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Amir calls for stronger foreign investment ties

KUWAIT CITY, July 7, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Tuesday Director General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr. Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Managing Director of the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) Sheikh Saud Salem Abdulaziz Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received Assistant Director General for Investment Operations at KDIPA Sheikh Abdullah Sabah Humoud Al-Sabah, Chief Executive Officer of Brookfield Corporation Bruce Flatt, and the accompanying delegation on the occasion of their visit to the country.

During the meeting, His Highness the Amir stressed the importance of supporting investment and economic opportunities and fostering a competitive business environment that strengthens strategic partnerships with foreign companies.

He said such efforts would facilitate the exchange and localization of expertise, attract global investments, support the national economy, create employment opportunities for young people, accelerate development and achieve sustainable development goals.

For his part, Flatt and the accompanying delegation expressed their appreciation for meeting His Highness the Amir, reaffirming the company's commitment to strengthening cooperation with the relevant authorities in Kuwait and exploring further investment opportunities to support development projects and expand partnership prospects, contributing to the growth and development of the national economy.

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HH the Amir receives KDIPA Director General, KIA Managing Director, Brookfield CEO and the accompanying delegation. Amiri Diwan photo

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR ENFORCES 120-DAY RECORD RETENTION

Kuwait steps up CCTV oversight

'No modification of footage'

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: The Ministry of Interior has urged the owners of establishments and buildings subject to the relevant law to adhere to the regulations and installation of security cameras and monitoring devices, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement on Tuesday, the ministry underscored the need to retain surveillance camera recordings for a minimum of 120 days and to refrain from modifying them.

The ministry stressed that this is in accordance with Law No. 61/2015, which covers hotels, hotel apartments, residential complexes, commercial complexes, cooperative societies, banks, shopping and entertainment centers, gold and jewelry shops, hospitals, clinics, youth centers, sports and cultural clubs, gas stations, industrial zones, marinas, shooting ranges, warehouses and storage facilities for precious and hazardous materials, and mosques and other places of worship.

It invited the owners of establishments and those wishing to inquire about the provisions of the law or seek further information to contact WhatsApp number 25580888.



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Kuwait has money and human capital, but needs swift decision-making

DURING World War II, the then US Secretary of Defense George Marshall was quoted as saying, "When you hear the roar of cannons, you must start planning for reconstruction and revitalizing the economy. Start selling when you hear the music of peace."

With the onset of the global financial crisis in 2008, Vice President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid launched the Media City project, along with other developments. Several projects had already been undertaken by the Emirate. Some of his close economic advisors objected, but he told them, "On the contrary, construction is beginning now and we must seize this opportunity."

In the following years, with the launching of the Dubai Metro in 2009, the economy of the Emirate boomed. Within a few years, the Emirate recovered the cost of this strategic project and began planning the expansion of such a vital facility. Dubai also started the expansion of Al Maktoum International Airport to increase its capacity to 260 million passengers annually.

The revenues of these projects enabled Dubai to pay its debts and retain more. Today, the UAE economy is capable of quickly overcoming crises. Despite the recent war, it is currently considered the fastest growing economy. Dubai achieved a qualitative leap in recent months, thanks to its bold development plans and its move away from oil as the sole source of income. Today, 77 percent of the GDP of Dubai is derived from non-oil sources.

In the same vein, Saudi Arabia has been undergoing major modernization process for many years now through its extensive 'Vision 2030' planning program. In all sectors, Saudi Arabia enacted investment-friendly laws, including granting foreigners the right to own property. Free zones were established where foreigners can work freely, with government support. Saudi Arabia invested in attracting foreign talent and capital by granting them citizenship and permanent residency.

The Sultanate of Oman is currently toying a similar path, granting citizenship to anyone who owns a residential unit or land, as well as providing investment incentives throughout the Sultanate without restrictions.

Qatar ratified a law allowing non-citizens to own real estate and establish businesses with up to 100 percent ownership. It earned astonishing non-oil revenues last year.

Bahrain made a law granting foreigners the right to own real estate, which boosted economic dynamism, the effectiveness of which was evident in the recent crisis. Despite the war, Bahrain achieved a growth of 4.6 percent in the first quarter of 2026.

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Thousands caught in traffic dragnet

By Munif Naif

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: The General Traffic Department conducted intensive traffic campaigns in various governorates from June 29 to July 5, 2026, which resulted in the issuance of 15,859 traffic citations for various violations and the handling of 3,006 traffic reports.

The department explained that the campaigns led to the detention of 42 individuals at traffic police stations, the referral of 15 juveniles to the Juvenile Prosecution for legal action, and the impounding of 482 vehicles and nine motorcycles.

The department also responded to 1,114 traffic accidents, including 239 accidents that resulted in injuries. Specialized teams attended the accident scenes and took the necessary measures.

In addition, the department apprehended one individual suspected of possessing narcotics and two individuals found in an abnormal condition, who were referred to the Drug Control General Department.

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French President Emmanuel Macron, left, speaks during a joint press conference with Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa in Damascus, Syria, Tuesday, July 7, 2026. (AP)

Kuwait condemns Damascus blasts as Macron visits Syria

KUWAIT CITY, July 7, (Agencies): Kuwait on Tuesday strongly condemned and denounced the bombings that struck the Syrian capital, Damascus, describing them as criminal acts aimed at undermining Syria's security and stability.

In a statement, the Foreign Ministry

reaffirmed Kuwait's firm rejection of all forms of violence and terrorism, stressing the country's solidarity with Syria in its efforts to preserve security, stability, and the safety of its people.

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait sounds alarm over Hormuz strike

KUWAIT CITY, July 7, (Agencies): Kuwait strongly condemned the Iranian attack targeting a Qatari tanker while transiting near the Strait of Hormuz, describing it as a flagrant violation of international law and a direct threat to maritime security and global energy supplies.

In a statement on Tuesday, the Foreign Ministry reaffirmed Kuwait's full solidarity with Qatar and its support for all measures taken to safeguard the country's security and national resources.

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Day by Day

THE wise have said, "If the heart dies, mercy disappears; if the mind dies, wisdom disappears; and if the conscience dies, everything disappears."

Experienced and wise people have said, "Money can buy food, but it cannot buy appetite."

A wise man was asked, "How old are you?" He replied, "My health is good." He was asked, "Do you have money?" He replied, "I have no debts." He was asked, "Do you have enemies?" He said, "I live far away from my relatives."

Ali ibn Abi Talib (may God honor his face) said, "If you love money, do not forget that God will ask you how you spent it. If you love palaces, do not forget that your final dwelling will be a grave. If you love someone, do not forget his Creator."

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Arab solidarity pours in after Morocco foils terror scheme

KUWAIT CITY, July 7, (Agencies): The State of Kuwait strongly condemns the terrorist designs recently aborted by the sisterly Kingdom of Morocco, said a statement from the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry on Monday.

The State of Kuwait stands in full solidarity with sisterly Morocco in all measures it might adopt to protect its security, stability and sovereignty, and the safety of its citizens and residents on its soil, according to the statement.

The Moroccan Security Services busted a terrorist cell with suspected links to the Islamic State (IS) group in the Sahel, arresting 10 suspects allegedly plotting imminent attacks, Morocco's Central Bureau for Judicial Investigations said Monday in a statement.

The 10 individuals were arrested simultaneously in the cities of Agadir, Taroudant, Casablanca, El Hajeb, Tetouan, Fquih Ben Salah and Safi, it said.

Authorities captured electronics, blades, combat gear and video materials threatening attacks in Morocco, it said.

Investigators also searched a warehouse in the central city of Inzegane,

where they found a four-wheel-drive vehicle with a rigged fuel tank for suicide bombings or vehicle ramming targeting sensitive sites, it said.

Investigations are underway to hunt down remaining cell members, it added.

Saudi Arabia on Tuesday strongly condemned terrorist plots targeting public order and the safety of people and property in the Kingdom of Morocco.

In a statement, the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed the Kingdom's solidarity with Morocco and its people, rejecting all forms of terrorism, extremism and attempts to undermine the country's security and stability.

The Kingdom also praised the efficiency of Morocco's security services in swiftly foiling the terrorist plots and wished Morocco and its people continued security, stability and prosperity.

Moroccan authorities announced on Monday they had thwarted highly dangerous terrorist plots that were in advanced stages of preparation and targeted public security, people and property.

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Kuwait sets 2027 goal for stronger anti-graft shield

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: A government report revealed that the new Kuwait Strategy for Enhancing Integrity and Combating Corruption is scheduled for completion and full implementation in 2027.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the report, indicating that this strategy aims to ensure transparency in the national economy — both public and private, and to stop the wastage of public funds.

The report affirmed that the strategy shall serve as the foundation for implementing structural reforms that will help reduce corruption chances.

It also highlighted the importance of the strategy in formulating a comprehensive national document that assesses and analyzes the current level of integrity in various sectors, and outlines the vision for effective anti-corruption measures in accordance with international laws and standards.

It explained that the strategy aims to develop national personnel specialized in law enforcement and the prosecution of corruption crimes, and to improve the quality of public services by eliminating bureaucracy and complex administrative procedures that contribute to the spread of corruption.

Continued on Page 5



AQRAT & Al-Tijaria announce successful 8 exit from '501 First Residences' project in Miami, FL



9 Warba honors Mol frontline personnel, promotes banking services



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:20 Asr 15:27
 Sunrise .. 04:55 Maghrib .. 18:51
 Zohr 11:53 Isha 20:22



HH the Amir



Sir David Tiva Kapu

Amir congratulates Solomon Islands on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, July 7, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a congratulatory cable to Governor-General of Solomon Islands Sir David Tiva Kapu on the occasion of his country's Independence Day.

His Highness the Amir wished him good health and for the people of Solomon Islands further progress and prosperity.

Crown Prince congratulates

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a congratulatory

cable to Governor-General of Solomon Islands Sir David Tiva Kapu on the occasion of his country's Independence Day.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished him good health and for the people of Solomon Islands further progress and prosperity.

PM congratulates

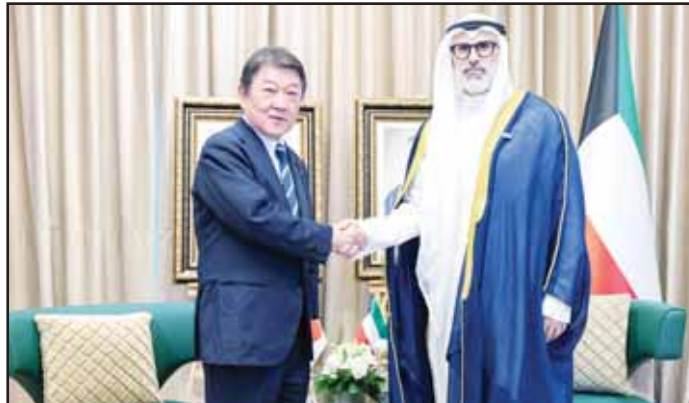
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a congratulatory cable to Governor-General of Solomon Islands Sir David Tiva Kapu on the occasion of his country's Independence Day.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting.

PM Diwan photo

Kuwait FM meets Turkish, Japan counterparts



Kuwait FM meets Japan counterpart.



Kuwait FM meets Turkish counterpart.

KUNA photos

ANKARA, July 7, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met with his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidani on Monday during his visit to the Turkish capital, Ankara.

The foreign minister heads Kuwait's delegation participating in the ministerial meeting of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) member states and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member countries, which is scheduled to be held on the sidelines of the NATO Summit.

Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that the meeting reviewed the strong bilateral relations between the two friendly countries and discussed ways to further strengthen cooperation across various fields.

The two ministers also exchanged views on the

latest regional and international developments.

Japan

Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi on Tuesday during his visit to Ankara, Türkiye.

According to a Foreign Ministry press release, Sheikh Jarrah is leading Kuwait's delegation to the ministerial meeting of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) countries and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member states, held on the sidelines of the NATO Summit.

Both ministers reviewed bilateral relations and ways to strengthen cooperation across various fields, discussing the latest regional and interna-

national developments, the statement added.

Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also met Greek Foreign Minister George Gerapetritis in Ankara on Tuesday.

The Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry said in a statement that the meeting was held during Sheikh Jarrah's visit to the Turkish capital to lead Kuwait's delegation to the ministerial meeting of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative countries and NATO member states, held on the sidelines of the NATO Summit.

The two ministers reviewed bilateral relations and discussed ways to further strengthen cooperation across various fields. They also exchanged views on the latest regional and international developments.



Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei chairs the meeting.

KUNA photo

MoE reviews new strategy

'Prep for new academic year'

KUWAIT CITY, July 7, (KUNA): Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei chaired an expanded meeting on Monday with senior education officials to review strategic development files, assess implementation progress and evaluate preparations across all sectors for the 2026-2027 academic year.

The Ministry of Education said in a statement that the meeting formed part of ongoing efforts to strengthen institutional performance and achieve the ministry's objectives of improving educational quality through comprehensive planning, effective coordination and sustained administrative development.

Al-Tabtabaei stressed the importance of accelerating progress on all priority files in line with the political leadership's

aspirations, emphasizing the need to maximize the current period to complete preparations before the new academic year begins.

The minister instructed the Educational Affairs Sector to examine all observations submitted regarding the proposed new education regulations and finalize a revised version balancing educational development with organizational requirements before submitting it for formal approval.

He also underscored the importance of continuously monitoring implementation of agreed measures and submitting periodic progress reports, reaffirming the ministry's commitment to advancing educational plans through efficiency, governance and measurable institutional performance across every department.

The meeting reviewed readiness for the upcoming academic year, including completion of the "Balligh" platform, ensuring textbook availability, monitoring contracts for educational services and finalizing school maintenance and infrastructure preparations before students return to classrooms.



Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah presents a certificate to an outstanding student.

Governor honors outstanding students in science, literature

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah honored the top high school students in the science and literature sections in Farwaniya Governorate on Tuesday, in cooperation with the Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK).

Present at the ceremony were Senior Manager for Corporate Communications at CBK Yousef Mohsen, Farwaniya Governorate Council member and representative of the Ministry of Education Eng. Jamal Al-Aiban, and a number of educational officials from the Farwaniya Educational District.

The Governor asserted that he is proud of the outstanding achievements of the students, while praising CBK for its cooperation and commitment to support community initiatives that motivate high-achieving students.

He also commended the role of parents and educational institutions in providing the students with an environment conducive for learning.

He pointed out that honoring these outstanding students is in recognition of their efforts and an incentive for them to continue to follow the path of success and excellence.



Ambassador Abdullah Al-Turki presented his credentials to Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides as Kuwait's ambassador to the Republic of Cyprus. Embassy staff seen at the ceremony.

KUNA photo

Kuwait ambassador presents credentials to Cyprus leader

BEIRUT, July 7, (KUNA): Ambassador Abdullah Al-Turki presented his credentials on Tuesday to Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides as Kuwait's ambassador to the Republic of Cyprus.

In a statement, Kuwait's Embassy in Nicosia said the credentials were presented during an official ceremony at the Presidential Palace, where Ambassador Al-Turki conveyed greetings from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, along with their wishes for contin-

ued progress and prosperity for Cyprus and its people.

President Christodoulides asked the ambassador to convey his greetings and appreciation to His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince, wishing Kuwait and its people continued progress and prosperity.

The statement added that the meeting reviewed the distinguished bilateral relations between Kuwait and Cyprus and reaffirmed the shared commitment to strengthening cooperation across various fields, in addition to exchanging views on issues of mutual interest.

Kuwait highlights media role in bolstering Arab-China ties

BEIJING, July 7, (KUNA): Kuwait reaffirmed on Tuesday its commitment to strengthening media cooperation with China and expanding Arab-Chinese exchanges, highlighting the media's role in supporting development partnerships and promoting mutual understanding.

Speaking at the opening of the 2026 China-Arab Media Dialogue, held at the China-Arab Research Center on Reform and Development in Shanghai, Kuwait's Deputy Consul-General in Shanghai, First Secretary Saad Khalil Ismail, praised the organizers' efforts in convening the event.

He said that despite the geographical distance between Kuwait and China, the two countries share deep-rooted historical ties extending from the ancient Silk Road to the modern Belt and Road Initiative.

Ismail noted that Kuwait Vision 2035 has become closely aligned with China's Belt and Road Initiative, with cooperation spanning energy, infrastructure, finance and cultural exchange, stressing

that media organizations play a pivotal role in documenting these joint development efforts.

He added that Kuwaiti media have consistently sought to provide objective coverage of China's development achievements while conveying an authentic image of the Arab world, recalling that Kuwait sent a media delegation to the center in 2019 to explore opportunities for cooperation in the media sector.

The Kuwaiti diplomat expressed hope that the dialogue would promote objective coverage of Arab-Chinese cooperation, facilitate the exchange of expertise in media and journalism, particularly in digital transformation, and help establish stronger platforms for media collaboration between the Arab world and China.

He reaffirmed Kuwait's pride in its longstanding friendship with China and expressed hope that the event would further enhance bilateral media cooperation and broaden channels of communication and exchange.

Other Voices

Story of the spoon

By Ahmad alsarraf

IN Kuwait, we call the spoon "qafsha," a word of Persian origin, or "khashouqa," a word of Turkish origin from which the name "Khashoggi," meaning "spoon maker," is derived.

For several reasons, it is preferable to use a fork for eating rather than the hand or a spoon. A fork holds a small amount of food, allowing more time for chewing and enjoying conversation during a meal while avoiding having a mouthful of food.

The use of eating utensils spread relatively early in Kuwait's urban areas due to interaction with foreigners, perhaps beginning in the 1950s. The spoon remains the most commonly used utensil in our country, either because people want to consume the largest quantity of food in the shortest time or due to the fact that certain types of food, such as broth, are easier to eat with a spoon. There is no doubt that soup requires a spoon.

When did humans first begin using cutlery?

Using cutlery was initially considered "unmanly." The fork, now regarded as the most important utensil in the West, was once rare and even ridiculed. Eating with one's hands was the traditional norm.

Like any new practice, this transition did not happen all at once; rather, it evolved over centuries, influenced by changing eating habits and the introduction of new utensils. Gradually, etiquette for sitting at the table and eating was established.

Although humans have used eating utensils for tens of thousands of years, these tools were originally crafted from materials such as shells, hollow wood, and animal horns. Spoons were among the oldest utensils. Ancient Egyptians used spoons carved from wood, ivory, and gold.

Knives had numerous uses beyond eating. In ancient and medieval societies, the knife served as both a practical tool and a weapon and was used for cutting food. Guests often brought their own knives to the table, especially in medieval Europe.

Even after the introduction of cutlery, most food continued to be eaten directly with the hands, a practice that remains common in many parts of the world today.

Of all cutlery, the fork was perhaps the most difficult for people to accept. As is often the case, its use spread first among the elite. The Church and other religious authorities opposed its use, considering eating with one's hands almost a sacred practice.

However, centuries later, the fork acquired an aura of prestige during the Renaissance. The Italian Catherine de Medici played a role in introducing the fork to France after her marriage to King Henry II in 1533. In the early 17th century, the English traveler Thomas Coryat returned from Italy and enthusiastically described the variety of forks he had seen. His family, however, considered them extravagant, strange, and even feminine.

This reputation persisted for a surprisingly long time. British sailors, until 1900, refused to use forks for the same reason. However, as etiquette became more complex in royal courts, forks became increasingly practical, and eating with one's hands at formal meals became more widely frowned upon. Victorian culture took dining etiquette to extremes, with some upper-class households boasting sets containing up to 100 pieces of cutlery.

Meanwhile, the use of chopsticks has been widespread in Southeast Asia for thousands of years, originally serving as cooking tools.

This article is partially quoted from the "History" website.

* * *

It is healthier and more economical to leave the air conditioner running at home or in the office 24/7. Do not worry; this is the best way.

When you turn off the air conditioner, it uses more energy to cool the space back down to the desired temperature after the temperature has risen.

A temperature of 25 degrees Celsius is probably the most suitable setting for most people.

□ □ □

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

Egypt & Morocco teams pride of the Arab nation

"OBSERVERS agree that the Egyptian and Moroccan national football teams have demonstrated exceptional skill in the 2026 World Cup, which is being held across three countries," columnist **Engineer Sheikh Fahad Dawood Al-Sabah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The Egyptian team achieved victory with skill no less impressive than that of the Moroccan team. Morocco's 3-0 victory over Canada on their home soil means the Moroccan team has continued the progress it has made since the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. The Egyptian team has also secured its place in the final qualifying rounds.



Al-Sabah

"This is not the first time Egypt has participated in the World Cup; it also competed in the 1934, 1990, and 2018 tournaments. There is great hope that both teams will reach the final stages. On this happy occasion, it is not important to mention the names of the players, but rather to celebrate the nation as a whole, and indeed the entire Arab world.

"This achievement demonstrates that Arabs possess soft power equal to, and even surpassing, other forms of power. Possessing soft power is the best way to preserve rights and achievements.

"Egypt and Morocco today represent the aspirations of every Arab citizen. The victories achieved by the Egyptian and Moroccan national teams reinforce the fact that Arab peoples are peace-loving and build their strength through scientific, sporting, and artistic achievements. We Arabs are not as portrayed by the distorted image painted by our detractors.

"We Arabs are the bearers of a civilization rich in soft power that serves humanity. Morocco's victory over Canada on its home soil is a landmark achievement in major competitions and demonstrates the advanced physical and technical skills of the Moroccan team. Egypt likewise possesses a wealth of sporting, cultural, and artistic talent and potential.

"Egypt has once again proven its ability to achieve remarkable feats. This sporting achievement reaffirms the importance of building upon the cultural heritage of nations across the ages. Following the matches of the Egyptian and Moroccan national teams has reinforced the importance of placing talented and competent individuals in the right positions. What the Egyptian team achieved collectively was a symphony of fair play. The Moroccan team is no less impressive than its Egyptian counterpart.

"This great achievement is the result of the players' focus and determination. The victories of the Egyptian and Moroccan national teams have brought the Arab world together, uniting its people and confirming that dreams and ambitions can be achieved. I hope to see Egypt and Morocco reach the World Cup final. That would be a source of great pride for the Arab world."

Also:

"Everyone can protect themselves from evil if they remain wary of it as much as possible and do everything they can to avoid falling victim to it," Kuwaiti writer **Dr. Khalid Al-Janfawi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"In today's confusing world, a wise person can protect themselves from many misfortunes by adhering to certain behavioral principles. A person must always be prepared, meaning they must be psychologically and intellectually ready to face any problem. Then they will be in a better position than someone who is complacent and relies on others to rescue them from the troubles they face.

"A person must focus on developing their life skills. Every psychologically and intellectually healthy person possesses a certain set of life skills related to adaptability.

