to drain his energy and go for it.

Haaland turned it on when it mattered most, getting the right side of his head on the ball after a perfect setup by Andreas Schjelderup, who entered at halftime. Haaland scored a little over minutes later for his seventh of the tournament, through Danilo's legs to tie Argentina's Lionel Messi and Kylian Mbappé of France in the race for the Golden Boot.

Brazil goalkeeper Alisson Becker (1) follows the ball as Norway's Erling Haaland (9) slides out of bounds during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between Brazil and Norway in East Rutherford, N.J., near New York. (AP)

At the other end, goalkeeper Ørjan Nyland was stellar. He made a crucial stop early, diving to his left to deny Bruno Guimarães' penalty kick in the 14th minute, then got his left hand on a shot by Endrick late when Norway was hanging on to a one-goal lead.

The only goal Nyland allowed was to Neymar on a penalty kick late in stoppage time, which changed just the final score. Neymar said Sunday he is done playing for Brazil's national team, making the announcement after he and his teammates were knocked out of the World Cup with a 2-1 loss to Norway in the round of 16.

"I tried," Neymar said. "It started here at MetLife Stadium, and I finished here. It is now over."

Neymar, 34, played his first game for Brazil on Aug. 10, 2010 - a friendly against the U.S. at the stadium in the Meadowlands in northern New Jersey. Against Norway, he scored on a penalty kick in the final minutes after subbing in off the bench.

Nyland, who at 35 is his team's oldest player, was a huge factor in a historic victory that ranks among the most significant in the country's history - at least on the men's side. Norway's women's team won the World Cup in 1995, but the men have only qualified four times and not since 1998. They had not gone further than the round of 16.

"I think that all Norwegian citizens are experiencing the night of a lifetime," Solbakken said. "Some people say that we have changed Norway forever. Probably, they will party for a week or so."

Norway next faces England on Saturday in Miami Gardens, Florida. Solbakken said he had more than a dozen friends already book travel to South Florida.

Paolini beats Eala to reach Wimbledon quarterfinals

LONDON, July 6, (AP): Jasmine Paolini ended the historic Wimbledon run of Filipino star Alexandra Eala 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 to reach the quarterfinals Monday - all with her idol watching at Centre Court.

Roger Federer sat in the Royal Box as Paolini, the 2024 singles runner-up at the All England Club, attacked the 21-year-old Eala's second serve on a hot day at the grass-court Grand Slam.

The 5-foot-4 Italian tried not to let the presence of the record eight-time men's singles champion distract her.

"He is my idol," the 30-year-old Paolini said in an on-court interview. "I was like during the match, 'please stay focused, stay focused,' don't think about he's here. I was watching all the finals and all the tournaments he was playing here.

"So, it's an amazing feeling."

The left-handed Eala, who struggled with her first serve, was trying to extend her run after ousting defending champion Iga Swiatek in the third round. No other player from the Philippines had come this far in a Grand Slam singles tournament in the Open era, according to the women's professional tour.

Both players placed ice towels around their necks during changeovers Monday. The temperature rose to to 31 C (88 F) after mild weather in the first week.

Paolini, who lost the 2024 singles final to Barbora Krejcikova, said the most important part of her game is just to enjoy her tennis.

"I think that's my superpower," she said.

Paolini, the 13th seed, next will face Marta Kostyuk for a spot in the semifinals.

Kostyuk reached her first Wimbledon quarterfinals by beating qualifier Ashlyn Krueger 6-4, 6-4 on No. 2 Court.

The 24-year-old Ukrainian, a French Open semifinalist, improved to 10-0 this season against players from the United States. Krueger had come into the match with a 16-1 record on grass this season.

"Today was a very difficult day, very hot," said the 12th-seeded Kostyuk, who twirled after her win.

World Cup Fixtures

Egypt vs Argentina 19:00

Switzerland vs Colombia 23:00

Dominant Australia wins Women's T20 World Cup

LONDON, July 6, (AP): Australia won the Women's Twenty20 World Cup after smashing England in the final by seven wickets at Lord's.

Beth Mooney and Phoebe Litchfield supercharged the chase of 151 runs from the second over to the 13th in a 100-run partnership off 67 balls.

Litchfield fell 34 runs from victory and Mooney was out 11 runs from the inevitable end after her third match-winning half-century in Australia's last three successful finals.

Overseeing the winning runs in the middle with 17 balls to spare was another Australian cricket stalwart, Ellyse Perry, winning her seventh world T20 trophy.

Australia pulled off the highest successful chase in a final at 153-3 after restricting England to 150-4.

This was the 10th, biggest and most popular Women's T20 World Cup and Australia extended its staggering record to seven titles from eight finals.

After missing out on a World Cup title in the 20-over and 50-over formats in 2024 and '25, Australia's serial champion women were back in business under new captain Sophie Molineux.

"The atmosphere, the occasion, it's phenomenal," Perry told broadcaster Sky. "For it to fall our way is super special. Amazing performance from the girls against an awesome England team.

"To get over the line in Soph's first World Cup (as captain), it's a joy to be a part of. We've hopefully taken our game to a new level. To have the chance to be part of that is the privilege of a lifetime."

The sold-out final in front of a sun-baked crowd of 28,887 was going to break one maxim: England had won all four of the Women's World Cups it has hosted across formats while Australia had won all six of the finals between the teams across formats.

In the end it wasn't a contest.

Sent in to bat, England openers Amy Jones and Danni Wyatt-Hodge were dismissed in the powerplay. Wyatt-Hodge became the first player to pass 300 runs in a single T20 World Cup but she was gone for 8. Alice Capsey was bowled in the 10th over at 67-3 and England was struggling to rouse its home crowd.

It takes something special to knock out Australia in a T20 World Cup: The unbeaten 122-run stand between Claire Taylor and Beth Morgan for England in the 2009 semifinals; Hayley Matthews' 66 for West Indies in the 2016 final and Anneke Bosch's 74 for South Africa in the 2024 semifinals.

England captain Nat Sciver-Brunt had her shot and hung tough with her record ninth half-century in a T20 World Cup but her unbeaten 53-ball 58 was too slow. Freya Kemp was unbeaten on 44.

The Australia team celebrate on the podium with the trophy after winning the Women's T20 Cricket World Cup final between England and Australia in London. (AP)

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