"The wise person understands that time does not guarantee a life free from hardships or transitions to more difficult circumstances. Therefore, a person must develop their skills, both innate and acquired, especially those needed to cope with emergencies.

"The best way to hone life skills is to practice them constantly in real-life situations. It is important for a person to know their enemies and their friends. Every psychologically mature person has a hostile enemy who wants to pounce on them when they are weak. A person's own soul can be their worst enemy when it drives them toward vice.

"The best way to protect oneself from the vicissitudes of time is to recognize that there is an enemy who wishes to see them weakened. A wise person strives to increase their friends and minimize their enemies.

"A wise person should avoid emotional thinking and regard it as mere fantasy and a false source of judgment. Emotional thinking is a negative activity of the subconscious mind that produces false anxieties. A ratio-

nal person cannot willingly indulge in emotional thinking when seeking protection from misfortune.

"It is essential to avoid arrogance and refrain from harming others. Whoever is arrogant toward others distances themselves from God and makes themselves disliked by wise and righteous people. Whoever deliberately harms others because they are able to do so, God will surely send someone more powerful to harm them."



"I am discussing matchmaking in this article to highlight the unregulated activity of intermediaries for those seeking marriage," Kuwaiti writer **Zaid Al-Jalawi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"In some cases, illicit activities may be carried out under the guise of marriage mediation. These harmful practices need to be clearly defined and criminalized through legislation that protects society from vice disguised as virtue and safeguards marriage from any misuse or infiltration.

"Is the increasing divorce rate among the reasons for young people's reluctance to marry, in addition to the lack of regulation of matchmaking activities?"

"It is important to establish regulations for this profession to ensure that marriages are built on sound foundations and that the rights and obligations of each party are guaranteed.

"Some marriage contracts facilitated by individuals engaged in this activity may contain violations of Islamic law, such as customary relationships, the justifications for which have diminished in the era of official documentation and its ease. The absence of legislation regulating marriage brokerage is a fundamental reason behind young people's reluctance to marry and the increasing number of divorce requests from married women, especially newlyweds.

"Do the marriages facilitated by intermediaries meet all the requirements of a valid marriage? Are the identities of the witnesses signing the marriage contract verified, and are they known to the families of the bride and groom? Is it ensured that neither spouse was coerced into the marriage?"

"There are suspicious indicators that raise doubts about the activities of marriage brokers. In some countries, individuals resort to marriage brokers to obtain sham marriage contracts, providing them with legal cover to evade punishment and shielding them from authorities who might intervene in their illicit meetings. This constitutes engaging in an unlawful relationship, which contradicts the conditions of a valid marriage based on fidelity and the consent and knowledge of the parents."



"Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait directed the ministry, during a press conference, to demolish the Palace of Justice building due to alleged structural issues, indicating the ministry's intention to undertake a comprehensive overhaul of the legal system," Legal consultant **Dr. Kazem Bou Abbas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"I feel saddened that this is the fate of this judicial landmark and architectural masterpiece, which was built in 1985 to represent the Kuwaiti judiciary during the reign of the late Amir, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad. The judges of that era established important judicial principles that shaped the legal system.

"This building stands as a testament to decades of judicial proceedings and a rich history of constitutional, civil, administrative, criminal, and personal status cases, from the Court of First Instance to the Court of Cassation. It also housed the Public Prosecution and the Execution Department.

"We hope that this decision will be reconsidered, whatever its justifications, and that any damage that may have affected the building will be repaired rather than resorting to demolition. Nations preserve their cultural and national heritage. This architectural masterpiece is only 40 years old, a relatively short period compared to historic buildings preserved in other countries.

"Demolishing this building would constitute a waste of public funds, as it cost the state millions of dinars when it was constructed, funds that would ultimately be lost without benefit. Reforming the legislative system is a necessity dictated by the nature of social and temporal development, and it requires the involvement of specialists from every field.

"In 1977-1978, the State, represented by the then Minister of State for Legal and Administrative Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Du'aj, enlisted a distinguished group of experienced and specialized experts to develop the legislative system."

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



KUNA photo
Undersecretary of Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Lieutenant General Staff Hamad Al-Barjas during his visit to the Al-Sumood Camp.

Al-Barjas briefed on steps taken to counter UAV-hits

KUWAIT CITY, July 7, (KUNA): Undersecretary of Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Lieutenant General Staff Hamad Al-Barjas on Tuesday inspected Al-Sumood Camp to review ongoing operations and receive a briefing on the latest achievements of specialized technical teams studying countermeasures against unmanned aerial vehicles (drones).

According to a KNG statement, Lt. Gen. Al-Barjas stressed the importance of continuing work in line with modern standards while utilizing the latest technologies to keep pace with rapidly evolving developments and enhance operational readiness and efficiency.

During the visit, Lt. Gen. Al-Barjas also inspected the Combat Support Directorate, where he was received by Acting Commander of Military and Security Affairs Brigadier General Staff Abdullah Saleh Abdullah, who briefed him on ongoing operational tasks.

Gov. addresses traffic congestion in 'Nuzha'

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Capital Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali conducted a field tour of Nuzha, accompanied by Public Security officers, to assess traffic congestion and discuss possible solutions, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.



Sheikh Abdullah

The governor commended the huge efforts exerted by the Public Security officers in the field, and praised their dedication and continuous work to maintain the safety and security of citizens and residents.

He emphasized the importance of ongoing field coordination to address traffic challenges and enhance the quality of services provided.

Two shops selling fake goods in Ahmadi shut

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Emergency teams from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry continued their inspection campaigns of markets in Ahmadi Governorate, which resulted in the closure of two shops involved in displaying, selling, and possessing counterfeit goods bearing international trademarks belonging to others, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The ministry explained that 2,059 counterfeit items were confiscated, including bags, shoes, accessories, watches, and sunglasses for both men and women. The necessary legal procedures were taken, and the shops were closed immediately.

Meanwhile, the Capital Inspection Department of the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) conducted an inspection campaign that resulted in the closure of four non-compliant food establishments, including two butcher shops, a café, and a biscuit factory, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

The closure orders were issued due to several violations, most notably failure to comply with public hygiene standards, operating establishments for purposes other than those for which they were licensed, continuing operations after the expiration of health licenses, and handling food without meeting the required technical and health standards.

PAFN affirmed its commitment to continuing inspection campaigns in all governorates and taking legal action against violating establishments to protect consumer health and ensure food safety.

Service allows download of digital driving license

KUWAIT CITY, July 7, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Interior, represented by Human Resources and Information Technology Sector in cooperation with Traffic Affairs and Operations Sector, on Tuesday launched a new service allowing users to download their driving licenses electronically through the unified government e-services application, Sahel.

In a statement, the ministry said the service enables users to download and store an electronic copy of their driving license on their mobile phones, allowing easy access and use whenever needed.



Woman acquitted: The Misdemeanor Court of Appeals overturned the prison sentence imposed on a woman accused of breach of trust and stealing money and gold from her ex-husband following a dispute, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

18kg tobacco found in Indian's car at border

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: The Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC) foiled an attempt to smuggle 18 kilograms of tobacco hidden inside a vehicle driven by an Indian as it entered Kuwait through the Nuwaiseeb border.

The customs inspectors found the contraband concealed in a professional manner within the undercarriage of the rear seats and the rear side panels of the vehicle. KGAC took the necessary legal measures and referred the suspect to the competent authorities.



App for Kuwaitis: The Ministry of Interior launched a service on Monday for the issuance of Kuwaiti citizenship certificates for deceased relatives through the Sahel application, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

In a press statement, the ministry explained that the service allows first-degree relatives to obtain a citizenship certificate for a deceased family member addressed to "To Whom It May Concern" or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

One dead, one hurt in Al-Abdali Road mishap

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: One person died and another was injured in a traffic collision that occurred Monday morning on Al-Abdali Road towards the border crossing point, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

A security source explained that the injured person sustained a head contusion and multiple fractures.

A patrol from the Qashaniyah Police Station cordoned off the area, while forensic investigators arrived at the scene. The necessary procedures were completed, and the deceased was transferred to the Forensic Medicine Department.

Meanwhile, an Arab expatriate sustained serious injuries after being struck by wood and iron that fell from the fourth floor of a building under construction in Dasman, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

According to a security source, the manager of a company reported that the worker was accidentally injured while on duty when building materials fell from a height, causing head and neck injuries.

The injured worker was taken to Al-Amiri Hospital, where he was admitted to the intensive care unit for a day. His condition has since stabilized. The initial medical report stated that he suffered a fracture of the sixth cervical vertebra and a skull fracture, with suspected internal bleeding.

A case has been registered, and legal procedures are underway to determine the circumstances and cause of the accident.

180kph Kuwaiti detained

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: The Jahra Governorate Traffic Department referred a citizen to the traffic detention center for driving at a speed of 180 kilometers per hour, while his vehicle was taken to the garage for impounded vehicles.

Missing Indian's mystery solved

Body found buried in desert

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: The Criminal Investigation General Department at the Interior Ministry unraveled the mysterious disappearance of an Indian worker who had been missing since March.

Investigations revealed that the worker died when a crane fell on him during maintenance work at Salmi desert. The owner of the heavy equipment and his son buried the worker's body in a desert area to conceal the incident and evade legal accountability.



The ministry said the case began with a report on the disappearance of the Indian, prompting the Criminal Investigation General Department to carry out thorough search and investigation. It was then discovered that the worker and the owner of the heavy equipment went to Salmi desert on March 19, and no one could contact the worker since that day.

The ministry indicated that the search teams conducted extensive investigations, along with a thorough review of traffic surveillance camera footage, which showed the victim with the accused on the way to Salmi. The worker was not seen in the vehicle on the return trip, which raised suspicions of foul play.

According to the ministry, the detectives apprehended the son of the accused who confessed that the worker died when a crane fell on him at work. He added that he and his father buried the body in Salmi desert to cover up the incident for fear of prosecution.


The accused led the security personnel to the burial site, where the Criminal Evidence General Department, Forensics Department and Kuwait Fire Force coordinated their efforts to exhume the body.

The Public Prosecution ordered the removal of the body and the completion of legal measures, while the accused was detained and referred to the concerned authorities. Efforts are ongoing to apprehend his father, who left Kuwait.





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KIJS and Kuwait Airways sign MoU to strengthen institutional cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, July 7, (KUNA): Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies (KIJS) and Kuwait Airways signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Monday aimed at strengthening institutional cooperation and reinforcing integration between the two entities.

In a press statement, Director of KIJS, First Attorney General Counselor Bader Al-Musaed, said the agreement seeks to enhance cooperation in the areas of training, professional qualification, and the promotion of legal awareness.

Al-Musaed added that the institute works closely with relevant government entities to build institutional capacities and



Al-Faqaan

enhance the efficiency of human resources, contributing to improved service quality, and institutional excellence in line with the State's development and administrative reform objectives.

On his part, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Airways Abdulmohsen Al-Faqaan said the signing of the MoU reflects the company's commitment to strengthening institutional partnerships with leading national entities in a way that facilitates the exchange of expertise and the development of professional competencies.

He added that investment in human capital is a key pillar of the company's strategy to enhance institutional performance and achieve the highest standards of quality and excellence. The agreement, he noted, opens new opportunities for joint cooperation in training and awareness

programs related to legal and administrative fields.

Al-Faqaan reaffirmed Kuwait Airways' commitment to supporting national initiatives aimed at developing human capabilities, serving the public interest.

The signing ceremony was attended on behalf of the institute by Deputy Director for Continuing and Specialized Training Counselor Saud Al-Sanea, Deputy Director for Relations, Communications and Research Counselor Ahmad Al-Muqallid, as well as Technical Office members Counselor Abdulaziz Al-Rubaiaan and Counselor Faisal Al-Hasan.

Representing Kuwait Airways were Legal Director Ahmad Al-Salem, Acting Director of the Training Center Ghezlan Al-Tasha, and head of external affairs coordination and follow-up office Amani Bourabia.

Human resources key to real progress – minister

MoE honors 25 finalists in (Ibda'at 2026) digital platform education

KUWAIT CITY, July 7, (KUNA): Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei honored 25 finalist projects on Monday in the (Ibda'at 2026) digital platform.

The platform which was launched last December to incubate innovative ideas and development projects while empowering national talent to contribute to improving Kuwait's education system and enhancing its efficiency and outcomes.

Speaking at the award ceremony, Al-Tabtabaei said the platform was established out of the belief that genuine development begins with people, adding that education professionals are best placed to understand the sector's challenges and devise solutions that meet its needs and advance the educational system.

He said honoring the 25 finalist projects reflects the Ministry of Education's wealth of creative minds and national talent capable

of innovation and driving change. Providing these talents with opportunities and support, he added, will help transform ideas into practical projects that deliver tangible and sustainable benefits to the education sector.

The minister congratulated the finalists on their achievement and expressed appreciation to all participants, the platform's organizers, evaluation committees and everyone who contributed to the initiative's success. He reaffirmed the ministry's commitment to supporting innovation, empowering national talent and fostering an environment that encourages creativity in service of education in Kuwait.

Head of the Ibda'at 2026 platform team, Arwa Al-Ayyar, said the initiative was launched with the vision and direct support of the Minister of Education, based on the conviction that the ministry is rich in creative minds and national talents capable of developing solutions and contributing to educational reform.

She noted that the platform serves as a dig-

ital environment for Ministry of Education employees, enabling them to submit innovative projects aimed at developing education while providing a space for exchanging expertise and promoting creativity and collaboration. The platform targets ministry employees across all sectors and specialties.

Al-Ayyar revealed that the platform received 740 projects, including 65 projects and proposals submitted directly to the Minister of Education's Office.

She stressed that recognizing the finalist projects marks the beginning of a new phase focused on transforming outstanding ideas into effective initiatives and implementable projects, noting that the true value of any idea lies in its ability to move from concept to execution and from ambition to achievement.

Al-Ayyar concluded by congratulating the finalists and thanking all participants who believed in their ideas and submitted their initiatives, as well as everyone who contributed to the platform's success and development.



KUNA photo
Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei (left) honored 25 finalist projects in the (Ibda'at 2026) digital platform.



Farwaniya Governorate photo
Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah receives Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of 'Kafo' platform Dr. Fatima Al-Mousawi.

'Kafo' platform empowers youth, activates multidimensional roles

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah had a meeting with Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of 'Kafo' platform Dr. Fatima Al-Mousawi on Monday.

During the meeting, the Governor was briefed on the objectives and programs of the platform, as well as the initiatives it offers to support and highlight national talent.

They also discussed potential areas of

cooperation between Farwaniya Governorate and Kafo.

Sheikh Athbi Nasser commended the efforts of all those behind the platform, while underscoring the importance of supporting national initiatives that empower the youths and activate their role in various fields.

Al-Mousawi expressed her gratitude to the Governor for his warm reception and unwavering support for national initiatives.

PAHW to hold housing lottery for Kuwaiti women in 2 areas

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) announced that the Women's Housing Committee will hold a lottery on Wednesday for Kuwaiti women in Sulaibiya and Taima who have submitted applications for rental housing, updated their information, and received notifications through the Sa-

hel app, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

PAHW clarified that the lottery will take place at 11:00 am in the Abbas Marafie Hall. The authority called on those included in the lottery to attend in person or through a legal representative holding an official power of attorney to complete the lottery procedures.

Summer tests limited to 2nd semester curriculum purely

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Minister of Education Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei issued a ministerial decree limiting the second-round (summer course) examinations for high school students in the 2025/2026 academic year to the second-semester curriculum only.

This decision comes as part of the ministry's efforts to support students and in consideration of the exceptional circumstances Kuwait has experienced recently.

The Ministry of Education explained that the decision applies to students in Grade 10, Grade 11 (both science and arts tracks), and Grade 12 (both science and arts tracks), as well as students in religious education. The grades that the students achieve in the summer course examinations will be counted in full and included in their overall grade point average for the current academic year.

The ministry confirmed that the decision takes effect immediately upon issuance and supersedes any previous decisions that conflict with it. The decision

applies exclusively to the 2025/2026 academic year.

Municipal Council session: The Technical Committee at the Municipal Council, chaired by Munira Al-Amir, on Tuesday held its 37th meeting for the fourth session, during which it approved four out of the six items on its agenda.

The committee approved the request of the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) to include all the areas previously allocated for the petroleum fuel depot in Subhan Industrial Area-Block 10.

The committee approved the request of the Ministry of Public Works to allot to it the area between Interchange C3 and Mutlaa Residential City-Sector N1, as well as the request to add a portion of state-owned land adjacent to Plot 81 in Sharq-Block One.

It approved the amendment of the distribution schedule for a plot within the development project in Block 45 in the former Sharq Hawally, which is currently Plot No. 11 in Salmiya-Block 46, according to the approved zoning plan.



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Delegation participation reflects national coordination on digital policy

Kuwait takes part in AI governance forum

GENEVA, July 7, (KUNA): Kuwait is taking part in the first Global Dialogue on Artificial Intelligence (AI) Governance and related events, including the AI for Good Global Summit and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum, held in Geneva from July 6 to 10.

The meetings bring together representatives of member states, international organizations, the

private sector, academia and civil society to discuss AI governance, digital infrastructure, digital policy and capacity-building.

Kuwait's delegation includes representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) and the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT), reflecting national

coordination on AI governance and digital policy.

Kuwait's participation underscores its commitment to strengthening international cooperation on AI governance, contributing to global discussions on the future of AI, and benefiting from international best practices to build a secure and inclusive digital future that promotes innovation, transparency and accountability.

UIC chairman praises Kuwait's emergency preparedness push

Fund seen as boost to national resilience

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Mr. Abdullah Hamad Al-Terkait, Chairman of the Union of Investment Companies (UIC), commended the launch of the "Kuwait Emergency Response Fund" initiative chaired by H.E. Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs, established with an initial capital of USD 100 million, affirming that this landmark national initiative reflects the wise vision of Kuwait's leadership in establishing a comprehensive institutional framework to enhance the country's preparedness and response capabilities in addressing various challenges and exceptional circumstances, while safeguarding national security, stability, and development achievements.

Al-Terkait stated that the establishment of the Fund represents a significant milestone in Kuwait's institutional development and demonstrates the State's strategic foresight, capability, and expertise in proactively strengthening its national response mechanisms. Such efforts, he noted, reinforce the country's readiness to address emergencies with efficiency and professionalism while ensuring the continuity of essential services and the protection of critical national infrastructure.



Abdullah Hamad Al-Terkait, Chairman of the Union of Investment Companies (UIC)

He added that the Union of Investment Companies views this initiative as an advanced model of national partnership between the public and private sectors and a practical embodiment of the values of social responsibility and solidarity that have long distinguished Kuwaiti society during periods of challenge. He emphasized that national unity has always been—and will continue to be—the cornerstone of overcoming crises, preserving stability, and advancing sustainable development.

Al-Terkait stressed that Kuwait's investment sector has consistently served as a key partner in supporting the national economy and contributing to the country's development agenda. He noted that the current phase calls for strengthening this role by aligning behind national initiatives that reinforce Kuwait's resilience, enhance in-

stitutional preparedness, and improve the country's capacity to respond effectively to evolving regional and international developments.

He further noted that one of the initiative's defining strengths is that it extends beyond providing financial resources. Rather, it establishes an integrated institutional framework founded on sound planning, robust governance, transparency, accountability, and efficient resource management, ensuring that available resources are directed toward national priorities in accordance with the highest professional and governance standards. This approach, he added, strengthens stakeholder confidence and reflects Kuwait's commitment to institutional excellence in managing strategic national initiatives.

Al-Terkait highlighted the extensive expertise of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development under the leadership of H.E. the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, in financing and infrastructure projects both within Kuwait and internationally. He stated that leveraging this institutional expertise to serve national priorities demonstrates the ability of Kuwaiti institutions to transform decades of accumulated experience into practical capabilities that support national resilience and enhance preparedness in times of exceptional circumstances.

He further emphasized that the Union of Investment Companies firmly believes that investment extends beyond generating financial returns. True investment, he said, also encompasses investing in the country's stability, strengthening its economic resilience,

protecting its infrastructure, and ensuring the sustainability of essential public services—objectives that are fundamentally aligned with the mission of the Kuwait Emergency Response Fund.

Al-Terkait affirmed that Kuwait's financial and investment sector possesses the expertise, resources, and capabilities necessary to play an active role in the success of this national initiative, whether through direct support or by contributing its expertise in finance, risk management, governance, and sustainability, thereby strengthening the State's ability to build a more resilient and responsive national framework for future challenges.

He added that the current circumstances require all state institutions, the private sector, and civil society to work collectively under the principle of shared national responsibility and to translate the values of loyalty and patriotism into meaningful action. He noted that Kuwait's greatest achievements throughout its history have always been the result of close cooperation and solidarity between the country's leadership, its people, and its institutions.

Al-Terkait also praised the significant efforts undertaken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, and all relevant government entities in designing and launching this important national initiative. He stated that their work reflects a high level of planning, coordination, and institutional excellence, while underscoring the State's commitment to continuously enhancing its national preparedness framework to address emerging challenges and emergency situations.

Other Voices

Learning to set boundaries

By Hala Al Humaidhi

One of the most common misconceptions about having healthy relationships is that always saying "yes" is the definition of kindness. Many people spend years trying to do everything they can to be kind to others. However, this approach is not healthy and often leads to resentment and burnout.

In reality, healthy relationships require boundaries. Boundaries are not about creating distance, but they are about establishing clear expectations. Setting boundaries is one of the first steps toward building healthier and more respectful relationships. It allows you to show yourself kindness by refusing to accept disrespectful treatment.

However, learning to create boundaries can be difficult and even frightening. Boundaries are the rules you establish regarding how you want to be treated, how you expect others to behave, and what you are comfortable accepting.

Many people struggle to set boundaries because they fear disappointing others. Saying "no" can create feelings of guilt, and we fear that others will be uncomfortable with us if we set boundaries. If we are not careful, we may think that our friends will leave, our family members will stop communicating with us, or our colleagues will no longer want to work with us if we say no to something.

We might be so uncomfortable saying no that we agree to commitments we cannot fulfill simply to avoid disappointing others. Saying no and refusing requests we cannot honor may make us feel uncomfortable at first. However, we shouldn't put ourselves in that uncomfortable position and we shouldn't ignore our needs. Setting boundaries is an essential part of self-care.

Self-respect means protecting and honoring our physical needs, opinions, and personal space. When we respect our friends and family, we naturally want them to respect us as well. This may mean saying, "No, I can't do that," or "I can't commit to that right now." It means



Hala Al Humaidhi

acknowledging and prioritizing our own needs.

It may mean taking an hour for ourselves after a long and difficult day or refusing to remain at a gathering where people are being unkind or disrespectful. We have the right to decide which behaviors we are comfortable accepting and which we are not.

Other people's reactions to our boundaries do not mean that setting them is wrong. Sometimes, establishing boundaries may make others unhappy. We may have been surrounded in the past by people who benefited from receiving unlimited time and attention from us, but that does not mean continuing this pattern is healthy for either side.

We seek healthy relationships by treating ourselves with the same kindness we offer others. A healthy relationship does not require one person to lose their identity for the sake of another. Instead, it allows both parties to respect each other.

Setting boundaries means letting go of what does not work so that we can build healthier and happier relationships. Boundaries can bring more love into the world. They help people feel comfortable around us because we know what to expect.

Healthy boundaries do not take away any of the love we give to others; rather, they protect that love by helping us be healthy in the first place. The question is not whether we have boundaries or not. The real question is whether we believe we are worthy enough to set them.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait has

All these projects in the five Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries relied on cooperation between the public and private sectors, and solidified economic stability, which in turn strengthened social stability.

These countries are building for the future, taking advantage of their capabilities and experiences. They are keen on utilizing infrastructure to create the conditions for continuous development.

Kuwait has the potential to compete with neighboring countries through the implementation of major projects, with the participation of the private sector. The state benefits from collecting fees from private sector companies, in addition to the diversification of its national income sources.

If other countries import labor, then we have many illegal residents (Bedouins) in Kuwait, those whose citizenship was revoked, who need training in professions needed by the country, in addition to the existing expatriate workforce.

All of these individuals can contribute to building a modern state if progressive laws are enacted to fully benefit from them. It is crucial to ease restrictions on both citizen and foreign investors, and grant them the freedom to exercise the usufruct right, which helped stimulate the economy in the past.

Kuwait was once a model for other countries in terms of growth, modernization and dynamism.

Finally, will we receive any response to our questions?

Amir calls

Separately, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also received Tuesday, Director General Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr. Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) Managing Director Sheikh Saud Salem Abdulaziz Al-Sabah, Brookfield Chief Executive Officer Bruce Flatt and the accompanying delegation on their visit to Kuwait.

During the meeting, His Highness stressed the importance of supporting investment opportunities and fostering a competitive business environment that strengthens strategic partnerships, attracts global investment, and localizes expertise to support the national economy and create employment opportunities for Kuwaiti youth.

For his part, Brookfield CEO Bruce Flatt expressed his apprecia-

tion for the opportunity to meet His Highness, affirming the company's commitment to enhancing cooperation and expanding strategic partnerships in support of Kuwait's development projects.

Thousands caught

Furthermore, 35 wanted individuals, 21 residency law violators, 28 wanted vehicles, and three individuals without official identification were apprehended.

The General Traffic Department confirmed the continuation of field campaigns in all governorates and called on drivers to comply with traffic regulations to help preserve lives and property.

Meanwhile, traffic officers arrested 10 individuals of various nationalities who are wanted by law for different offenses, such as holding expired residency permits, street vending and absconding. They were referred to the concerned authorities.

According to a security source, the traffic officers apprehended these wanted individuals within a 24-hour period on Monday, and then they were handed over to the relevant authorities for further action.

Moreover, the General Traffic Department continued its intensive field campaigns in the governorates. In the past 24 hours, the patrol officers issued 2,888 traffic violation citations and impounded 65 vehicles.

A security source disclosed that traffic officers deployed throughout the governorates issued citations to violators for a number of offenses, including those related to trucks, using mobile phones while driving, not wearing seatbelts, illegal window tinting, excessive noise, speeding, motorcycle violations and other traffic infractions.

The source urged motorists to strictly comply with the traffic rules and regulations to ensure their safety and that of other road users, and to avoid violations and legal action.

Arab solidarity

Arab League Secretary General Nabil Fahmy on Tuesday praised Moroccan authorities for foiling terrorist plots, saying any attempt to undermine Morocco's security and stability is an unacceptable attack on an Arab state.

In a statement, Fahmy affirmed the Arab League's full solidarity with Morocco, its leadership, government and people, and reiterated support for all legitimate measures to safeguard the country's security, sovereignty and institutions against

terrorist threats.

He also commended the vigilance of Morocco's security services and stressed the importance of strengthening Arab cooperation, enhancing security and judicial coordination, and expanding information-sharing among Arab states to combat terrorism in all its forms.

Kuwait sets

It confirmed the vital role of technology in the next phase of enhancing transparency and data accessibility, and combating cyber corruption.

This project falls within the core responsibilities of Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha), as stipulated in Article Five of its founding law. The article mandates Nazaha to make a comprehensive national strategy for integrity, transparency and combating corruption, prepare the mechanisms, plans and programs for its implementation, and monitor its execution in cooperation with the relevant entities.

The strategy covers the pillars in the development plan of the country, especially the effective government administration and distinguished international standing pillars, which contribute to the realization of the vision of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Kuwait Vision 2035.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Transparency Association Secretary Dr. Manal Al-Kandari is hoping that the new strategy for promoting integrity and combating corruption will be more comprehensive and effective than its predecessors. She emphasized the necessity of including stringent legislation to protect the wealth of the nation from financial crimes, alongside establishing accountability governance mechanisms to completely eliminate favoritism within the government system, thus, creating an attractive work environment that guarantees equal opportunities.

Al-Kandari stressed the significance of the involvement of the private sector as an active partner in protecting public funds, adding that anti-corruption efforts will have a positive impact on the business environment.

She thinks this strategy will enhance transparency and boost confidence in state institutions -- a fundamental requirement for foreign investors seeking a secure environment that protects public and private funds and relies on economic and administrative systems based on integrity and effective accountability. She said this will lead to an influx of foreign investments and reduce

the cost of public sector projects and tenders.

She affirmed that the strategy aligns with the current reform efforts of the country to eradicate corruption. She emphasized that combating corruption and liberalizing the investment environment are two essential pillars for creating a diversified and sustainable national economy based on the principles of transparency and fair competition.

Furthermore, economic expert and lawyer Salem Al-Hamoud asserted that protecting public funds is imperative for safeguarding the resources and assets of the country. He pointed out that the country witnessed sheer mismanagement and wastage in previous eras, indicating that the strategy will lead to a decline in corruption rates, hence, saving millions of Kuwaiti dinars that were previously wasted.

Al-Hamoud clarified that protecting national resources is not the responsibility of the government alone, because it is a shared national duty incumbent upon the state and its citizens. He stated that the elimination of anomalies will have a positive impact on the general budget.

He commended the current reform approach and the success of the nation in holding former officials -- including ministers -- accountable, which proves Kuwait is experiencing a golden age in its fight against corruption.

He said Kuwait already made significant strides in building its oversight institutions, particularly since it recognizes that combating corruption is a crucial step in administrative, economic and social development, in addition to reinforcing the principles of transparency and accountability.

Kuwait condemns

Saudi Arabia also strongly condemned the attack in Damascus, which injured several security personnel and civilians while authorities were dismantling two explosive devices planted by a terrorist cell. The Saudi Foreign Ministry reaffirmed the Kingdom's rejection of all terrorist and extremist acts targeting Syria's security and stability.

Explosions rocked Damascus on Tuesday as France's president met with his Syrian counterpart in a landmark visit, wounding at least 18 people, Syria's Interior Ministry said.

It was the second blast to rock the capital in a few days, and a setback for the country's new president as he welcomed his first visit from a western leader since ousting longtime dictator Bashar al-Assad. Syr-

ia's new rulers have wrestled with outbreaks of violence as they work to assert control, but the capital has been largely peaceful.

Emmanuel Macron was inside the presidential palace when the explosions happened. An official from the Elysee Palace said he was safe and that the meeting with Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa continued, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss Macron's whereabouts and security.

"Nothing can smother the aspiration of Syrian women and men to live in a fully sovereign, safe, pluralistic, and united Syria," Macron said in a post on X hours after the explosions. "This morning I met Syria in all its diversity. I saw dignity, courage and determination."

A large plume of smoke could be seen from the site of the explosion near the Four Seasons Hotel, where Syrian media reported Macron was staying. Footage widely circulated on social media showed a van and a motorcycle on fire and blood stains on the street in the area on a busy street near the headquarters of the Tourism Ministry and the Damascus National Museum.

The explosions represent a challenge to al-Sharaa, who came to power after leading an insurgency that ousted the Assad dynasty that ruled and Syria with an iron fist for half a century and ended the country's 14-year uprising-turned-civil war.

Al-Sharaa has since pushed to assert full control over and bring stability to war-torn Syria, appeal to minorities skeptical of his Islamist-led rule, and win the support of Western governments who were concerned about his past leadership of the formerly al-Qaeda-linked Hayat Tahrir al-Sham group. His government has promised political and economic reform after decades of autocratic rule.

Macron is the first major Western leader to visit Syria since al-Sharaa came to power and his visit comes before he is set to head to Ankara, Turkey later Tuesday for a NATO summit. Macron also plans to hold a joint news conference with his Syrian counterpart.

The French head of state played a major role in pushing Europe and the United States to drop most sanctions on Syria. He arrived in the country Monday night with an economic delegation, and is scheduled to sign memorandums of understanding with his counterpart as the battered country tries to lure investors to help it rebuild after 14 years of war.

The Interior Ministry in a statement reported by Syrian state media said that the two blasts in the heart of the capital were caused by explo-

sive devices, one placed in a garbage bin and the other in a parked car. It added that four of the wounded were police officers, and no deaths were immediately reported.

Kuwait sounds

The ministry stressed Kuwait's rejection of any actions that could undermine regional security and stability, calling for an immediate halt to all escalatory acts and urging adherence to international law guaranteeing freedom of navigation and safe passage through international waterways.

Three tankers were struck by projectiles Tuesday in the Strait of Hormuz, the British military said, in the latest attacks targeting vessels moving through the narrow mouth of the Arabian Gulf.

The new assaults threatened to choke off the flow of traffic in the strait just as countries hoped to restore normal shipping practices and ease the global economic strain of the war between the U.S. and Iran.

One of the tankers was traveling off the coast of Oman and caught fire, according to the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations center. Iranian state television said the liquefied natural gas tanker came under attack after ignoring warnings but did not directly claim the assault.

Two other tankers were also hit, including one that was struck by a drone. It was not immediately clear where they were at the time of the attacks. Both of those ships sustained some damage, but no one was injured, the maritime agency said. At least one of the vessels continued on its way.

Tehran, which has repeatedly declared that only its approved route through the strait is safe, is suspected of attacking other ships that have used another route close to the Omani shore.

The U.S. is eager to press ahead with negotiations with Iran aimed at fully reopening the strait, rolling back Tehran's disputed nuclear program and reaching a permanent end to the war launched Feb. 28. Previous attacks in the strait have sparked retaliatory strikes by the U.S. Iran then attacked Gulf Arab states.

In peacetime, a fifth of all traded oil and natural gas passed through the channel.

Meanwhile, talks between Iran and the U.S. appeared to be on hold until after the burial of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was killed at the beginning of the war. Mourners at his funeral have called for the death of U.S. President Donald Trump.

INTERNATIONAL

America

'Sen McConnell continuing his recovery': Staff for Kentucky Sen. Mitch McConnell said last week that the senator is "continuing his recovery" in a hospital while the Senate is out of session. But his office has released no details about the former Republican leader's condition during his weeklong hospitalization or whether he will be at the Capitol when the Senate returns next week.

McConnell was admitted to the hospital on June 14, according to a statement from his office that only said he was "receiving excellent care." A statement a week later said that he would not be voting that week. And on Thursday, a new statement said that he "continues to improve" and "appreciates the outpouring of support he's receiving while he continues his recovery in the hospital."



McConnell

His office has not released any updates since then, and a spokeswoman did not return a request for comment on Monday.

The senator's unspecified health issues come after several hospitalizations in recent years, and as Senate Republicans are already navigating a narrow majority in the final months before the midterm elections. McConnell, 84, was the longest serving Senate leader in history before stepping aside from that role. He is serving out his final term, which ends in January.

While he was still Republican leader, McConnell was hospitalized with a concussion in March 2023 and missed several weeks of work after falling in a Washington hotel. After he returned, he twice froze up during news conferences that summer, staring vacantly ahead before colleagues and staff came to his assistance. A year later, he fell and sprained his wrist while walking out of a GOP luncheon. (AP)



Heavy rain leads to roof collapse: Heat wave-breaking rain caused part of the roof of a New Jersey

warehouse store to collapse Monday, sending a shopper, a cart and tables of baked goods skidding through rushing water.

Two people were briefly trapped in debris at the BJ's Wholesale Club in Ocean Township but managed to escape, and no injuries were reported, according to the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office.

Flooding rains were reported in parts of New York City, Philadelphia and New Jersey as rounds of storms moved through the area Monday, breaking a heat wave that gripped much of the area last week.

On Sunday, New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani warned about heatstroke and shared locations of pools and cooling centers. By Monday, he was urging people to leave basement apartments immediately if they saw water rising in their homes. (AP)



Idaho mother charged with murder: An Idaho woman who said her toddler twins died last year after being vaccinated faces murder charges connected to their deaths, authorities said.

A grand jury indicted Andrea Shaw, who is accused of suffocating her 18-month-old twins in May 2025, on two counts of first-degree murder on June 29, according to court records and a statement from the Payette Police Department.

While appearing last year on an internet show produced by Children's Health Defense - an anti-vaccine group founded by Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. - Shaw said her twins died after getting vaccinated. Kennedy has not been affiliated with the group since December 2024, when he formally resigned as chairman to join President Donald Trump's administration.

Shaw, 23, was arrested by Boise police officers Tuesday and arraigned Thursday. She is being held on a \$2 million bond and could face life in prison or the death penalty if convicted or if she pleads guilty to first-degree murder. Her next court appearance is July 14.

Joe Filicetti, an attorney representing Shaw, wrote in a text message that she "denies anything and everything" and that the state "cannot prove" the criminal charges.

"We will defend her with wholeheartedness," Filicetti added. (AP)

Trump building White House helipad for new and more powerful Marine One

WASHINGTON, July 7, (AP) - US President Donald Trump said Monday that he's building a granite helipad on the White House lawn, insisting that the landing area is needed to accommodate new, more powerful presidential choppers.

Confirmation of the project came as construction crews had already begun working on the helipad on the South Lawn, where the president had UFC build a temporary arena for a cage fight celebrating his 80th birthday. He said the project would be privately funded and estimated its cost at up to \$6 million.

"It's got the seal of the White House on it in granite, in carved granite," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office. "It's really a beautiful thing."

The Republican president did not offer details on how long the work would take. It is the latest major construction project he has overseen in an effort to increasingly mold the White House in his own image.

Some of Trump's major White House construction projects have relied on public money, even when the president initially suggested otherwise. Still, Trump said Sikorsky Aircraft, a subsidiary of defense contracting giant Lockheed Martin, would be paying for the helipad.

Asked about the cost of the project and a timeline for its completion, Lockheed Martin responded with a statement reading in part: "This specific contribution was made to the National Park Service" and "conducted in full accordance with all applicable laws and regulations."

In 2024, Sikorsky completed a new fleet of helicopters for use as Marine One, and President Joe Biden took the first flight aboard a modern VH-92A Patriot helicopter

on his way to the Democratic National Convention in Chicago - the same day the military announced Sikorsky delivered the last of the 23 new aircraft.

A Sikorsky spokesperson said Monday that the new helicopters deliver "increased performance and reduced maintenance costs and time."

But Trump said the newer aircraft were more powerful than Vietnam War-era choppers that long had been used as Marine One, and the modern ones were too potent to land on the White House lawn without damaging the grass.

"It's not that the grass gets discolored - it gets ripped out," the president said.

Indeed, the new helicopters have seen limited service because their exhaust vents aim heat downward, scorching the White House South Lawn.

Dems begin pulling Platner endorsements

McMorrow suspends Senate campaign

TRaverse City, Michigan, July 7, (AP) - Michigan Democrat Mallory McMorrow suspended her campaign for the US Senate abruptly reshaping the party primary just a month before the election and leaving a two-person contest between moderate Haley Stevens and progressive Abdul El-Sayed.

McMorrow's exit comes after many Democrats increasingly viewed her as a long shot for the nomination. It also creates a fresh dynamic in one of the country's most closely watched Senate races, forcing Democratic voters into a direct choice between Stevens, a mainstream congresswoman backed by much of the party establishment, and El-Sayed, supported by many progressive movement leaders.

The binary choice will be on full display Tuesday, when Stevens and El-Sayed are set to face off in a televised debate. During a May debate, El-Sayed repeatedly went on the offensive against Stevens, who mostly declined to engage directly with him.

McMorrow's departure could also prompt influential Democrats in the state to announce their support for Stevens because of concerns about El-Sayed's electability in a general election. Some had stayed on the sidelines because of relationships with McMorrow.

The seat being vacated by Democratic Sen. Gary Peters is one that the party must hold if it hopes to reclaim



Michigan State Sen. Mallory McMorrow, a candidate for the US Senate, listens to questions from the media during the Michigan Democratic Party State Endorsement Convention on April 19 in Detroit. (AP)

the Senate majority in this fall's midterm elections. The primary winner is expected to face Republican Mike Rogers, who lost to now-Sen. Elissa Slotkin in 2024.

McMorrow made the announcement in a statement and video posted online Sunday, which came after ballots have already gone out.

"Today, I'm announcing that I am suspending my campaign for United States Senate," McMorrow wrote.

Also:

WASHINGTON: A woman who previously dated Maine Democratic

Senate candidate **Graham Platner** said he drunkenly forced her to have intimate moment after she told him to stop, according to a Politico report released Monday, leading prominent supporters to pull their endorsements and throwing a must-win race for the party into turmoil.

Platner denied the allegation, but said he would be considering next steps for his campaign.

"Regardless of the inaccuracy of the reporting but mindful of the political reality it will inflict, we're taking the time to reflect on the best path forward," he said in a video released on social media.



Workers construct a helipad for Marine One on the South Lawn of the White House on July 1, 2026, in Washington. (AP)

Leaders try to show they're serious about defense

NATO unveils billions in arms deals to prove its firepower as Trump arrives in Ankara

ANKARA, Turkey, July 7, (AP) - US President Donald Trump arrived in Ankara Tuesday afternoon for the NATO summit, as the transatlantic military alliance was announcing billions in arms deals in an attempt to appease the mercurial US leader.

Trump was expected to head first to the presidential compound of Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, a close ally who is hosting this year's gathering.

Just before Air Force One touched down in Ankara, NATO showcased a series of military projects worth billions of dollars - an investment that the alliance's secretary-general, Mark Rutte, called "money well spent." An energized Rutte was speaking to government ministers and defense industry officials at a forum billed as NATO's "big reveal," to the thrum of techno music and a slick video display.

NATO as an organization does not own any weapons - these are the property of the 32 member countries - but it does have a fleet of 14 AWACS early warning radar surveillance planes that are about 50 years old, along with some newer surveillance drones.

A deal to replace the aging planes was announced Tuesday. Swedish manufacturer Saab will be supplying up to 10 new GlobalEye surveillance aircraft for a 10-nation consortium, Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson announced.

"It's a moment of great pride," he said, noting that the twin-engine aircraft would be "made within the

alliance for all the alliance."

Some of the projects will be paid for with funds from a system of cheap loans for defense purposes set up by the European Union, comprising up to \$170 billion raised on capital markets.

"We need to ensure that we are translating our economic might into military capabilities, putting the cash to work from defense plans to drones, from money to missiles and interceptors," Rutte said.

Trump has branded NATO a "paper tiger" that would cease to function without American arms and leadership. At the forum on Tuesday, Michael Duffy, a US undersecretary of defense, said "the reality is that we need production increases across the board."

"We will be looking to increase our exports to those who are looking to buy our equipment, and we'll also be looking to partner with the expansion of production capacity here in Europe," he said.

Representatives from 15 nations shook hands and patted shoulders on a vast podium under the NATO logo as they announced a multinational effort to buy air-to-air refueling and transport planes from Airbus.

Then Rutte announced a four-country effort to purchase as many as five new Triton surveillance drones to add to NATO's small fleet.

"It is genuinely made in NATO, and creating jobs on both sides of the Atlantic," he said.

Rutte told reporters on the eve of the military alliance's two-day sum-



US President Donald Trump walks with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, (left), upon arriving for the NATO summit in Ankara, Turkey on July 7. (AP)

mit in Turkey that "we will announce tens of billions in new contracts that will provide the crucial kit we need to deter and defend."

However, at Tuesday's event, no dollar figures were given and the display included some projects long since agreed.

The defense industry splash comes a few weeks after Rutte tried to ease US concerns about military spending at NATO with a new pitch using a chart labeled "The Trump Trillion" - showing \$1.2 trillion in spending by European allies and Canada since 2017.

Far from being impressed, Trump appeared unmoved, saying he was

still disappointed at some NATO allies' refusal to join the Iran war, which he had launched alongside Israel without consulting them.

"We don't need their money - we don't need anything," Trump said. "I just want loyalty."

The summit is being held in President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's sprawling palace compound in Ankara, and Trump has suggested he would come bearing gifts for the Turkish leader.

Speaking Monday on the morning show "Fox & Friends," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu urged the US not to sell F-35 fighter jets to Turkey, saying that Erdogan "calls

openly for the annihilation of Israel." Turkey and Israel have acrimonious relations. Erdogan frequently accuses Israel of committing genocide in its war in Gaza, triggered by the deadly Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas-led attack on southern Israel.

Turkey was barred from the F-35 program in 2019 after it purchased Russian-made S-400 missile defense systems. However, Trump, who has warm relations with Erdogan, has hinted ahead of his planned visit to Ankara that the sales could soon resume.

Netanyahu said selling Turkey F-35s would "upset the power balance in the Middle East, which is ultimately guaranteed by Israeli air superiority and also, I think, by America's posture in the Middle East."

Israel's Air Force depends on hundreds of US fighter jets, including F-35s, F-16s and F-15s.

Turkey beefed up security and banned protests in Ankara during the summit, but a small group of demonstrators gathered on Tuesday in the capital. They were quickly surrounded by police, and a legal association said 22 students affiliated with the leftist Turkish Workers Party and three lawyers had been detained.

The focus of the summit is a stronger Europe for a stronger NATO. The Trump administration has warned the allies that they must handle Europe's security alone as the United States focuses on China and the Indo-Pacific region.

The Pentagon wants a reboot and is promoting what it calls "NATO

3.0," a vision of the alliance in which Europe assumes greater responsibility for its own defense, freeing the U.S. to concentrate on other priorities.

But hiking defense spending means increasing taxes or diverting resources from other priorities. U.K. Defense Secretary John Healey unexpectedly quit last month, saying the British government was not willing to spend at a time of rising threats.

Concern is mounting among some northern and central eastern countries that Russia might be preparing a hybrid attack - a combination of conventional warfare with tactics like cyberattacks - on the continent as Russian President Vladimir Putin struggles to secure victory in Ukraine.

Keir Starmer's office said the British leader will be "focused on building a stronger and more European NATO" on what is likely to be his last foreign trip as prime minister.

Starmer, who announced his resignation June 22, has faced criticism from military leaders, opposition politicians and some in his center-left party for the slow rate of increase in UK military spending.

His government has committed to reach the NATO budget target of spending 3.5% of gross domestic product on defense by 2035 but does not have a concrete plan to get there. Its current spending plan will see that spending hit 2.7% of GDP by 2029.



French far-right leader Marine Le Pen, (center), reacts at the National Assembly during a session, on April 1, 2025 in Paris. (AP)

Europe

French court clears way for Le Pen to run in 2027: A Paris appeals court cleared the way Tuesday for popular far-right leader Marine Le Pen to possibly run for the French presidency next year but said she must wear an electronic bracelet, which she has said is a no-go.

The verdict declared Le Pen guilty of embezzlement but softened the ban on her holding elected office, putting the ball in her court.

She must now decide whether campaigning in 2027 with a monitoring bracelet as part of her sentence to be served at home is possible. (AP)



French gov't survives no-confidence vote: The French government led by Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu survived a no-confidence vote on Monday after deputies in the National Assembly rejected a motion criticizing its handling of the June heatwave.

The motion, tabled on July 2 by Green Party lawmakers and by some lawmakers from the hard-left parliamentary group La France Insoumise (LFI) and the left-wing Socialist Party, accused the government of failing to respond adequately to the record-breaking and deadly heatwave that

swept across France in late June. (Xinhua)



Lithuanian president approves new cabinet: Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda on Monday approved the composition of a new government led by Prime Minister Mindaugas Sinkevičius, paving the way for the cabinet to take office once it completes the required parliamentary procedures.

The new cabinet retains several ministers from the previous administration, including Foreign Minister Kestutis Budrys, while introducing new faces to key portfolios. (Xinhua)



Warsaw bus accident injures 6: Six people were injured in Warsaw after a city bus collided with a tram and multiple cars before crashing into a pedestrian underpass, Polish media reported.

The accident occurred at around 6 p.m. local time (1600 GMT) on Sunday. The bus, operating on Route 186, first collided with a tram before continuing toward a roundabout, where it struck 14 cars.

Police said the 58-year-old bus driver reported a possible technical malfunction that may have affected the vehicle's braking system. Tests showed that the driver was neither under the influence of alcohol nor drugs. (Xinhua)

Landslides, floods kill 13 in Maharashtra

Modi and Prabowo seal deal for Indonesia to acquire India's BrahMos missiles

JAKARTA, Indonesia, July 7. (Agencies): India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Indonesia's President Prabowo Subianto sealed a major defense deal on Tuesday, allowing Jakarta to acquire the Indian BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles.

The agreement, part of over a dozen, was reached during Modi's three-day visit to Indonesia, the first stop of his overseas visit to Indo-Pacific nations. The deal, reached a day after China test-launched a long-range ballistic missile, is expected to boost India's defense exports and strategic cooperation between Jakarta and New Delhi.

Speaking alongside Modi after their talks at the Merdeka Palace, Indonesia's main presidential office, Prabowo hailed Modi's visit as a "historic milestone" in bilateral ties, saying the two countries agreed to deepen cooperation across defense, security, trade, energy, health, education and cultural exchanges.

"We are two of the world's largest democracies. Cooperation between our countries will certainly bring benefits to the region," Prabowo said.

Modi said ties between India and Indonesia have gained "new energy" in recent years, with the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership established in 2018 continuing to grow.

"We are making significant strides in every field, including development, security, technology, culture and education," Modi said.

The Indian missiles are manufactured by BrahMos Aerospace Private Limited, a joint venture between India's Defence Research and Development Organization and Russia's NPO Mashinostroyeniya. It can be launched from land-based batteries, naval ships, submarines, and aircraft, at speeds up to three times the speed of sound.

Indonesia is the third foreign buyer of the missiles after the Philippines and Vietnam, local media said, as the BrahMos offers powerful coastal defense and anti-ship capabilities. Its high speed makes it difficult to intercept, and



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, (right), inspects honor guards with Indonesia's President Prabowo Subianto during the welcoming ceremony ahead of their meeting at Merdeka Palace in Jakarta, Indonesia on July 7. (AP)

it can help deter hostile naval forces in strategic waterways, including areas around the South China Sea and key maritime chokepoints in Southeast Asia.

The deals reached Tuesday also included an agreement to enhance maritime security cooperation as the two nations share strategic interests along key shipping routes linking the Indian and Pacific oceans.

Modi arrived in Jakarta on Monday afternoon and received a warm welcome, with his plane escorted into Indonesian airspace by three fighter jets. He was greeted on the tarmac by Prabowo at Halim Perdanakusuma Air Force Base, underscoring the importance Jakarta places on its relationship with New Delhi.

Indian Ambassador to Indonesia Sandeep Chakravorty said Modi is also scheduled to address members of Indonesia's Parliament Tuesday before attending an evening event with the Indian community in Indonesia. He said the visit reflects growing cooperation between two of Asia's most influential democracies.

"In the recent geopolitical context, closer ties between two leaders of the Global South are very essential so that we give the message to the world that we are together and we work for each other's strength," Chakravorty told reporters ahead of the visit.

Also:

NEW DELHI: At least 13 people were killed, and 10 others injured in the last 48 hours as heavy monsoon rains triggered landslides and floods, causing widespread destruction in parts of India's western state of Maharashtra, officials said Monday.

Girish Mahajan, a local disaster management minister, said on Monday that 13 people were killed in rain-related incidents as record-breaking rainfall lashed Mumbai and neighbouring Palghar and Raigad districts.

"The worst-hit area was Mankhurd in Mumbai, where a building collapse killed six people and injured one," an official said.

Heavy rain and landslides have also severely affected rail and road transport across the state. The India Meteorological Department warned of flooding in low-lying areas, flash floods, waterlogging, uprooted trees, damage to weak structures and the risk of landslides, urging residents to avoid unnecessary travel and follow official advisories.

Journalists' groups raise concerns

South Korean law targeting 'fake news' takes effect

SEOUL, South Korea, July 7. (AP): South Korea began enforcing a law Tuesday that allows steep punitive damages against news outlets and social media influencers for spreading false information as journalist groups warned it could chill public discourse and invite censorship.

Journalists and civil liberties groups say the vaguely worded law fails to clearly define what information it prohibits and lacks adequate safeguards for the media, warning it could potentially discourage critical reporting about government officials, politicians and large businesses.

The law allows courts to award damages of up to five times the proven losses against news organizations and large social media channels, including YouTube creators, that circulate illegal, false or manipulated information to cause harm or generate profit.

In addition, those who distribute information more than twice after a court has confirmed it to be false or manipulated could be fined up to 1 billion won (\$656,000) by the country's media regulator. Internet companies operating large social media



Supporters of impeached South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol attend a rally to oppose his impeachment near the presidential residence in Seoul, South Korea on Jan 6. (AP)

platforms with more than 1 million daily users are required to take measures such as removing content or suspending user accounts when they receive reports of false or fabricated information.

The law was backed by President Lee Jae Myung's liberal Democratic

Party and passed by the National Assembly in December over a boycott by the conservative opposition. The liberals, who unsuccessfully sought to pass similar legislation under previous governments, say the law is necessary to combat fake news and disinformation, which they argue is

posing a growing threat to democracy by fueling division and hate speech.

The Journalists Association of Korea said the mere prospect of news organizations repeatedly facing massive damage claims or legal disputes could have an "unavoidable chilling effect."

"Even if a law's objective is legitimate, it could erode the foundations of democracy if it's enforced in a way that discourages the media and ordinary citizens from freely criticizing and scrutinizing those in power," the group said in a statement.

The Seoul Foreign Correspondents' Club also expressed concern about the potential impact on the work of the media and the free flow of information.

The push for the law came as Lee expressed concern about South Korea's online discourse and information environment after then-President Yoon Suk Yeol briefly imposed martial law in 2024. He was later impeached and removed from office. He was convicted and sentenced to life in prison for rebellion, a ruling that he appealed in February.



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, rescuers conduct search and rescue at the site of a landslide at a village in Nanhe township of Tanchang County, Longnan City, northwest China's Gansu Province on July 7. (AP)

China landslide kills 5

A landslide struck a township in Tanchang County, Longnan City, northwest China's Gansu Province, early on Tuesday morning, leaving five people dead and 12 missing.

The landslide occurred at Renzhang Village in Nanhe Township at around 6:56 a.m., according to local authorities. A total of 33 people were buried beneath the debris.

Rescuers said 21 people had been pulled out as of 2:50 p.m., five

of whom died despite treatment. All-out search and rescue operations are underway for the other 12 missing people.

Multi-departmental rescue efforts in Gansu are in full swing. Teams from emergency management, fire control, medical services, public security, transportation, power supply and telecommunications sectors have been mobilized to carry out search operations. (Xinhua)



Rescue workers search through the rubble on a building collapsed during the earthquakes in La Guaira, Venezuela on July 6. (AP)

As earthquake rescue effort winds down, Venezuelans left alone to recover their dead

LA GUAIRA, Venezuela, July 7. (AP): When the high-rise where Noel Márquez lived with his family crashed to the ground and burst into flames in Venezuela's twin earthquakes, Márquez, who happened to be at his girlfriend's apartment, raced home and called out for his mother, grandparents and siblings. Only his 17-year-old brother, his legs pinned under columns that required heavy machinery to lift, responded.

Márquez and his father, who also survived, spoke through layers of concrete, hearing Leonel suffer, shout for help and inhale suffocating smoke as he waited for a crane to remove the columns crushing him. But it never came. After several hours, Leonel's cries gave way to silence, Márquez said.

But even that, terrible as it was, was not what disturbed him the most. The worst, Márquez said, was trying to recover his families' tangled remains with little more than his bare hands and a saw. He sliced off limbs to free the corpses of Leonel and his mother but was forced to abandon his sister, who was eight-months' pregnant, grandmother and other relatives beneath the ruins - and with their bodies, the hope that if he couldn't save them, he could at least give them proper burials.

"It's unfair. It's inhumane, everything that is happening," 26-year-old Márquez said from the overflowing

makeshift morgue at La Guaira port. "We couldn't get my brother out because we didn't get a response from the state ... and after 11 days, we are still requesting a crane."

Márquez is one of countless Venezuelans who, after days of torment, has been left alone to search, if not for signs of life, then for loved ones' remains - and for some semblance of closure.

International rescue teams, quietly acknowledging the possibility that no more victims would be found alive after 12 days under the rubble, are preparing to depart. Local authorities are turning their focus to finding shelter for thousands of displaced people. But the recovery of the dead has become a pressing, and horrifying, duty for Venezuelans still missing their loved ones.

"I found her hand, but her torso is crushed," said Norely Rodríguez, trying to get her 5-year-old daughter out of the ruins in the hardest-hit state of La Guaira. "I want to see if I can get her out whole."

Many say that just as they were left without government help to rescue survivors in the immediate aftermath of the quakes, so too are they now under-equipped to unearth their dead nearly two weeks later.

The more time passes, the more gruesome the recovery process becomes, said William Gomez, a firefighter in La Guaira. "It has been dif-

ficult because the bodies are already in an advanced state of decomposition, decomposed to such an extent that many times when we try to remove them, they fall apart."

Authorities announced that the death toll rose on Monday to 3,535, with another 16,740 people injured. Beyond that is an untold toll: those whose bodies have yet to be found. There are no official statistics on how many people are buried under the rubble, but more than 30,000 reports of missing people have been sent to a website set up by the Venezuelan opposition.

Over the weekend in La Guaira, no government civil defense crews or security forces could be seen helping families dig. The vast majority of those working their way through the wreckage were civilians using their bare hands or rudimentary tools like pickaxes and shovels, occasionally accompanied by firefighters and Mexican rescuers who remain in the country.

There are 1.2 million tons of debris in the most affected parts of La Guaira, according to the United Nations Development Program.

"We are the ones helping ourselves: our family. Nobody else helps us except for a few volunteers," said Yeikhary Urbina, who found the bodies of her mother and brother on Saturday suspended under piles of concrete, seemingly locked in an embrace.

Islandwide blackout hits Cuba as fuel reserve dwindles, aging grid crumbles

HAVANA, Cuba, July 7. (AP): An islandwide blackout hit Cuba on Monday as the country's fuel reserves dwindle and its electric grid continues to crumble.

The blackout in the country of nearly 10 million people was reported by the state-run Electric Union, which said on X that the cause is under investigation. The Ministry of Energy and Mines wrote on X that it has activated protocols to restore electricity.

Fuel has been running out across Cuba since January, when US President Donald Trump threatened tariffs on any country that sells or provides oil to the island, deepening the island's ongoing economic and financial crisis. Public transportation has largely been halted, and officials have canceled tens of thousands of surgeries.

Energy Minister Vicente de la O Levy said microsystems were already operating throughout Cuba a couple of hours after the outage: "Vital services continue to be protected, amidst this complex situation exacerbated by the energy blockade we face."

Meanwhile, Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel accused the US of trying to "incite social unrest by strangling Cuba's fuel supply." "The actions of electrical workers in the midst of a genocidal energy blockade are heroic," he wrote on X.



People walk along a street during a blackout in Havana, Cuba on July 6. (AP)

The outage sparked concern across Havana, with 36-year-old Lina May wondering when the power would come back on so she could cook some rice.

"I just told my dad that we have to buy charcoal because otherwise we won't eat and we'll starve," she said. Richard Valdés, 40, said the outage is just the latest hit of many. "We're without power again," he said. "Now we have no water, no gas, nothing until they restore it."

Cuba produces only 40% of the fuel it needs, while the 730,000 barrels

of oil delivered by a Russian tanker in late March ran out by the end of April.

The government also has been rationing power with intentional outages that can stretch to more than 24 consecutive hours.

A blackout in mid-May affected the island's eastern provinces, while a blackout in mid-March struck the entire island.

Like many Cubans, Mario Pedroso, a 33-year-old Havana resident, was resigned about Monday's total blackout.

Subcontinent

Militants kill 9 police officers in Pakistan: Dozens of militants attacked a police post overnight in southwestern Pakistan, triggering an intense gunbattle that killed nine police officers and wounded some others, officials said Tuesday in the latest escalation of militant violence in the region where insurgents have stepped up attacks on security forces.



Rind

The attack took place in a remote area of Ziarat district in Balochistan province, police said, without providing further details. The assailants also abducted eight police officers, but all were later recovered by security forces, said **Shahid Rind**, a spokesman for the Balochistan government.

He said a subsequent clearance operation by security forces ended with 15 militants killed. Rind said intelligence-based operations against militants would continue and vowed that authorities would respond decisively to any such attacks on security forces. (AP)

8 dead in Bangladesh landslides: Landslides triggered by heavy monsoon rains in southeastern Bangladesh killed at least eight Rohingya refugees.

Dollar Tripura, a Fire Service and Civil Defense official in Cox's Bazar district, told The Associated Press that rescuers recovered seven bodies while an eighth body was found by refugees after several hills collapsed from late Sunday to Monday morning. All have been handed over to families, he said.

He said another two children were found with injuries.

According to the UNHCR, 36 refugees died and at least 86 were injured in similar landslides at refugee camps between 2021 and 2026. (AP)

□ □ □

Sri Lanka jail clash death toll rises to 26: The death toll in Sri Lanka's prison clash rose Tuesday to 26, including seven prison officials and 19 inmates, while the government announced that three separate investigations into the incident are underway.

The unrest at the prison in Negombo, about 35 kilometers (22 miles) north of the capital, Colombo, started between inmates on Sunday and turned violent on Monday after the inmates attacked the guards who intervened. Officials said the inmates even tried to break through the main gate, but were stopped. (AP)

Kuwait oil price surges to \$69.22 pb

KUWAIT CITY, July 7, (KUNA): Price of Kuwaiti crude oil rose by 21 cents to USD 69.22 pb in Monday's trading, up from USD 69.01 per barrel on Friday, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation

(KPC) on Tuesday. In global markets, Brent fell nine cents to settle at USD 71.99 pb, while US West Texas Intermediate declined 14 cents to USD 68.55 pb.

Business

TM Forum validates Zain's smart network capabilities

Zain Kuwait earns TM Forum's top recognition for world-leading autonomous network capabilities

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Zain Kuwait has received two Autonomous Network Levels Assessment Validation Certificates from TM Forum, the connectivity industry's global alliance, recognizing the company's advanced application of AI-powered intelligence across its network.

Zain Kuwait's Network Engineering Director Saleh Al-Asaker received the recognition during the 2026 DTW Ignite conference in Copenhagen, Denmark. The step reflects Zain's growing efforts to make its network smarter, more efficient, and more responsive. This translates into stronger network reliability, faster maintenance, and improved energy efficiency, while continuing to deliver a seamless customer experience across Kuwait's most awarded 5G network.

Zain's network was recognized for achieving AN Level 4.0 in RAN Energy Efficiency Optimization and AN Level 3.9 in RAN Fault Management. The RAN Fault Management score represents the highest recorded AN level globally for this scenario, while the energy efficiency optimization score ranks among the highest validated results worldwide.

This milestone reflects Zain's continued progress in building a smarter, more resilient, and more sustainable network, in line with its 4WARD-Progress with Purpose strategy. By embedding AI and automation deeper into network operations, the company is strengthening the foundations of Kuwait's digital ecosystem while enhancing customer experience, operational efficiency, and environmental performance.

The validation follows Zain's large-scale deployment of RAN Agent in partnership with Huawei across its network in Kuwait. Operating 24/7 in real



Saleh Al-Asaker receives the first certificate in Copenhagen.



The second certificate is ranked among the highest globally.

- At 2026 DTW Ignite conference in Copenhagen, Denmark
- Zain's network recognized with AN Level 4.0 in RAN Energy Efficiency Optimization, the highest recorded AN level globally.

time, the solution supports both maintenance and energy-saving scenarios, from proactive fault prediction and root-cause diagnosis to dynamic, site-level energy optimization.

In fault management, the RAN Agent is integrated into Zain's operations and maintenance workflows to help predict potential network issues, accelerate diagnosis, and guide field teams through natural language interaction and

visualized recommendations. This enables faster fault resolution, improves network quality, and reduces the need for prolonged outdoor fieldwork, particularly in Kuwait's challenging summer climate.

In energy efficiency optimization, the AI-driven solution enables a more precise approach to network energy management by adapting strategies to the needs of each site and each hour. Through a "one site, one strategy" model, it dynamically balances energy savings with network experience, supporting round-the-clock optimization while maintaining service quality for customers.

The dual validation reinforces Zain's leadership in applying autonomous network technologies at scale, moving AI from controlled pilots into live, nationwide network operations. It also highlights the company's com-

mitment to future-ready infrastructure that can support rising data demand, accelerate digital transformation, and contribute to more sustainable network operations.

As demand for high-performance connectivity, cloud services, AI, and digital applications continues to grow, autonomous networks are becoming a critical enabler of service agility and operational resilience. Zain's recognition by TM Forum further positions Kuwait as a leading market for intelligent network transformation in the region and demonstrates the readiness of AI-native networks for large-scale deployment.

Zain will continue working with global technology partners to advance its network intelligence roadmap, accelerate automation across key operational domains, and deliver smarter, more reliable, and more sustainable digital services to customers, businesses, and communities across Kuwait.

Premier index declines

Bursa Kuwait dips slightly

KUWAIT CITY, July 7, (KUNA): Bursa Kuwait ended Tuesday's session marginally lower, with the general index slipping 5.26 points, or 0.06 percent, to close at 8,733.72 points. Trading activity saw 310.2 million shares change hands across 21,796 transactions, with a total value of KD 72.1 million (USD 234.8 million).

The main market index outperformed, rising 12.18 points, or 0.14 percent, to 8,841.11 points, supported by 209.8 million shares traded through 13,086 transactions worth

KD 31 million (USD 100.9 million). In contrast, the premier market index declined 9.24 points, or 0.10 percent, to settle at 9,164.16 points, with 100.4 million shares traded across 8,710 transactions totaling KD 41.1 million (USD 133.8 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index posted the strongest gain, climbing 36.92 points, or 0.37 percent, to 10,098.56 points, on the back of 178.6 million shares traded through 9,588 transactions valued at KD 25.9 million (USD 84.3 million).

Wego sees shift to smarter, mobile-first travel planning

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Kuwaiti travelers are returning to familiar travel patterns, but with a more flexible and considered approach to planning, according to Mamoun Hmidan, Chief Business Officer at Wego. In this Arab Times interview, he discusses shifting booking behavior, the dominance of mobile-first travel, and the destinations now drawing the strongest interest from Kuwait.

Question: What trends are Wego observing among travelers from Kuwait? Are Kuwaiti travelers returning to their usual travel patterns, or have recent events led to lasting changes in the way they choose destinations and plan their trips?

Answer: We're seeing Kuwaiti travelers gradually return to their usual travel patterns as airline schedules continue to normalize. The appetite for travel remains strong, but travelers are taking a more considered approach to planning by comparing more options, booking closer to departure, and placing greater importance on convenience and flexibility.

At Wego, we've observed that travelers continue to favor destinations that offer strong connectivity, straightforward travel planning, and good overall value. Rather than changing where they want to travel, many are adapting how they plan their trips, looking for greater confidence and flexibility throughout the booking journey.

As we move further into the summer season, booking momentum continues to improve, reflecting the resilience of Kuwaiti travelers and their continued enthusiasm for international travel.

Question: Mobile-first booking has become the norm across the GCC. How does traveler behavior in Kuwait compare with other regional markets, and what insights has Wego gathered from its user data?

Answer: Kuwait is very much a mobile-first market, in line with the broader GCC. Today's travelers expect to search, compare, and book their entire journey through their smartphones quickly and seamlessly.

One of the biggest shifts we're seeing is that travelers are spending more time comparing prices, flight schedules, and accommodation before making a booking. Mobile has become the preferred platform for this decision-making process because it offers convenience, real-time updates,



Mamoun Hmidan, Chief Business Officer, Wego

and access to a wide range of travel options.

We're also seeing growing demand for personalized recommendations and smarter search experiences. Travelers increasingly expect platforms to understand their preferences and present the most relevant options, making technologies such as AI an important part of delivering a more personalized and efficient booking experience.

Question: Do you anticipate stronger demand for intra-GCC travel? Which destinations are emerging as favorites among Kuwaiti travelers, and what factors are driving this renewed interest?

Answer: We expect regional travel to remain an important part of the overall travel mix, supported by strong connectivity and short flight times. At the same time, Kuwaiti travelers continue to show strong interest in international destinations that combine accessibility, value, and diverse experiences.

According to Wego's latest search data, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Türkiye are among the most searched destinations for summer travel from Kuwait, reflecting strong demand for destinations that offer visa-friendly entry, convenient flight connections, and a wide variety of leisure experiences. For travelers planning longer holidays, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Milan, and Paris continue to rank among the leading international destinations.

Overall, we're seeing travelers prioritize destinations that offer ease of access, strong connectivity, and good value. As airline capacity continues to recover and tourism investment across the region expands, we expect both intra-GCC travel and outbound leisure travel to remain strong throughout the summer season.

Safeguarding valuable & personal belongings during travel

KFH continues to provide safety deposit boxes for customers

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continues to receive customer reservations for safety deposit boxes, which offer the highest standards of protection and security during the summer travel season. These boxes provide a reliable means of safeguarding belongings against potential risks like theft, loss, damage, or unforeseen emergencies, allowing customers to travel and enjoy their summer with complete peace of mind.

KFH safety deposit boxes are available at numerous branches throughout Kuwait. To suit varied customer needs, these boxes come in small, medium, and large sizes. They feature multi-layered secu-



urity systems and round-the-clock, high-definition camera monitoring. Customers can access their boxes in complete privacy at any time during

official bank working hours.

KFH customers can rent safe deposit boxes tailored to their needs at competitive prices by applying at any branch or through the website. All visits and rentals are handled with the highest level of privacy and confidentiality, and the boxes are accessible solely by the owner or an authorized representative.

KFH provides safe deposit boxes as part of an integrated solutions system designed to meet customer expectations. These boxes offer a reliable, highly private option for preserving valuables, reflecting the deep-rooted trust between the bank and its customers.

AQARAT & Al-Tijaria announce successful exit from '501 First Residences' project in Miami, FL

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Kuwait Real Estate Company ("Aqarat") and The Commercial Real Estate Company ("Al-Tijaria") and are pleased to announce the successful sale and exit from their joint investment in the "501 First Residences" project in Miami, Florida, United States, following the development and completion of the project in December 2025.

The investment was undertaken in partnership with Aria Development Group, a leading real estate developer in Miami. The project represented an important milestone in the international investment strategy of both companies and reflected their confidence in the strength and growth potential of the Miami real estate market.

The 501 First Residences project, with a total project cost of approximately USD 200 million, comprises a 40-storey residential tower with 476 residential units.

The development was designed to provide a modern residential lifestyle in the heart of Downtown Miami, supported by a wide range of amenities, including fitness facilities, rooftop leisure areas, co-working spaces, resident lounges, valet services, storage facilities, and other lifestyle-oriented services.

Following the completion of the development phase, the project was successfully sold, and the exit proceeds have been collected during 2026.

The project's prime location, high-quality amenities, and strong



(Top left): Mr. Abdulfatah Marafie, Chairman of Al-Tijaria; (Top right): Talal Al-Bahar, Vice-Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of AQARAT

market positioning contributed to its commercial success and suc-

cessful exit, underscoring the value of investing in well-located de-

velopments with attractive market fundamentals and partnering with experienced, reputable developers.

Mr. Abdulfatah Marafie, Chairman of Al-Tijaria, stated:

"We are pleased to announce the successful exit from the Residences First 501 project in Miami, following the completion of its development in December 2025. This investment represents a clear example of Al-Tijaria's ability to identify attractive opportunities in international real estate markets, partner with reputable institutions, and execute a disciplined investment strategy that delivers strong returns."

Commenting on this achievement, Mr. Talal Al-Bahar, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of AQARAT, added:

"We are proud of the successful partnership we have built with Al-Tijaria and Aria Development Group on the 501 First Residences project. The successful delivery of this development reflects the strength of our collaboration, the alignment of our shared vision, and the commitment of all parties to delivering a high-quality project. We look forward to building on this success, further strengthening our partnership, and collaborating on future developments."

The successful exit from 501 First Residences reinforces the disciplined investment approach adopted by Al-Tijaria and Aqarat, focusing on opportunities with clear development potential, strong market fundamentals, reputable partners, and lucrative returns.

Package Visa aims to boost seamless travel to Saudi

RIYADH, July 7, (PRNewswire): Saudi has announced the launch of Package Visa, a new digital initiative designed to simplify travel to Saudi by integrating tourist visa application directly into curated travel bookings. The launch is currently underway through qualified travel and tourism service providers across selected international markets ahead of a broader rollout.

The initiative builds on Saudi's wider efforts to simplify visiting the country. Since launching the tourist e-Visa, Saudi has introduced several new ways to visit, including visa on arrival and the Stopover Transit Visa. Together, these initiatives have supported the country's rapid tourism growth, with Saudi welcoming more than 29 million inbound visitors in 2025.

Commenting on the initiative, His Excellency Ahmed Al Khateeb, Saudi Minister of Tourism, said:

"As Saudi's tourism sector continues to grow at pace, Package Visa reflects our commitment to making travel to Saudi more seamless for visitors. By integrating visa issuance with travel bookings, we are simplifying the visitor journey and creating a more connected travel experience. This initiative also strengthens collaboration across the tourism ecosystem and supports Saudi's position as an increasingly accessible global destination."

For visitors, Package Visa means fewer steps between planning a trip and experiencing Saudi. Instead of arranging flights, accommodation, and a visa separately, eligible travelers can book everything through one integrated travel process, with the option to add events, activities and tourism experiences. The result is a simpler, more connected journey from booking to arrival.

For qualified travel and tourism service provid-

ers, the initiative creates an opportunity to offer more attractive travel packages, streamline the traveler journey, and encourage longer stays and richer travel experiences.

To ensure a smooth and reliable travel experience, Package Visa is available only through qualified travel and tourism service providers that meet clear service standards and offer 24/7 customer support.

As Saudi continues to grow its tourism sector, Package Visa marks another step toward making travel easier, more connected, and more seamless for visitors discovering the country.

About Saudi Tourism Authority (STA): Saudi Tourism Authority (STA), launched in June 2020, is responsible for marketing Saudi's tourism destinations worldwide and developing the destination's offerings through programs, packages, and business support.

Al-Qatami: Initiative reflects our commitment to community engagement & partnerships with public-sector institutions

Warba honors Mol frontline personnel, promotes banking services



Ahmad Al-Qatami, Chief Retail Banking Officer at Warba Bank, welcomes Ministry of Interior personnel.



A group of employees from the Ministry of Interior and Warba Bank at the two-day event.

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Warba Bank organized a community initiative at the Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmed Building of the Ministry of Interior on July 5-6. The event featured a ceremony honoring frontline ministry personnel alongside a dedicated booth showcasing the bank's Sharia-compliant retail products, digital services, and financing solutions.

The initiative reflects Warba Bank's corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy to recognize the national contributions of Ministry of Interior personnel and strengthen direct engagement with public sector employees.

Recognition of Frontline Personnel:

The event honored frontline security personnel in appreciation of their ongoing efforts to maintain national security and stability. This initiative reflects the bank's commitment to strengthening community partnerships and supporting national institutions.

Executive Commentary:

Mr. Ahmad Faisal Al-Qatami, Chief Retail Banking Officer at Warba Bank, stated:



A scene from the visit of His Excellency the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior to the Warba Bank pavilion.

"We are proud to launch this initiative, which combines our appreciation for the frontline personnel at the Ministry of Interior with direct engagement to introduce our latest banking solutions. Our presence at the event reflects our commitment to staying close to the community while delivering a modern banking experience focused on innovation and efficiency."

Al-Qatami added: "Corporate social responsibility extends to building effective partnerships with state institutions and providing tangible value to society. This event reflects our deep respect for our security forces and our keenness to provide them with competitive, tailored financial solutions."

About Warba Bank:

Warba Bank is a leading Islamic bank in Kuwait with a strong focus on Sharia-compliant digital banking. With one of the largest shareholder bases in the country, the bank delivers innovative financial products and services, reinforcing its position as a digital-focused financial institution.

'Lulu boosts retail flexibility'

deema Buy Now, Pay Later service now available across all Lulu Hypermarkets

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Lulu Hypermarket, one of Kuwait's leading retail destinations, has announced the launch of deema's Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL) service across all its hypermarkets in Kuwait, offering customers a more convenient way to manage their purchases.

The new payment solution allows shoppers to split their purchases into four simple installments, making it easier to budget while enjoying immediate access to the products they need. Whether purchasing everyday groceries, household essentials, electronics, home appliances, furniture, fashion, or other lifestyle products, customers can now complete their shopping with greater ease and convenience.

deema BNPL enables customers to convert their total purchase amount into four equal payments through a quick and seamless process. With instant approval and minimal steps required, customers can enjoy a smooth checkout experience without lengthy procedures or unnecessary waiting times.

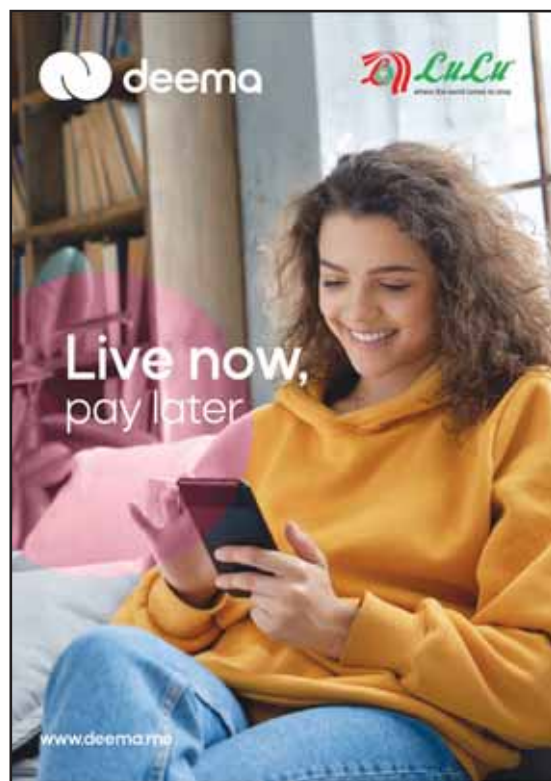
A key feature of the service is its transparency and affordability. Customers pay only the original purchase value, with no additional cost on eligible transactions, ensuring a straightforward payment option that does not increase the overall cost of shopping. The service provides shoppers with greater purchasing convenience, helping them plan their spending more effectively while enjoying immediate access to the products they need.

Mr. Sreejith K. S., Director of Lulu Hypermarket Kuwait, said:

"At Lulu Hypermarket, we continuously strive to enhance shopping experience by introducing solutions that add value and convenience to our customers. Our partnership with deema reflects our commitment to offering greater payment flexibility while maintaining the affordability and quality that our customers expect. We are confident that this Buy Now, Pay Later service will make everyday shopping even more convenient for families and individuals across Kuwait."

Bader Alghanim, Head of Innovation and Partnerships at deema, said:

"Our partnership with Lulu Hypermarket reflects deema's mission to make everyday shopping more flexible and accessible for customers across Kuwait. By bringing our Buy Now Pay Later service to all Lulu locations,



we are giving shoppers a simple, transparent way to manage their budgets without compromising on the products they need. This collaboration is a natural extension of our commitment to delivering innovative financial solutions that genuinely make a difference in people's daily lives."

With deema BNPL now available across all Lulu Hypermarkets in Kuwait, customers can enjoy a smarter and more flexible way to shop. The partnership reflects the shared commitment of Lulu Hypermarket and deema to deliver convenient, customer-centric payment solutions that make everyday shopping simpler, more accessible, and budget-friendly.

Walmart cites seasonal deals

Trump credits policy for lower prices

WASHINGTON, July 7, (AP): President Donald Trump on Monday sought to take credit for recent price cuts by Walmart, but a statement by the retailer made no mention of the administration's involvement in its decision.

The president has faced public backlash over inflation rising during his watch, as prices climbed initially in the aftermath of his tariffs and later with the start of the Iran war in late February. Trump described a recent bipartisan measure to trim housing costs as "a yawn" and tried to blame the Democrats for inflation staying elevated.

Going into the November midterm elections for control of Congress, Trump has sought to deride Democrats as communists who would have the government interfere with private companies. But in his social media post about Walmart, he said the business had trimmed prices at the specific request of his administration.

"I have just been informed that

one of the biggest, best, and smartest Retailers in America, Walmart, will be lowering prices, by a lot, at my Administration's request to celebrate our great Country's 250th birthday," Trump said. "Walmart will, in particular, be dropping the price for a pound of ground beef by almost 15%, among many other products."

Walmart has benefited in part from higher inflation under Trump, as consumers have turned to its stores and website in search of lower prices, according to its quarterly earnings released in May.

The company, in a statement issued Monday after the president's post, said its price rollbacks at Walmart and Sam's Club "are designed to help customers and members make the most" of the summer season. There was no mention of any interaction with the administration and the company did not publicly comment on Trump's claims.

The statement noted price cuts for ground beef, corn, red cherries, ice cream, potato chips and Coca-Cola

and Pepsi products.

Inflation for consumer prices has climbed 4.2% over the past 12 months, meaningfully higher than the 3% rate Trump inherited, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Some inflationary pressures may ease as the interim ceasefire deal with Iran has led to lower oil prices as more tankers can travel through the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump has famously used Walmart as a barometer of the American consumer, telling the company in May 2025 that it needed to "eat" the cost of tariffs that he had unilaterally imposed.

"Walmart should STOP trying to blame Tariffs as the reason for raising prices throughout the chain," Trump posted a little over a year ago. "Walmart made BILLIONS OF DOLLARS last year, far more than expected. Between Walmart and China they should, as is said, 'EAT THE TARIFFS,' and not charge valued customers ANYTHING. I'll be watching, and so will your customers!!!"

US-Mexico trade ties at risk

Tariffs & deficits dominate US trade agenda

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



By Pamela K. Starr

USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences

Most Americans understand that their avocado toast and Super Bowl guacamole depend on a green fruit imported from Mexico. But few realize that Mexico is the United States' top trading partner, both as the largest source of U.S. imports and the largest market for its exports.

Mexico supplies everything from fruits and vegetables to computers, medical equipment and electrical machinery - not to mention vehicles and auto parts. Mexico is also the top consumer of U.S. exports, ranging from corn, pork and dairy products to natural gas, to auto parts.

Given these ties, the stakes will be high on July 1, 2026, when U.S., Mexican and Canadian trade negotiators begin a required trilateral review of the 2020 trade deal underpinning this relationship. But a de facto stalemate is likely, resulting in uncertainty that will dampen growth in all three member countries.

Meanwhile, consumers will have to keep paying the tab for imports affected by Trump's tariffs, including global tariffs announced in April 2025, as well as specific levies on autos and products made with steel and aluminum. According to the Dallas Federal Reserve Bank, the U.S. inflation rate in March 2026 would have been 0.8 percentage point lower year on year without these tariffs.

As a scholar of U.S.-Mexico relations, I argue this outcome reflects President Donald Trump's desire to reduce U.S. trade deficits, bring manufacturing back to the U.S. and retain coercive power over his neighbors. But all it will likely do is yield a poorly defined process of annual reviews of the longer-standing agreement - signed by Trump during his first term.

The 2020 pact, known as the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, has been a linchpin for U.S. global competitiveness, especially for the trade relationship with Mexico. With some modifications, it succeeded the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement.

Mexico doesn't export just agricultural goods and products assembled with factors of production imported from the U.S. It supplies such inputs to the U.S. production process as well. This bilateral trade supports key cross-border supply chains for regional manufacturing.

This is most striking in the automotive industry. A telling measure is that a typical "U.S." vehicle crosses the U.S.-Mexico border up to eight times during the manufacturing process. The U.S. and Mexico don't just trade finished products; they produce things together, as Mexico scholar Chris Wilson has put it.

These deeply integrated supply chains lower the cost of production, which in turn helps the U.S. compete with China, generate investment, spur job creation - and keep consumer prices down. Recognizing this, the Trump administration agreed to exempt all exports that comply with the terms of the 2020 trade pact from the global tariffs announced in April 2025. This exemption now applies to 85% of Mexican exports, according to Mexico Economy Secretary Marcelo Ebrard.

Under the terms of the 2020 pact, the three countries have to review the deal after six years. Potential outcomes of the 2026 negotiation round range from renewing the deal in full for 16 more years, ending it altogether or agreeing to undergo a series of annual reviews that could extend it through 2036.

Given the three countries' supply-chain integration, preserving predictability in trade and investment through a successful review should be a slam-dunk case. But that outcome looks unlikely for three reasons.

First is Trump's abhorrence of trade deficits, stemming from his belief that they're caused by U.S. production and jobs moving overseas due to unfair trade

practices. While this argument applies to U.S.-China trade to a certain degree, it does not to Mexico. For example, 30% of Mexican-manufactured exports to the U.S. include U.S. content, a share that rises to 40% for vehicles. The effect of these integrated supply chains is to create jobs rather than replace them.

What Trump also overlooks is that Washington's success in pressuring manufacturers to move production out of China and into low-cost producers - including Mexico - has helped widen the U.S. trade deficit with Mexico, a "problem" of Washington's making. In fact, a 2026 Federal Reserve study found that 53% of the increase in Mexico's trade deficit with the U.S. over the past five years resulted from U.S. tariffs on Chinese exports.

Despite such clear findings, the Trump administration remains fixated on reducing the U.S. trade deficit with Mexico, making a successful review even less likely.

Second, Trump is wedded to the idea of "reshoring," or bringing production back to the U.S. But that position runs against the trade deal's logic of "nearshoring," or bringing production back to North America. That was the principle also embedded in NAFTA.

This reshoring obsession drove Washington's refusal to exempt Mexican steel and aluminum exports from the 50% tariff that the administration imposed in mid-2025 and provide only a partial exemption on a 25% tariff on autos and auto parts. It's also behind Trump's demand to add a high minimum U.S. content requirement in autos.

Taken together, the levies and demands by Trump will likely stymie a successful review of the pact that replaced NAFTA.

Finally, Trump and his team believe that advancing Washington's interests depends on wielding U.S. power to coerce other countries. This includes using tariffs not merely to redirect international trade but to pressure allies and adversaries alike to meet U.S. demands.

Mexico and Canada were the first two targets of this coercive tool in February 2025, when Trump slapped tariffs on all Mexican and Canadian exports to force their leaders to cooperate on migration and drug policies.

Although the goods that fell under the 2020 trade pact were quickly declared exempt and the U.S. Supreme Court eventually ruled that the legal foundation for those levies was unconstitutional, Trump's desire to exploit the coercive power of tariffs persists. He has no incentive to ink a trade agreement that limits his power to impose tariffs at will.

He restated this indifference in June 2026, when he asserted that he wasn't "looking to renew" the pact because he believes the U.S. would do better without it.

"We don't need anything that Canada has," he added. "We don't need anything that Mexico has, but they need everything that we have. They have to treat us better."

Mexico needs investors to have the certainty provided by a successful review.

But without knowing the future rules of the road, investors are sitting on the sidelines, which is weakening the country's growth strategy tied to nearshoring. As a result, Mexico has focused on preserving the 2020 agreement - even if this means a more ad hoc cycle of annual reviews - because it still guarantees a lower tariff rate compared with what other countries face with Trump in the White House.

Indeed, in a private conversation, a Mexican official told me that keeping this lower rate is a core objective in Mexico's trade talks with the United States.

Although not ideal, this outcome would protect the North American supply chains that drive growth in a country where exports account for 37% of its GDP.

But for Americans, an unsuccessful review followed by ongoing talks without resolution has few upsides. Instead, it's likely to weaken the U.S. competitive advantage relative to China - all while Trump's trade policy leaves them grappling with higher prices on products such as cars and trucks and with no uptick in job creation. (AP)

Grand prize of KD 5,000 monthly salary for five years on 13 July 2026

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait to hold semi-annual Alfouz draw

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) has announced the upcoming semi-annual draw for its Alfouz account, reaffirming its commitment to rewarding customers and promoting a culture of saving through one of Kuwait's most rewarding savings accounts.

The draw will take place on Monday, 13 July 2026, in the presence of representatives from external audit firms Deloitte and Grant Thornton. The grand prize winner will receive a monthly salary of KD 5,000 for five years. In addition, three winners will be announced as part of the weekly draw, each receiving a monthly salary of KD 1,000 for one year.

Customers who maintain the required minimum balance of KD 200 in their Alfouz account will be automati-



Johair Marafi

ally entered into the draw. ABK continues to differentiate its Alfouz account through its comprehensive prize program, which features weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, and annual draws, providing customers with multiple opportunities to win throughout the year.

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ABK continues to differentiate its Alfouz account through its comprehensive prize program, which features weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, and annual draws, providing customers with multiple opportunities to win throughout the year.

On this occasion, Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, said, "Through the Alfouz account, we aim to encourage our customers to strengthen their savings while rewarding them for their continued loyalty. The semi-

annual Alfouz draw represents an exceptional opportunity to reward one of our customers with a truly outstanding prize, and we look forward to announcing the lucky winner."

Marafi encouraged customers who wish to participate in future draws to open an Alfouz account and maintain the required minimum balance to increase their chances of winning. She reaffirmed ABK's commitment to delivering innovative banking solutions and rewarding experiences that help customers achieve their financial goals.

She also invited customers to stay connected through ABK's website, social media channels, and mobile application to learn about the Bank's latest banking solutions, products, offers, and promotional campaigns launched throughout the year.



SAVE plan ends, borrowers face higher repayments

US student loan overhaul raises costs for millions

NEW YORK, July 7, (AP): Changes to federal student loans expected to affect millions of borrowers are taking effect July 1. A part of President Donald Trump's "Big Beautiful Bill," these changes mean the end of some payment plans and new limits for graduate loans.

Along with the end of the Biden-era SAVE plan, the changes are expected to raise the cost of payments for millions of borrowers.

"The main concern is the affordability of monthly payments. I think a lot of people are simply going to see their payment increase significantly and they're either going to have to stretch pretty significantly to make that payment work or they're not going to be able to make the payment," said Michele Zampini, an associate vice president at The Institute for College Access & Success.

Loans

Around 9 million Americans are in default on their federal student loans as of June, according to the Education Department. Hundreds of thousands more are behind on loan payments and at risk of default this year.

Earlier this month, Education Department officials said borrowers who are enrolled in auto pay will be eligible for a 1% rate reduction beginning July 1. However, borrowers who currently use auto pay already receive an interest-rate discount of 0.25%, so the new reduction takes off just 0.75%. For all borrowers, the rate reduction will be temporary, lasting through June 2028.

If you're a student loan borrower, here are some key things to know:

The SAVE plan was a repayment option with some of the most lenient terms ever offered by the government. Soon after its launch it was challenged in court, leaving millions of student loan borrowers in limbo. Earlier this year, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit struck down the SAVE plan, which ended Wednesday.

There are about seven and a half million borrowers in the SAVE plan and servicers will begin sending them official notices Wednesday, said Lindsay Vail Clark, chief borrower advocate at Savi, a student loan debt assistance platform.

Borrowers enrolled in the SAVE plan will be notified that they have 90 days to enroll in another income-driven repayment plan. Vail Clark recommends borrowers start checking their options as soon as possible because processing delays are likely. If borrowers

don't enroll in another plan before the 90-day deadline, they will be auto-enrolled in one of the standard options by the Education Department, said Vail Clark.

However, there's no specific deadline for all borrowers enrolled in the SAVE plan to find another plan. This is because notices will be going out on a rolling basis, said Zampini.

Trump's "Big Beautiful Bill" changed the amounts graduate students can borrow for various programs, but his administration revised that plan this week in line with a judge's order.

Under the new rule, programs designated as professional degrees face federal student loan caps of \$200,000, while other graduate programs are capped at \$100,000. Previously, graduate students had been able to take out federal loans up to the full cost of their degree.

For now, the administration's revised plan restores eligibility for students pursuing graduate degrees in nursing, physical therapy and several other fields to take out higher federal student loan amounts. The initial rule had held them to lower limits.

Parent PLUS Loans have had fewer repayment options but now, the options are being reduced further, said Zampini. New limits on Parent PLUS loans cap them at \$20,000 per student, and \$65,000 per family.

Additionally, Parent PLUS borrowers who take out new loans on or after July 1 will not have access to any income-driven repayment plans, only a new tiered standard payment plan.

Payment

"Going forward, they're basically only going to have the standard payment option and there's not going to be any caveat or any safety net to adjust that based on income, if they have a low income or if they have an income fluctuation or some kind of other hardship," Zampini said.

Parent PLUS Loan borrowers who consolidated their Parent PLUS Loans into a Direct Consolidation Loan before July 1 can repay their loans through the income-contingent repayment plan until June 30, 2028. After that date, borrowers will be moved to the income-based repayment plan.

Current borrowers can apply for the following income-driven plans: the Income-Based Repayment Plan, the Pay as You Earn plan, and the Income-Contingent Repayment plan.

The payment amount under income-driven plans is a percentage of the borrower's discretionary income, and the percentage varies depending on the plan.

However, students who take loans on or after July will only be able to enroll in one income-driven repayment plan: the Repayment Assistance Plan. Borrowers can also use Tiered Standard Plan, a payment plan with a fixed amount that ensures loans are paid off within 10-25 years.

You can find out which repayment plan might work best for you by logging on to the Education Department's loan simulator.

Taxpayer

There are no changes to the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, despite a Trump administration plan announced last year to change the eligibility requirements for participating nonprofits. The policy sought to disqualify nonprofit workers if their work is deemed to have "substantial illegal purpose." The Trump administration said it's necessary to block taxpayer money from lawbreakers, while critics said it turns the program into a tool of political retribution.

Two separate federal judges struck down the new rules on Tuesday, a day before they were due to take effect.

Involuntary collections on federal student loans remain on hold. The Trump administration announced earlier this year that it is delaying plans to withhold pay from student loan borrowers who default on their payments.

Federal student loan borrowers can have their wages garnished and their federal tax refunds withheld if they default on their loans. Borrowers are considered in default when they are at least 270 days behind on payments.

If your student loans are in default, you can contact your loan holder to apply for a loan rehabilitation program. Through this program, borrowers are enrolled in a reduced payment plan and, after five successful payments, wage garnishment ends.

Borrowers can find more information about loan rehabilitation here.

The online application for loan consolidation is available at studentaid.gov/loan-consolidation. If you have multiple federal student loans, you can combine them into a single loan with a fixed interest rate and a single monthly payment.

The consolidation process typically takes around 60 days to complete. You can only consolidate your loans once.

Digital hiring boom connects jobseekers with top employers

China revamps jobs market for AI era

BEIJING, July 7, (Xinhua): This was a livestream like no other! Instead of social media influencers, it featured HR managers from China's top tech giants like JD.com, Baidu and Alibaba stepping into the spotlight to unveil exclusive job openings, tackle burning questions about salaries and career growth, and even take viewers on virtual office tours. To top it off, young jobseekers received real-time career advice straight from employment counselors.

This event in June was part of a month-long online recruitment campaign launched by China's Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, which brought together more than 5,000 internet companies and offered over 200,000 job vacancies.

"The livestream recruitment helps bridge the information gap between employers and jobseekers, making it easier for us to find positions that truly match our skills," said Liu Weicai, a graduating student from the University of Science and Technology Beijing.

Salts

JD.com alone announced 25,000 openings across technology and sales. Tencent plans to recruit more than 8,000 people, covering artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms and high-performance computing. ByteDance is hiring about 7,000 for positions related to large language models and AI search, among other areas.

The virtual job fair reflects a profound transformation that is unfolding in China's employment market.

Currently, the employment pressure remains high in China, with 12.7 million college graduates set to join the workforce this year. Meanwhile, rapid advances in technologies and the digital economy have reshaped labor demand, reducing the need for some traditional positions while creating a growing number of new occupations that require higher skills.

To meet these challenges head-on, China is rolling out targeted employment support and revamping college majors to empower young people to thrive in an ever-evolving labor

market.

The central government recently launched a nationwide employment support campaign from July through December to provide career counseling, job matching, vocational training and internship opportunities for college graduates and other young jobseekers.

Local authorities and universities are also stepping up efforts. In east China's Jiangsu Province, authorities have established personalized assistance plans for more than 23,000 graduates facing employment difficulties.

In Beijing, representatives from 56 universities and more than 100 companies gathered in June to strengthen cooperation in graduate recruitment, internship programs and joint talent cultivation.

During the event, Zhao Yutong, a postgraduate student at Minzu University of China, visited company production lines and research facilities. "I realized the gap between what we learn in classrooms and what companies actually need. It gave me a much clearer understanding of my own career development," said Zhao.

In addition to near-term employment support, China is also reshaping how it trains the next generation of workers.

According to a report by MyCOS, a higher education consulting firm, electrical engineering, automation, and new energy science and engineering were among the most sought-after undergraduate majors on the job market this year. These disciplines closely align with China's expanding industrial chains and accelerating technological innovation, the report said.

To better match the changing industrial demand, the Ministry of Education in April added 38 new undergraduate majors, ranging from energy science and engineering and agricultural robotics to frontier fields such as bio-manufacturing and brain-computer science and technology.

Beyond creating new majors, China has also introduced more flexible learning models

that respond faster to technological advances and shifting industry needs.

At Xi'an University of Science and Technology, mining engineering student Guo Haifeng completed a "micro-major" in intelligent monitoring technologies for high-pressure mining, combining traditional mining engineering with AI and big data applications.

"The program broadened my skill set, allowing me to combine traditional mining engineering with intelligent technologies," Guo said, adding that the experience helped him secure his ideal job.

The Ministry of Education launched in 2025 an initiative to establish 1,000 micro-majors and 1,000 vocational skills training courses to equip students with industry-oriented skills, which has benefited more than 1 million students so far.

Economy

This year, additional micro-majors focusing on AI, the low-altitude economy and intelligent connected vehicles have been introduced.

Beyond the education policies, China has stepped up top-level planning to ensure that talent development is better aligned with real-world needs.

The State Council in June unveiled a five-year plan dedicated specifically to employment. The plan highlighted employment as a top priority, calling for coordinated macro policies and better adaptation to the age of AI.

As technology keeps reshaping the economy and employment, a proactive response to the changes will help align the employment environment, job supply and workers' skills with the direction of technological development, said Zhao Zhong, dean of the School of Labor and Human Resources at Renmin University of China.

Experts expect the country will continue to bolster economic development and foster stronger synergy between industrial development and employment in a bid to create more sustainable job opportunities.

'First-class boom'

US airlines shift focus to high-paying passengers

WASHINGTON, July 7, (AP): They may arrive at the same destination, but two passengers on the same flight can have strikingly different travel experiences.

One traveler breezes through a priority security lane and heads straight to an invite-only lounge for craft cocktails and a chef-prepared meal before boarding early. A flight attendant offering a glass of champagne and a warm hand towel welcomes the passenger to a spacious seat at the front of the plane.

The other traveler stands in a line at every step - security screening, a café selling \$16 sandwiches, a crowded gate - then boards with one of the final groups, hoping there's still room for a carry-on in the overhead bin before folding into a cramped middle seat. After the cabin lights dim, sleep comes in fragments, and a travel pillow does little to ease a stiff neck.

The contrasting journeys are no accident. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the largest U.S. airlines have pulled out all the stops to court premium passengers who are willing to pay for comfort, convenience and exclusivity. Budget-conscious travelers may notice a widening gap between the back of the plane and up front as the carriers increasingly build their businesses around selling first-class, business-class and premium-economy seats.

"We can't win by trying to provide the cheapest. We have to be able to win by providing the best," Delta Air Lines CEO Ed Bastian said in a recent Fortune podcast interview.

The strategy embraced by Delta and rivals American Airlines and United Airlines marks a notable evolution for an industry that spent decades making air travel more accessible. Now, the nation's largest carriers are reconfiguring aircraft to expand premium seating, designing new fleets with larger premium cabins and investing billions in amenities that extend the top-tier travel treatment beyond their jetliners.

But United CEO Scott Kirby has pushed back on the idea that the industry has become solely focused on chasing big spenders. He said United's premium investments are part of a broader strategy to boost the experience of every traveler, pointing to initiatives such as seat-back entertainment and improvements to the airline's mobile app.

"We're investing nose to tail for all customers," Kirby said last month on financial firm Morgan Stanley's Exceptional Leaders podcast.

The premium playbook didn't emerge overnight.

Airlines used to fill empty first-class seats mainly by giving their most loyal frequent flyers free upgrades. Delta rewrote the rules in the early 2010s by using sophisticated pricing tools to offer more of those seats to coach passengers who were willing to pay a little more, said Henry Harteveltdt, president of travel advisory firm Atmosphere Research Group.

The strategy unlocked demand airlines hadn't fully recognized, encouraging more travelers to trade up and laying the groundwork for today's broader premium push.

"Travelers could and would pay for noticeably more comfort, noticeably better service, noticeably more amenities, if the price was right," Harteveltdt said.

Then came the pandemic. When business travel collapsed and Zoom replaced many corporate trips, airline analysts wondered whether carriers would once again have to lure travelers with cheap fares. Instead, eager leisure travelers proved willing to splurge on premium seats and perks, convincing airlines that demand extended well beyond the traditional business road warrior, Harteveltdt said.

That confidence has only grown. Premium demand is now a fixture of quarterly earnings calls, with airline executives regularly touting premium revenue as they compete for higher-spending travelers.

"When you think about what's different and what's changed over the last 10 or 15 years, the premium products used to be loss leaders,

and now they're the highest-margin products," former Delta President Glen Hauenstein said last summer. "That's really the headline."

Analysts say premium cabins - a category that expanded with the introduction of premium economy seats featuring more legroom and amenities at a fraction of the cost - now generate a disproportionate share of airline revenue compared with the space they take up on commercial aircraft.

On heavily trafficked transatlantic routes, business-class tickets can bring in nearly as much revenue as fares and fees paid by passengers in the much larger economy cabin, according to an analysis by consulting firm McKinsey & Company.

The premiumization of air travel has become impossible to miss, even for travelers who only get a glimpse through an airport lounge door or while walking down an airplane aisle.

Delta's new first-class lounges resemble upscale restaurants, with open kitchens plating dishes such as hamachi crudo, cocktail bars serving made-to-order drinks, soundproof relaxation pods and outdoor decks overlooking the tarmac.

American has refreshed its premium cabin menus with "globally inspired dishes," like crispy maitake mushroom and fried chicken bao topped with yuzu aioli, in partnership with the James Beard Foundation. The airline also redesigned its newest Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners for long-haul international flights around individual business-class compartments with sliding privacy doors, lie-flat seats longer than a standard twin mattress and amenity kits that might include a celebrity facialist's brand of sheet masks and under-eye patches.

United's newest business-class cubicles add oversized 27-inch entertainment screens, caviar service, luxury skincare products and multi-course dining on long-haul international services. The airline said its revamped menus "feature flavors and dishes" inspired by cities across its network.

"Marie Antoinette would feel very comfortable on any of the big three airlines these days," said William J. McGee, senior fellow for aviation at the American Economic Liberties Project. "But instead of saying, 'Let them eat cake' in the back of the plane, she would say, 'Let them eat Biscoffs.'"

The airlines' pursuit of higher-paying passengers shows no loss of momentum. On board Delta's next-generation Airbus A350-1000 aircraft arriving in 2027, nearly half the cabin will be devoted to premium seating. American has said it plans to expand premium cabins by 50% by the end of the decade.

Yet the new era of luxury in the skies is unfolding alongside a very different reality for other U.S. travelers as broader inflationary pressures have added to the strain on household budgets.

New York-based travel advisor Mary Auteri said more of her clients are "experiencing sticker shock" as fares and add-on fees have gotten more expensive since the Iran war broke out and pushed up the price of jet fuel, one of the largest operating costs for airlines.

A group of friends in their 20s recently asked Auteri to price out flights to the sugar-white sand beaches of Punta Cana, a resort town in the Dominican Republic. After she sent them an itinerary, they said they had found what looked like the same flights on Google Flights for more than \$100 less.

But the cheaper fares were basic economy tickets that excluded seat assignments, checked bags and flexibility to change plans. Once those costs were added back in, the trip no longer fit their budget.

Checked-bag fees, seat-selection charges and other add-on costs fall heaviest on economy travelers, McGee said. For wealthier travelers, those fees may amount to little more than an inconvenience. For budget-conscious travelers, they can determine whether a trip happens at all.

"The idea that we're all created equal? Not in the airlines' eyes," McGee said. "Not by any means."

Celebrating a lasting film legacy

George Clooney set for Venice lifetime honor

NEW YORK, July 7, (AP): George Clooney is returning to the Venice Film Festival this year, where he'll be honored with a lifetime achievement award. The festival's organizers said Monday that Clooney has been selected to receive the Golden Lion at the 83rd edition of the festival in September.

"I've had so many extraordinary moments in Venice. This festival is without question my favorite and to be given the Golden Lion is a tremendous honor," Clooney said in a statement. "It also probably means I'm old, but I'll take it."

The star has indeed had many memorable appearances in Venice, and at the festival, including with Steven Soderbergh's Elmore Leonard adaptation "Out of Sight," in 1998, and his sophomore feature as a director, "Good Night, and Good Luck," in 2005. Last year, he came with Noah Baumbach's "Jay Kelly," in which he plays a movie star experiencing an existential crisis in the lead-up to accepting a lifetime achievement award at an Italian film festival.

"In his triple capacity as actor, director, and producer, George



George Clooney appears at the screening of the film 'The Boys In The Boat' in London on Dec. 3, 2023. (AP)

Clooney is a complete and charismatic artist, impassioned and original, who has transformed a deep vocation into one of the most luminous parabolas of contemporary film," festival director Alberto Barbera said in a statement. "A perfect combination of the star glamour of days gone by, remarkable professionalism, and modern sensitivity, the actor has crossed the genres with rare versatility."

Venice is also where Clooney exchanged vows with then Amal Alamuddin, in 2014.

The 83rd Venice Film Festival kicks off on Sept. 2 and runs through Sept. 12.

Judge finds no proof

Harry loses privacy battle with Daily Mail publisher

LONDON, July 7, (AP): Prince Harry's final lawsuit aimed at taming the British tabloids ended in defeat Tuesday as a judge said he failed to prove his privacy invasion claims against the publisher of the Daily Mail.

Justice Matthew Nicklin rejected the broad inferences the Duke of Sussex relied on to try to show that Associated Newspapers Ltd. engaged in unlawful activities. The judge said there was a realistic possibility the news came from legitimate sources.

The ruling scuttles lawsuits filed by Harry and six others, including singer Elton John and actor-model Elizabeth Hurley, that sought substantial damages. The legal costs alone - which the claimants could end up having to pay - for years of preparation and an 11-week trial were estimated at about 40 million pounds (\$53.5 million).

The publisher called it an "overwhelming victory" and a "magnificent vindication" of the Mail's journalism.

The newspapers had denied the allegations as "preposterous," insisting the roughly 50 articles at issue were based on lawful sources including friends, royal aides and publicists who offered information to reporters.

The decision leaves a mixed legacy for Harry's trio of lawsuits accusing tabloid publishers of using unlawful tactics, such as phone hacking, or hiring private detectives to dig up dirt to snoop on his life.

Harry won a judgment in 2023 that condemned the publishers of the Daily Mirror for "widespread and habitual" phone hacking. Last year, Rupert Murdoch's flagship U.K. tabloid, The Sun, made an unprecedented apology for intruding on his life for years, and agreed to pay substantial damages to settle his privacy invasion lawsuit.

The verdict, released remotely with no court hearing, coincided with Harry's visit home to the U.K., which has been dominated by headlines over his latest efforts to repair a rift with his father, King Charles III.

Harry has said his litigation - in which he broke with royal family tradition to seek relief in the courts - was a primary source of his falling out with his father and brother, Prince William.

His grudge with the press runs deep. He blames it for the death of his mother, Princess Diana, who was killed in a car crash in 1997 while being pursued by paparazzi in Paris, and for attacks on his wife, Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, that led the couple to abandon royal life and move to the United States in 2020.

"They continue to come after me, they have made my wife's life an absolute misery," he testified as he choked back tears in the witness box during the trial in January.

Attorney David Sherborne said the Daily Mail and its sister publication, Mail on Sunday, used its journalists, freelance reporters and private eyes for "clear, systematic and sustained use of unlawful information gathering" to snoop on his clients.

Defense lawyer Antony White said the case relied on conjecture and inferences when the more likely source of information was "ordinary, legitimate journalism." He said Harry was "inclined to see unlawful evidence gathering, in particular voice-mail interception, everywhere."

Other claimants in the case were actor Sadie Frost, anti-racism activist Doreen Lawrence, former politician Simon Hughes and John's husband, David Furnish.

The Mail trial played out differently than the Mirror case, with more journalists defending their work in court.

Cinema celebrates 70 years of China-Egypt ties

Chinese films take center stage in Cairo

CAIRO, July 7, (Xinhua): China Film Week opened here on Sunday, bringing together filmmakers, critics and students for a week-long celebration aimed at strengthening cultural ties between China and Egypt.

The opening ceremony, held under the theme "Chang'an-Cairo Forum: West China Film Week in Egypt 2026," attracted over 200 participants. It started with a promotional film for the 13th Silk Road International Film Festival, to be held in northwestern China's Xi'an this September.

Jointly organized by Egypt's Cinema Professions Syndicate and Chinese partners, including the Executive Committee of the Silk Road International Film Festival (Xi'an), Xiyi Group, and Silk Road International Film Exchange & Trading Center, the week-long event marks the 70th anniversary of China-Egypt diplomatic ties. Seven Chinese films will be screened during the event.

Li Yadong, director of "Happiness Railway," which was screened at the opening night, told Xinhua that the event offers Egyptian audiences an opportunity to discover the authentic image of western China

and the lives of people in its mountainous regions.

"The film highlights universal human values shared by the Chinese and Egyptian peoples, including the pursuit of a stable life, family security and a better future," Li said.

He said Egyptian and Arab audiences would likely identify with the film's characters and aspirations while gaining a better understanding of China's development.

"It is not simply a story about a train. It is a story about ordinary people, dignity and the shared values that connect our two nations and reflect the long-standing friendship between our civilizations," he added.

Xiao Nan, deputy manager of Xiyi Group, said the film week not only celebrates the 70th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic ties but also demonstrates cinema's role in strengthening mutual understanding.

Noting that Xi'an and Cairo are both homes to ancient civilizations, she told Xinhua that films enable audiences to better understand each other's daily lives, values and emotions.

Ghada Ghobara, deputy head of Egypt's Cinema

Professions Syndicate and former president of the Academy of Arts, described cinema as an important bridge between civilizations.

"Egypt and China are two countries with ancient civilizations, and cinema helps bring our peoples closer and understand each other better," Ghobara said.

Describing "Happiness Railway" as "beautiful and sensitive," Ghobara praised its portrayal of ordinary people and China's natural scenery.

"Cinema is not just entertainment. It can change people's lives and strengthen relations between nations, especially between countries that already enjoy strong ties like Egypt and China," Ghobara added.

Sohila Ibrahim, a first-year Chinese-language student at Cairo University, said the event offers a valuable opportunity to better understand Chinese society.

"It is a great experience to watch Chinese films and learn how Chinese people live, celebrate and interact. It broadens my understanding of China and its culture," she said, describing "Happiness Railway" as "unique and engaging."

Tech

Bodies move with real action without risk of injury

VR & gaming are adding a kick to taekwondo

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia, July 7, (AP): When Vietnamese athlete Nguyen Thanh Hien Linh stepped into her first virtual taekwondo competition in Singapore in 2024, she had little idea what she was doing.

"I was just kicking into the air," recalled the 21-year-old. Despite her background as an elite national taekwondo champion, she struggled in the virtual arena with no clue on strategy, skills or how the technology worked.

Two years later, she won a gold medal at a recent virtual taekwondo competition in Malaysia and was part of a growing community of the gamified combat sport across Southeast Asia.

Once unfamiliar and experimental, virtual taekwondo is now emerging as a structured competitive discipline. Co-developed by World Taekwondo and Singapore-based technology company Refract Technologies, it combines virtual reality technology with traditional taekwondo techniques to woo tech-savvy young athletes.

Competitors wear VR headsets that transport them into a digital 3D arena, and strap motion-tracking sensors on their spine, thighs and shins. They use their bodies to control digital avatars in noncontact virtual matches, where every fast and well-timed strike depletes the opponent's virtual health bar.

Unlike conventional taekwondo where competitors are separated by age, weight and gender, virtual taekwondo places everyone in the same digital arena.

It was showcased at Singapore's Olympic Esports Week in 2023 and held its first World Championships in Singapore in 2024. This year, the sport will make its debut at the Asian Games in Japan, and it is expected to be included in the 2027 Southeast Asian Games in Malaysia.

During last month's Malaysian competition, athletes and coaches described how the discipline is reshaping perceptions of both martial arts and gaming.

Singapore national athlete Brian Peh, 46, said he was not into gaming but joined the 2024 championship with his son out of curiosity. Both won gold and have since participated in many other local and regional games.

Peh now also trains students in virtual taekwondo in his dojang, or training hall.



A laptop displays a virtual taekwondo match as a practitioner trains in Puchong, on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Thursday, April 23, 2026. (AP)



A young virtual taekwondo athlete competes during a taekwondo competition event in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Saturday, June 20, 2026. (AP)



A virtual taekwondo competitor performs a high kick during a competitive event in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Saturday, June 20, 2026. (AP)

"I always tell parents: your kids love games. Do you want them using their hands to play, or using their legs?" he said. "When they put on the headset and start to fight, wow, their energy is so high. They can play and play and they love it."

Cambodian coach Vandy Yiv said more children and parents in his country are showing interest due to the low risk of injury. In a local tournament earlier this year, he said there were more participants for vir-

tual taekwondo than traditional segments.

Many initially thought it was a video game but quickly realized it was a physically grueling combat sport. "Your whole body is moving. There is action, but no injury," he said. Vandy said he hopes virtual taekwondo can become a medal event in the Olympic Games in the near future.

Some athletes described their initial experiences as disorienting, reporting dizziness before they ad-

justed to the virtual environment. Many teen players, however, were immediately attracted to the gamified experience. Matches consist of intense and fast-paced rounds, only a minute for each bout, and requires continuous offensive pressure.

For Nguyen, success came after she learned that virtual taekwondo requires far more than simply throwing kicks. "You have to guess first where your opponent is and move" before they do, she said.

The Conversation

1 in 4 teens struggle with smartphone use, will a ban help?

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



By Elizabeth Dowdell,
Villanova University

Pennsylvania is moving toward a statewide "bell-to-bell" cellphone ban in public schools.

The state Senate and House of Representatives have advanced companion bills that would require students in grades K-12 to keep cellphones turned off or stored away in lockers, backpacks or designated classroom storage pouches for the entire school day.

Gov. Josh Shapiro wants them to agree on a final version and send it to his desk for signing.

The goal is to reduce digital interruptions, improve students' engagement with classroom lessons, increase face-to-face interactions and reduce conflicts that play out on social media during school hours.

As a forensic nurse, I study internet safety, cyber aggression and technology-related risks among children. Following these new rules will likely be challenging for all students. For some, the effort will pay off with improved health, safety and development. But those who are dependent on their cellphone may have trouble adapting.

In the U.S., most 13- to 18-year-olds spend nearly 8.5 hours a day using screens. Yet research consistently links heavy smartphone and social media use among children and adolescents to poor sleep, anxiety and depression, bullying, attention difficulties and academic challenges.

Healthcare providers report an increasing number of children, adolescents and young adults experience problematic smartphone use, or PSU. PSU is a pattern of behavior associated with depression, stress and decreased academic performance. Among this group, it is characterized by a difficulty controlling phone use, heavy social media dependence, having a preoccupation with notifications and voicing distress when separated from their device.

Meanwhile, results from a survey by Pew Research Center in 2023 highlight the mixed emotions U.S. teens report regarding their smartphones. In one question, 44% of teens said they feel anxious when they don't have their phone. In a separate question, 72% reported that they often or sometimes feel peaceful without it.

Supporters of the Pennsylvania ban argue that students need a structured break from constant phone notifications so they can focus on learning and social skills.

Some researchers have described these breaks as a kind of scheduled "digital detox."

Based on my research, students with PSU will most likely not react well to bans in school. Students experiencing PSU may face short-term academic and behavioral disruption, particularly in the first few weeks. They may have noticeable academic and attention challenges that reflect their anxiety, irritability or restlessness adjusting to reduced phone access. Evidence from school policy research shows that for most, the challenges stabilize over time. Students adapt over several weeks to a few months as new routines with boundaries are established.

Additionally, occasional rule-breaking and defiance are considered a normal part of child and adolescent de-

velopment. These students may also be more likely to challenge the policy, hide their phones or attempt workarounds, such as using smartwatches or other devices.

In general, the American Academy of Pediatrics clearly recommends prioritizing healthy, nonscreen interactions and content quality over strict time limits for children.

For children under 18 months, the AAP discourages all screen use except for video chatting with family. For ages 2 to 5, the AAP supports limiting screen time to one hour per day of high-quality, educational programming that ideally is watched along with a caregiver.

Children ages 6-11, in the early elementary years, are still developing socially. They tend to think in here-and-now, concrete ways, are starting to use simple logic and are building skills in teamwork and schoolwork. By fifth grade, many children have their own phones, while they are still developing attention, social skills and self-regulation. This can make managing device use challenging. Increasing independence and peer influence can outpace a child's ability to regulate phone use effectively.

During middle school, students begin to focus on establishing their identity, peer belonging and rapidly developing impulse-control systems. All three developmental stages make smartphones particularly compelling to them. The adolescent's ability to use their phone to access social media and continuous news, interact with artificial intelligence and play games often broadens their perspectives and encourages individual creativity.

But increased cellphone use can also increase exposure to violence, cyberbullying, harassment and social comparison, which may be especially upsetting and damaging

to this age group.

In high school, a young person's digital life becomes even more complicated. Developmentally, high schoolers are building greater autonomy, stronger problem-solving skills and increased risk-taking behaviors, while developing a sense of where they belong. A bell-to-bell ban may reduce social media pressure and classroom distractions, but teens may also perceive the restriction as limiting their personal freedom.

A 2024 poll found that parents who want to keep phones on and accessible in schools are most concerned about an emergency at the school, being able to get in touch with or find their child, and coordinating transportation to and from school.

Educators and legislators in virtually all states with school cellphone bans - and the additional 25 states that regulate phone use during instructional time - have exemptions for translation services, documented medical needs and approved educational access. Whether or not Pennsylvania's bell-to-bell ban bill becomes law, parents and guardians remain central to helping children develop healthy phone habits and communication skills.

Parents who want to protect their kids' sleep quality might have children charge their phone outside the bedroom, set app or Wi-Fi off times after a certain hour, and encourage them not to use their phone for the first hour after waking and the last hour before sleep.

Parents can also set consistent, predictable rules, such as no phones during homework or meals, or use built-in phone features to restrict the time kids spend on the most widely used apps and games, such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat and Minecraft. (AP)

PARIS

FASHION



Models wear creations as part of the Christian Dior Haute Couture Fall/Winter 2026-2027 Women's collection presented in Paris, Monday, July 6, 2026. (AP)

Art takes the runway

Dior goes sculptural

Jonathan Anderson arrived at Paris couture week with the fashion world still waiting to see the Dior wedding dress he made for Taylor Swift.

On Monday, on the first day, he tried to give it something else to look at.

Three days after Swift married NFL star Travis Kelce at New York's Madison Square Garden, with both dressed by Dior, Anderson returned to the runway with a sculptural, heavily pleated haute couture collection inspired by American artist Lynda Benglis.

The commission was a coup for the LVMH-owned house and for Anderson, the 41-year-old Northern Irish designer appointed a year ago to overhaul all of Dior's fashion lines.

For months, industry watchers had bet on American names, such as Ralph Lauren, or on Vivienne Westwood, whom Swift wears often.

The one dress the world wanted to see was the one Anderson would not show.

So on Monday he changed the subject - to art.

The collection tried to move the conversation from Swift's hidden gown to the work of Benglis, known since the late 1960s for pouring latex onto gallery floors and letting metal fold and sag into shape.

Dior workrooms were treated as a version of her studio - a place where flat fabric is pressed, knotted and bent into three dimensions.

Benglis bends flat material into shape; so, in the end, does couture.

The clothes followed that idea. A skirt of silver-foiled petals moved with each step.

A strapless silver lamé gown was cinched with an oversized bow. Trousers and blouses were finished in tight hand-pressed pleats.

Dior's signature Bar jacket, the nipped-waist shape the house has built on since 1947, was remade several ways: in fern-green tweed with a frayed fringe, in gray houndstooth folded into a giant bow, and once with loose chiffon threads left hanging at the hem.

Other looks were built entirely from embroidered silk flowers.

A wide fan of blue tulle was splayed across the front of one dress.

Handbags came in metallic pleats - four of them designed with Benglis herself.

France was in another heat wave, with temperatures above 30 Celsius (86 F).

Dior had sent fans with its invitations, and guests used them through the show in the gardens of the Rodin Museum. (AP)





A one-week-old sparrow kitten that fled out of its nest due to the hot temperatures is fed with flies by a veterinarian in Wehrheim near Frankfurt, Germany on June 26. (AP)

People aren't only ones hit by heat, what to do if you see wildlife affected by hot temperatures

WASHINGTON, July 7, (AP): As Europe scorches under extreme heat, people aren't the only ones impacted by the high temperatures and humidity. Birds and other wildlife are at risk without respite, too.

Birds, especially, are crucial to ecosystems across the globe, providing services like pollinating flowers, controlling pests naturally, dispersing seeds and even serving as early warning systems.

Experts said there are ways to respond if people see a bird in need in the heat, and how to react to other wildlife. Here's what to know.

Birds are very diverse, and often well adapted to dealing with prolonged periods of heat, said David Bird, McGill University emeritus professor of wildlife biology.

They also have a higher body temperature than mammals, with some birds around 38 degrees Celsius (100 degrees Fahrenheit) or even slightly higher.

They may adjust their feathers in certain ways, or increase airflow across a complex series of air sacs, to help keep cool. They also adapt to heat behaviorally.

But birds have a maximum level of heat they can withstand, just like humans, said Aimee Van Tatenhove, a postdoctoral fellow at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

"This level differs by species, and as you can imagine, species that live closer to the poles are often much more susceptible to heat than species that live closer to the equator," Van Tatenhove said. "Prolonged intense heat like Europe is experiencing right now is likely pushing many species toward their maximum heat tolerances, putting them at risk of heat illness or death."

Birds don't sweat like humans and some other mammals do, but they have other ways to naturally beat the heat, experts say.

Some species, including backyard birds, will "gape," opening their beaks and panting, not unlike a dog. Others will also flutter the pouch skin on their necks to cool off. This behavior is known as "gular fluttering."

Birds also often seek out shade, and dip in birdbaths, fountains and shallow ponds to lower their body temperatures.

It's difficult to fully protect birds that are also experiencing the ongoing heat wave, but experts offered a few tips.

In the short term, people could set up shallow water sources - in spots that are safe from harm, like predators - though experts caution it's important to keep these baths clean.

People can also fill bird feeders, providing an easy food source for birds that might be avoiding foraging for their next meal in the hot sun. Insect populations are also dramatically down, in part due to climate change and pollution, impacting a major natural food source for birds.

Over the long term, people who are able to can provide shaded areas around their yard, including layered vegetation such as small shrubs and taller trees, Bird noted.

If passive approaches aren't possible, it might be best to leave them be, said Jack Kottwitz, assistant professor at Michigan State University's College of Veterinary Medicine. "These birds know better than what we do about what is comfortable for them."

Birds often seek out cooling temperatures, by finding lower places to perch or even fens.

As far as other wildlife, it might also not be the best choice to try to intervene by giving an animal foreign food or water or attempting to bring it indoors, experts say.

Doctronic making healthcare more convenient for patients and prescribers

Is AI ready to take over your prescriptions? Docs wary of Utah's automated refill program

WASHINGTON, July 7, (AP): A prescription refill program that quietly launched in Utah earlier this year has kicked off a big medical debate: Is artificial intelligence ready to take over tasks that, until now, could only be performed by doctors?

The program allows Utah residents to skip the doctor's office and get their prescriptions refilled online by an AI chatbot called Doctronic. It's a seemingly simple step toward making healthcare more convenient for patients and prescribers.

But it's also a precedent-shattering milestone that has set off alarm bells for doctors, lawyers and public health experts. The pilot program has laid bare a host of questions about the role of AI in medicine, including how it should be regulated, whether doctors should be able to veto it, and what kind of safety measures are needed to protect patients.

At the center of the debate: state and federal laws limit prescribing to licensed medical professionals. Proponents say those laws, which have underwritten American medicine for over 100 years, should be updated to include AI chatbots and other new technologies.

"We have crossed a threshold in terms of giving something that is not human a medical license, whether or not we want to call it that," said Dr. Eric Bressman of the University of Pennsylvania.

Bressman and other experts say they aren't opposed to AI prescribing. But they say it should have to

meet rigorous standards akin to human doctors, who undergo years of testing and training before being licensed to practice medicine.

In Utah, Doctronic was able to launch thanks to a "regulatory sandbox" that allows state officials to waive laws for AI companies offering promising technology.

The refill program is currently overseen by a five-member board of AI specialists, none of whom are doctors, who say they have implemented numerous safeguards. During the program's initial phase, for example, human doctors review all Doctronic refill orders. The company expects to soon transition to fully automated refills.

The head of the state's medical licensing board says he and his colleagues learned of the program when its January launch was reported in the news. In a March letter to the state, 11 board members called for the program to be halted, citing the risks of automatically renewing medicines that can have side effects or drug interactions.

"We were essentially told: 'Yes this is going on. And no, you don't have a say in it,'" said Dr. Alan Smith, a family physician who heads the board but said he was speaking only for himself.

Complicating the picture is the fact that medical technology is traditionally regulated at the federal level, while medical professionals are overseen by states.

Doctronic executives consider



Bottles of medications sit on shelves at the Stormont Vail Retail Pharmacy in Topeka, Kan on June 2. (AP)

their AI part of the state-regulated practice of medicine. But the federal Food and Drug Administration is supposed to oversee AI that directly impacts medical care or decision making, a line that some experts believe Doctronic has crossed.

In an interview, Doctronic's executives wouldn't say whether they have sought permission from the FDA.

"Our goal here is really just to meet patients where they need healthcare," said Dr. Adam Oskowitz, who co-founded the company with a tech industry entrepreneur. "We try not to get too deep into the weeds on the regulatory side."

In Utah, residents can visit a

Doctronic website built for the refill program. After confirming their identity, the AI chatbot asks users about their prescriptions and medical history, verifying that they have a valid prescription by tapping into a national pharmacy database.

If there are no issues, the AI can renew the prescription and send it to a local pharmacy. If the request requires more attention, the chatbot transfers the patient to a doctor who works for Doctronic's telehealth service.

Oskowitz envisions a future where many routine medical tasks, including ordering tests and analyzing results, can be offloaded to Doctronic, allowing doctors to manage thousands more patients than they can today.

Other states are also waiving rules for AI, including Texas and Wyoming.

Meanwhile, lawmakers in Iowa, Idaho and elsewhere have introduced legislation to formally license AI medical services. Many of the bills are based on a template from the nonprofit Cicero Institute, a pro-AI think tank founded by Joe Lonsdale, co-founder of the artificial intelligence software company Palantir.

Pushback against medical AI mainly stems from the economic fears of doctors and other health workers, says Cicero's director for health policy.

"Whoever goes first is going to take the slings and arrows because there's economic interests, concerns about the workforce and what that's going to mean for jobs," said Cicero's Adam Meier.

Smith, the medical board chair, says the risks to patients are real. He points out that Doctronic's list of 190 refillable medications includes blood thinners, which can become dangerous if patients develop stomach ulcers or other conditions that cause internal bleeding.

"Many times when I see people after six months I find that their medical history or situation has changed," Smith said. "Just because something was prescribed before does not mean it's appropriate now."

The American Medical Association has voiced similar concerns, warning that "prescription renewals aren't routine checkboxes."

Utah has released some initial data on the program and Doctronic plans to publish peer-reviewed studies later this year. Currently the only publication about its technology is a paper written by company scientists that was not independently reviewed.

The study looked at whether Doctronic could correctly diagnose medical conditions based on records from 500 telehealth consultations. In the study, Doctronic's diagnoses matched that of human doctors 80% of the time.

Bressman says Utah should have demanded data on prescription refills up front, not after Doctronic was up and running.

"Mostly they're accepting the company's word on good faith that they're up to the task," he said.

The current approach to AI mirrors the haphazard medical standards of the early 20th century, Bressman says, before medical schools, medical boards and other authorities agreed on national benchmarks for training and licensing.

National guidelines on medical technology would typically come from the FDA, but the agency has indicated it plans to take a hand-off approach, at least under the current administration.

An FDA spokesperson said the agency has not authorized any AI chatbots but "is committed to encouraging medical innovation and helping bring promising new technologies to patients, while keeping safety at the center of every decision."

Ebola response requires speed, sustained support despite progress: Africa CDC chief

ADDIS ABABA, July 7, (Xinhua): Despite real progress in the ongoing response to the Bundibugyo Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda, managing the active outbreak requires "speed, discipline and sustained support," Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) Director General Jean Kaseya has said.

"Our priority is clear: find cases earlier, test faster, isolate safely, care for patients, protect health workers and work closely with communities. In an Ebola outbreak, speed saves lives," the Africa CDC chief said in a recent interview with Xinhua.

The response needs faster diagnosis, stronger contact follow-up, expanded treatment and isolation capacity, and more supplies, Kaseya noted.

He identified enhanced infection prevention and control and sustained financing as vital components for the success of ongoing outbreak containment efforts. "Community trust needs daily work. Ebola response succeeds when communities are informed, protected and fully involved."

The director general noted that the



A health worker stands at the Evangelical Medical Center, in Bunia, eastern Congo on July 3. (AP)

Africa CDC, alongside the World Health Organization (WHO) and other partners, is currently providing multifaceted support to both affected nations, spanning surveillance, contact follow-up, laboratory strengthening, clinical care, cross-border preparedness, community engagement, and research.

"Africa CDC will continue work-

ing with member states and partners to bring support closer to the front-line, protect communities, and stop transmission," Kaseya said.

The latest epidemiological data from the Africa CDC and the two affected countries showed that since the DRC declared its 17th Ebola outbreak on May 15, a total of 1,581 confirmed cases and 508 deaths have been recorded across the DRC and Uganda, representing a case fatality rate of about 32.1 percent. Uganda accounts for 20 confirmed cases and two deaths.

On a positive note, Kaseya highlighted that there has been real progress in the ongoing Bundibugyo Ebola outbreak response, including improvements in testing and case follow-up.

"Community engagement has intensified in affected areas through community dialogues, household visits, radio broadcasts and work with local leaders. Free care has started in four priority health zones in Ituri," Kaseya said, adding that the continental public health agency is offering support for the rollout of digital outbreak data tools to enhance reporting, analysis, and strategic decision-making.

Southern right whale mothers rest upside down to limit nursing: study

SYDNEY, July 7, (Xinhua): Southern right whale mothers may rest upside down to limit nursing so they can save much-needed energy during the demanding calving season, new research has found.

Southern right whale mothers fast through the months-long calving season, relying on stored energy to give birth, nurse their calves, and travel thousands of kilometers back to feeding grounds, according to a statement from the University of Western Australia (UWA) released on Monday.

Scientists from UWA and Aarhus University in Denmark used drones to record dozens of mother-calf pairs at the protected Head of Bight calving ground off the South Australian coast to better understand the "perplexing tendency" of southern right whales to rest upside down, the statement said.

The findings, published in *Mammalian Biology*, showed that whale mothers spent about 33 percent of their time resting, while their calves rested around 13 percent of the time.

Notably, around a quarter of mothers often lay upside-

down -- bellies to the sky -- as they rested at or near the surface, a behavior not previously recorded in other large whale species, said researchers, adding they observed it only in lactating mothers and one heavily pregnant whale.

The study found that nursing decreased as upside-down resting increased, suggesting the posture may help mothers restrict calf access to mammary slits and manage energy reserves.

"Upside-down resting may also be a way to prevent overheating, given southern right whales lack the dorsal fin which other marine mammals, such as dolphins, use to regulate their temperature," said Renae van Noort from the UWA Oceans Institute and School of Biological Sciences.

However, the behavior may increase vulnerability to vessel strikes -- a leading cause of death in right whales -- as whales take longer to "rotate to breathe and swim away quickly" if a threat approaches. Scientists advise vessels to slow down and keep a distance when whales are present.



The Pentagon is viewed from the window of an airplane Aug 27, 2023, in Washington. (AP)

Boot camp outbreak sickens nearly 300

Pentagon restores flu vaccine mandate

WASHINGTON, July 7, (AP): The Pentagon said that boot camps for all the military services are once again requiring the flu vaccination for all recruits after Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth made the shot optional for the military at the end of April.

The development, confirmed to The Associated Press by a Pentagon official, comes amid a growing, weeklong, flu outbreak at the US Air Force's boot camp at Lackland Air Force Base that has sickened nearly 300 people. However, the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details not cleared for public release, maintained that the permission to mandate the vaccinations was unrelated to the outbreak.

When Hegseth first announced the repeal of the flu vaccine mandate in April, citing "medical autonomy" and religious freedom, he allowed the services to ask for exceptions - or permission to keep the vaccine mandatory - within 15 days of the rollout.

The Pentagon official explained that the decision on those exceptions were being finalized earlier in June and the timing with the outbreak at Lackland was just a coincidence. Only 40% of the new trainees moving through the bootcamp at Lackland opted to receive the shot once it became optional, a source familiar with the situation told the Associated Press. The person spoke on the conditional of anonymity because the information was not cleared for public release.

The base handles roughly 700 new recruits every week, according to Air Force figures, and the close quarters environment has long been recognized as being conducive to the spread of disease.

Recruits are exposed to high stress, low sleep, and close contact conditions for weeks. They typically sleep together in large, open rooms, shower communally, and conduct much of their instruction and inspections in close contact.

The Lackland outbreak, which is now roughly three weeks long, has produced 275 confirmed cases of the flu, Democratic Rep. Joaquin Castro said in a social media post. Castro's district includes part of the base on which the Air Force boot camp resides.

The new outbreak is "not unusually concerning," said Dr Arnold Monto, a flu expert and emeritus professor at the University of Michigan.

Flu is mainly a problem in the late fall and winter - "flu season," as it is known. But flu viruses routinely circulate at lower levels in warmer months, too.

Concentrated flu outbreaks can occur in the spring and summer, but tend to be seen mainly on military bases, cruise ships and other settings where a lot of people are gathered together indoors, Monto said.

If you want to prevent flu outbreaks, "it is especially necessary to vaccinate when there are group settings," Monto said.

In a statement to the media, Sean Parnell, the Pentagon's top spokesman, confirmed that exceptions were granted to the Army, Navy, and Air Force as well as the National Security Agency and the Defense Health Agency but wouldn't offer further details.

However, both Army and Navy officials have said that they have also asked for permission to make the shot mandatory for certain broad groups that include troops deploying overseas, healthcare workers, and child care workers.

SPORTS

Kuwait Olympic Committee joins Asian Indoor & Martial Arts Games preparations meeting



Kuwait representatives Dr. Hussein Al-Saeed and Ahmed Al-Busairi participated in the Chefs de Mission meeting for the 6th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games.

RIYADH, July 7: The Kuwait Olympic Committee took part in the Chefs de Mission meeting for the 6th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games, held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, as preparations continue for the upcoming event scheduled for December 11-21, 2026.

Kuwait was represented at the meeting by Dr. Hussein Al-Saeed, technical director of the sports committees af-

filiated with the Kuwait Olympic Committee, along with Ahmed Al-Busairi, a board member of the Kuwait Jiu-Jitsu Committee.

The gathering focused on the latest organizational and technical arrangements for the Games, while officials also approved the competition program, which will include 18 sports.

Second arbitration win

Al Arabi secures landmark victory in registration dispute with KFA

By Khaled Al-Enzi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Al Arabi Club has secured a final and binding victory in its legal dispute with the Kuwait Football Association (KFA) after the Arbitration Chamber of the National Sports Arbitration Authority ruled in the club's favor over the registration of player Saud Abdullah Al-Anbari.

The chamber ordered the KFA to register Al-Anbari as an Al Arabi player and authorize his participation with both the club's first team and youth team as a professional. The verdict represents the second ruling in favor of Al Arabi before the arbitration panel unanimously brought the case to a close.

In addition, the Arbitration Chamber ordered the KFA to pay KD 3,200 in arbitration costs and arbitrators' fees, as well as KD 250 to Al Arabi for legal expenses. All other claims submitted in the case were dismissed.

Under Article 45 of the authority's procedural regulations, the decision became final and enforceable immediately upon its issuance and signature by the Chairman of the National Sports Arbitration Authority. The ruling obliges the KFA to implement the decision by registering the player and allowing him to represent Al Arabi in official competitions.

The unanimous decision was delivered by an arbitration panel headed by Saad Al-Omari, with Khaled Al-Suwaifan and Dr. Abdullah Al-Turajji serving as panel



Saud Abdullah Al-Anbari of Al Arabi Club celebrates during a match.

Gauff reaches semifinals



Jannik Sinner of Italy returns the ball to Jan-Lennard Struff of Germany in their quarter-final men's singles match at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London. (AP)

Sinner keeps title defense on track

LONDON, July 7, (AP): There's no panic in Coco Gauff.

Down a set after untimely double-faults, Gauff rallied past Jessica Pegula 4-6, 6-3, 6-3 on Tuesday to reach the Wimbledon semifinals for the first time.

The two-time major champion raised her arms in the air after Pegula sent a weak backhand into the net on the first match point in an all-American quarterfinal on Centre Court.

"I've been going three sets almost every match. I feel like when you have that faith in yourself as a competitor, when the match goes a distance, you know when you lose one set, you're not panicking," Gauff said in an on-court interview.

With the victory, the 22-year-old Gauff became the youngest player to reach the semifinals at all four Grand Slams since Maria Sharapova, who completed the feat at the 2007 French Open.

In Gauff's six previous appearances at the All England Club, she had never gotten past the fourth round. But perhaps the experience at the grass-court major is starting to pay off.

"I think after seven years playing this tournament it's finally the first time I can walk on Centre Court and I didn't feel nervous," she said. "So I don't know if I'm becoming a vet."

The "vet" was undone by early double-faults, though, putting herself in a hole to start the match. She led 40-0 right away but lost the next five points - including two on

double-faults - to go down 1-0. After breaking Pegula in the sixth game, Gauff was immediately broken to love with two more double-faults.

Gauff called the last two sets "really great tennis."

"Jess' ball is so flat and low. So I think I just needed to address that ... be in there in the rallies and just play the tennis that I wanted to play. And I think I started to land more first serves in the court," said Gauff, who cranked up one serve to 126 mph in the third game of the second set. "So I think that also helped and just trusting my shots."

On No. 1 Court, defending champion Jannik Sinner kept his title defense on track by beating Jan-Lennard Struff 7-5, 7-6 (4), 6-3 to advance to the semifinals.

The top-ranked Sinner continues

to put his French Open meltdown behind him. He needed five sets to get past 50th-ranked Miomir Kecmanovic in the first round, but since then they've been straight-set victories, allowing the 24-year-old Italian to avoid marathon sessions.

Under a sunny sky, the early afternoon matches started with the temperature at 29 Celsius degrees (84 Fahrenheit) and expected to rise to 31 C (88 F).

Sinner, who lost in the second round at the French Open amid a heat wave in Paris, used an ice towel around his neck on changeovers.

Early in her match, Gauff asked the chair umpire: "Do you guys have an ice pack?" The American dabbled what appeared to be a blue ice pack to her cheeks and top of her thighs.

Sun beats Minnesota Lynx

Valkyries rout Mystics for 5th straight win

WASHINGTON, July 7, (AP): Kaitlyn Chen scored 14 points off the bench and the Golden State Valkyries shut down the Washington Mystics 62-49 for their fifth straight victory.

Golden State (15-7) set a franchise record for the fewest points allowed in a game. The Valkyries held the Mystics to 18-of-60 shooting (30%), including 3 of 24 from 3-point range.

Chen made six of her nine shots in just 21 minutes to help Golden State's bench players reach 39 points. Veronica Burton was the Valkyries' highest-scoring starter with seven points.

Kiki Iriafan had 12 points and nine rebounds for Washington (10-10), which had won five of its previous seven games. Shakira Austin had 11 points and 11 rebounds. The Mystics were without

starter Sonia Citron (knee) for a second straight game.

Golden State pulled away in the third quarter, outscoring Washington 19-7 for a 50-40 lead. Chen completed a three-point play with 8:12 remaining in the fourth for a 55-40 lead, the largest of the game.

Sun 90, Lynx 89

In Minneapolis, Brittney Griner scored a season-high 29 points and grabbed 10 rebounds. Kennedy Burke added 16 points off the bench, including two 3-pointers in the final three minutes, and the Connecticut Sun beat the Minnesota Lynx.

Burke made a 3-pointer with 2:53 remaining in the fourth quarter to give the Sun a five-point lead, and Griner added a shot in the lane with 1:25 left

to make it 84-79.

Burke sank a wide open 3-pointer from the top of the key with 44.5 seconds left for an 87-84 lead. Then, former Lynx forward Diamond Miller made a key block for Connecticut and Griner sealed it on a layup with 18.2 left for another five-point advantage.

Storm 82, Sparks 64

In Los Angeles, Flau'jae Johnson scored 23 points, Natisha Hiedeman added 15 and the Seattle Storm beat the Los Angeles Sparks.

Jade Melbourne had 11 points for Seattle (6-17), which improved to 2-9 away from home this season. Katie Lou Samuelson scored nine points on three 3-pointers and Awa Fam had four of Seattle's 14 steals.

Federation Cup starts Nov. 9

Salmiya becomes second handball club to exit league

By Khaled Al-Enzi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 7: Salmiya Club has become the second team to withdraw from Kuwait Handball Association's senior competitions after Qadsia's earlier decision to pull out of the league.

The club did not submit its senior team roster to the federation, meaning its participation in the previous unfinished league season - which was halted due to the Gulf events - will be its final appearance in the competition. Salmiya will now focus on youth categories as part of its plan to restructure and reorganize its handball program.

Following the withdrawal, Salmiya's players will be eligible to move to other clubs.

The decision represents another setback for the senior league, with Salmiya and Qadsia both considered among Kuwait's most established handball clubs. The withdrawals create a challenge for the federation in maintaining the number and competitiveness of participating teams.

However, efforts are underway to strengthen the competition, with Al Shabab and Al Jahra expressing their intention to rebuild their senior teams and return to league action next season. Their official participation could help offset the reduction in the number of teams.

The Kuwait Handball Association is expected to finalize the upcoming season's schedule and confirm the participating clubs after receiving the final decisions from teams.

The federation has informed clubs of the remaining fixtures for the 2025-26 season. The postponed Premier League will resume with matches from Round 14 to Round 21 starting October 8, while the First Division League will continue from Round 10 to Round 20 beginning October 3.

The Federation Cup is scheduled to begin on November 9, while the 2026-27 season will start after Kuwait's national team completes its participation in the 2027 World



Salmiya Club players celebrate after scoring during a match.

Men's Handball Championship, which will be held in Germany next January.

Meanwhile, Al-Qurain Club has moved to reinforce its squad ahead of the 2026-27 season by signing German left back Valentin Spohn and Estonian right back Dener Janimaa. The club has also extended the contract of Algerian coach Rabah Gharbi.

Al-Qurain's management aims to build a balanced squad combining experienced players with young talents to compete strongly in the Premier League and Federation Cup, following the team's promising performances in recent seasons.

Kuwait Club has also witnessed several departures following the expiration of player contracts. Foreign players Frankis and Victor have left the club, along with local players Mohammed Amer, Mishari Siwan, Yaqoub Asiri, Mohammed Al-Balushi, Fahad Abdulhadi, Mishaal Taha, and Ali Safar.

The club has brought back its loaned players from Burgan - Mohammed Bouyabis, Hussein Al-Mutawa, and Mohammed Ghdanfar - after their loan spells ended, while also securing the signing of Salmiya and Kuwait national team standout Haider Dashti.

Al Horford remains with Warriors

Hachimura agrees to 2-year, \$28 million deal with Clippers

LOS ANGELES, July 7, (AP): Free agent forward Rui Hachimura and the Los Angeles Clippers have agreed on a two-year contract that would be worth \$28 million if a team option for 2027-28 is exercised, a person familiar with the talks said Monday.

The person disclosed the financial details to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because those numbers were not disclosed by either side. ESPN and the Los Angeles Times were among the first to report the deal's potential value.

"Rui is an elite 3-point shooter and an efficient mid-range scorer who uses his size to exploit mismatches," Clippers basketball operations president Lawrence Frank said after the signing was completed Monday. "He will strengthen our frontcourt with his one-on-one defense and ability to space the floor. Rui is also a well-liked and respected teammate who continues to grow his game. We're excited to add him."

Hachimura will be joining his third team, after splitting his first eight NBA seasons between the Washington Wizards and Los Angeles Lakers. His departure means all five players that the Lakers started in Game 1 of last season's playoff run

- Hachimura, LeBron James (still choosing a new team), Deandre Ayton (trade to Washington), Marcus Smart (agreed to sign with Houston) and Luke Kennard (agreed to sign with Phoenix) - will play elsewhere this season.

Luka Doncic and Austin Reaves, both of whom will remain with the Lakers, would have been starters that Game 1 but were injured.

The 28-year-old Hachimura, who played his college basketball at Gonzaga, averaged 11.5 points and shot 44% from 3-point range last season.

Veteran center Al Horford is staying with the Golden State Warriors, receiving a two-year, \$14 million contract, according to a person with knowledge of the agreement.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Monday because the team hadn't provided details of Horford's new deal. Golden State announced Horford would return on a multi-year contract.

The 40-year-old Horford will be entering his 20th NBA season, and second alongside Stephen Curry and Draymond Green.

Change Name

I, SAIFUDDIN CHAVI TAHER, holder of Indian passport no. X8047533 having permanent address TEMBA MOHAMMEDI PURA SAGWARA, DUNGARPUR PIN 314025 RAJASTHAN, INDIA residing in Kuwait at present, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as under:
Given Name- TAHER SAIFUDDIN and Surname: CHAVI

Babar not to compromise on discipline, fitness and performance

ISLAMABAD, July 7, (AP): Babar Azam vows not to compromise on discipline, fitness and performance of the Pakistan red-ball team during his second stint as test cricket captain.

Babar replaced Shan Masood as test skipper on Sunday after strings of poor results in red-ball saw Pakistan losing 12 of its last 16 test matches. Babar will lead Pakistan in two test matches against the West Indies later this month which will be followed by three-test series in England.

"My main focus is on three things: discipline, fitness and performance," Babar told former Pakistan captain Salman Butt in Pakistan Cricket Board's digital show 'Straight Drive', aired.

"These will matter a lot for me as captain and for the team

going forward. Whenever I get the opportunity to lead, I always try to back the players, but I will not compromise on these three things."

Pakistan did fairly well by winning 10 of the 20 test matches during Babar's first stint as test skipper before he was replaced by Masood in late 2023. Babar scored prolifically at a healthy average of over 50 while in-charge of the test team and also won series against South Africa, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

"I have learnt a lot from my previous experience as captain and also from the time I played as a player," he said. "With time, you gain maturity and clarity. I am confident that this time, with good planning and a positive mindset, I will lead the team well."



Fan Zone



Joyful scenes as World Cup fans celebrate during the round of 16 matches. (AP)

Integrity of World Cup questioned as Trump, FIFA defend actions surrounding Balogun suspension

'Red cards are not overturned by political phone calls'

GENEVA, July 7, (AP): Soccer leaders questioned the World Cup's integrity on a chaotic and unprecedented day in the event's modern history Monday.

The furor centered on a phone call that President Donald Trump made last week to FIFA head Gianni Infantino to make the case that U.S. striker Folarin Balogun should not have been suspended for Monday's matchup with Belgium because of a red card in a game last week. FIFA lifted the suspension and cleared Balogun to play.

The decision ultimately didn't help the U.S. team, which was eliminated from the World Cup with a 4-1 loss to Belgium late Monday with Balogun in the lineup.

The decision appeared to be the first time since 1962 that punishment for a World Cup offense was suspended in the tournament, increasing scrutiny on Infantino's control of FIFA and his close association with Trump.

European soccer body UEFA said FIFA "crossed a red line" and called Sunday's decision by FIFA's disciplinary committee "unprecedented, incomprehensible and unjustifiable." Infantino denied having a role in the decision. Trump called it a "horrible" call and took credit for getting FIFA to review the foul, but said he did not demand an outcome.

The Belgian Football Association said it informed the U.S. Soccer Federation it was contesting Balogun's eligibility.

But FIFA's appeals committee dismissed Belgium's legal challenge less than eight hours before scheduled kickoff of the round of 16 match in Seattle. The appellate panel said Belgium had no standing to challenge the decision.

It was unclear whether Belgium could pursue an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Switzerland.

Balogun's red card was assessed by Brazilian referee Raphael Claus for stepping on an opponent's ankle last Wednesday during the Americans' 2-0 win over Bosnia-Herzegovina, triggering an automatic one-game suspension. Claus did not initially issue a red card but showed it after a video review.



United States' Folarin Balogun, right, attempts a shot on goal over during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match against Belgium in Seattle. (AP)

FIFA's disciplinary committee on Sunday provisionally lifted the suspension for one year and fined Balogun \$40,000, which the USSF can pay.

European soccer officials reacted with outrage.

"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," UEFA said in a statement.

"Sometimes rules are open to interpretation. In this case not," it said. "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."

UEFA has often clashed with Infantino during his decade in FIFA power.

Infantino's predecessor Sepp Blatter, forced from office in 2015 in fallout from corruption scandals, posted Monday on social media:

"Red cards are not overturned by political phone calls," said Blatter. "They are overturned by rules, evidence and independent bodies."

The Swiss Football Association declared that the "credibility of the competition depends on clear rules that are applied consistently."

Coaches speculated about the implications of the decision going forward.

"What about the next red card? What happens then?" Norway coach Ståle Solbakken said. "Is there going to be some committee somewhere that is going to take that card away? It's a bad, bad, bad, bad, bad decision

that will hurt the World Cup."

England coach Thomas Tuchel wondered whether yellow cards to English defender Declan Rice and French midfielder Michael Olise could be reversed.

FIFA's disciplinary committee defended its decision in a statement Monday.

"Reviewing the legal consequences of red cards in football is nothing new in the modern game," it said. "In the majority of top-tier leagues belonging to UEFA-affiliated member associations the overturning of red cards is a common disciplinary measure, yet this has never raised concerns about crossing any 'red line.'"

Trump on Monday called the referee's decision a "horrible" call while admitting he was confused about the rules and punishment surrounding red cards.

Mbappé 'condemns' senator over remarks

WASHINGTON, July 7, (AP): France star Kylian Mbappé on Monday condemned a Paraguayan senator over racist remarks she made following Paraguay's loss to France in the round of 16 at the World Cup.

Mbappé called Celeste Amarilla, a senator for Paraguay's Liberal Radical Party, a "despicable woman" who was "unworthy" of serving in Paraguay's Congress.

"Through your recklessness and your brazen racism, the entire world has already forgotten the journey and the historic effort that your players accomplished during this World Cup," Mbappé wrote on X.

Amarilla posted a series of racist comments on X after Mbappé converted the winning penalty in France's victory over Paraguay on Saturday, mocking the French captain's origins, upbringing, education and appearance. France advanced to the quarterfinals, where it will face Morocco on Thursday.

Late Monday, Amarilla issued an open letter in French and Spanish to Mbappé on social media, in which she said her problem was with the player, not the country of France. She wrote that she regretted mistreating Mbappé with "the same insults" she's received as a mixed-race person and that she had deleted her post.

But she also demanded an apology from Mbappé, accusing him of gender-based violence in his comments about her, and threatening legal action if he didn't retract them.

The Associated Press emailed France's team media officers for comment on Amarilla's letter.

The Paraguayan government released a statement Monday afternoon condemning Amarilla's remarks as "contrary to the values and principles that inspire peaceful coexistence and respect for human dignity that our country promotes." It added that the senator's comments do not represent either the Paraguayan government or the Paraguayan people.

The French Football Federation on Monday denounced Amarilla's comments as "utterly abhorrent" and "unacceptable," adding that it would refer the matter to prosecutors.

France's president, Emmanuel Macron, and sports minister Marina Ferrari voiced support for the national team's captain.

'We have to keep the feet on the ground'

Haaland inspires wave of Norwegian pride during run

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J., July 7, (AP): Erling Haaland banged the drum to lead Norway fans in the Viking Row that has become a signature part of the World Cup.

After celebrating carrying his nation into the quarterfinals of the tournament for the first time by scoring both goals in a 2-1 win over Brazil on Sunday, his thoughts drifted to the scene back home where tens of thousands of Norwegians partied into the night.

And, of course, performing the Viking Row themselves.

"Look at the streets in Norway," Haaland said. "I've never experienced anything like it before. I kind of wish that I was in Oslo now celebrating with all the people."

Thankfully for his teammates, the Manchester City striker is in the U.S. piling up the goals and making this the best World Cup in the history of Norway's men's national team.

This improbable run that took another leap forward by knocking off five-time champion Brazil is stirring up pride in fans at stadiums and in the streets where the games are taking place, and across the Scandinavian country of just over 5.5 million people.

As many as 50,000 people were watching the match against Brazil at Rådhuspladsen - the square outside the town hall - in Norwegian capital Oslo, according to the city council. Wearing a Norway soccer scarf around his neck, Crown Prince Haakon even met a throng of fans outside the



Norway's Erling Haaland (9) leads the team as they participate in a Viking boat row after the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between Brazil and Norway in East Rutherford, N.J., near New York. (AP)

royal palace and was seen taking part in a mass Viking Row after the game.

Fireworks exploded at Ullevaal Stadium, the home ground of Norway's national team and where thousands more sat on long tables to view the game.

"The whole nation is rowing together," coach Ståle Solbakken said. "We are having a great party here and in Oslo and in all the other big and small cities all the way through Norway, and the rowing is in a way a symbol of that and that we're all together."

Giant crowds of fans in the red, white and blue colors of the flag turned the rowing into a viral sensation by taking over Times Square and doing it in the stands at a New York Mets baseball game. They will get at least one more chance to see

Norway play, against England on Saturday outside Miami with the chance to reach the semifinals.

"We have to keep the feet on the ground," captain Martin Ødegaard said. "We've shown that we can beat anyone and that we are really enjoying what we're doing. We're having fun, and in football everything is possible so just keep the foot on the floor, keep working hard and we'll see what happens and just go with the flow."

Norway is in the World Cup for just the fourth time and the first since 1998 after failing to qualify each of the past six times. Haaland, who turns 26 on July 21, was not even born then and joked that no one can blame him for previous defeats when he wasn't playing.

"You can blame me for coming here," said Haaland, whose

seven goals at his first World Cup are tied with Argentina's Lionel Messi and France's Kylian Mbappé. "It's unbelievable. I'm proud. I'm proud of my country, and I'm proud of everyone."

Indeed, it continues a fairytale season for Norwegian soccer, with Bodø/Glimt - a tiny team that plays in an 8,000-capacity stadium - delivering one of the most extraordinary stories for years in the European game by qualifying for the Champions League and beating a string of top teams, including Haaland's Man City, to reach the knockout stage.

Now the national men's team is taking center stage in its first major international tournament since 2000. The players are looking to emulate Norway's women's team, which won the World Cup in 1995 and has long been a top international side.

Haaland said several times after beating Brazil that he could not believe such a victory was possible and that it was beyond his wildest dreams to pull it off.

He also hopes Norway's success transcends this year and makes kids want to represent their country.

"I want to actually also cultivate a culture where we are proud to play for the national team, and if you play for Norway then you should do it proudly and I think we should cultivate this kind of attitude in young people," Haaland said.

"To all the kids who see and watch now, I want you to do like me, and I want you to play proudly when you grow up."

Tuchel praises England's character after dramatic win

MEXICO CITY, July 7, (Xinhua): Thomas Tuchel praised England's resilience after his team reached the World Cup quarterfinals on Sunday with a 3-2 victory over Mexico.

England appeared to be cruising after Jude Bellingham's first-half brace, but Julian Quinones' goal and Jarell Quansah's early second-half dismissal shifted the momentum at Mexico City Stadium.

Harry Kane restored England's two-goal lead from the penalty spot before Raul Jimenez also struck from the spot as England held on to set up a clash with Norway in the next round.

"It was incredibly difficult," Tuchel told a post-match news conference. "Just when we felt we had the momentum, we suffered another setback. But that's what this team is about. When things get tough, they never give up and they never lose belief. We found a way to take one more step." The England manager said his players

had overcome adversity to beat the tournament co-host, adding that the support from fans had helped his team's cause.

"I'm proud of the players' mentality and attitude," he said. "There were moments when we got through on pure heart and determination."

We overcame every obstacle that was put in front of us. It's a very special night for us.

"If you stayed up to watch us, I just want to say thank you. We felt your support 100%. There's so much to love about this team because they just keep pushing. Now we have to recover, and we'll use that energy from the fans to keep fighting and stay in this tournament." He said his players had relished the chance to experience the World Cup in Mexico, having played its previous four games in the tournament in the United States.



Alexander Zverev of Germany plays a return during the men's singles fourth round match against Jiri Lehecka of the Czech Republic at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London. (AP) — See Page 14

Sports

De Ketelaere runs the show

US falls apart as Belgium moves on

SEATTLE, July 7, (AP) — Images told the story of the United States' World Cup downfall.

Christian Pulisic sprawled on the field in agony after hurting an ankle.

Matt Freese holding his hands on his head after his gaffe gifted a goal.

Chris Richards crumpling to the ground, his face pressed on the grass.

Mauricio Pochettino kicking a rack in front of the American bench, sending four water bottles flying.

American hopes for a deep World Cup run at home ended when Charles De Ketelaere scored twice and assisted on another goal, helping Belgium expose the U.S. defensive liabilities in a 4-1 win Monday night that earned a quarterfinal berth.

"It stinks," Tyler Adams said. "This was a moment to have an opportunity to advance and really try and do something special. We fell short."

While the U.S. was boosted by the presence of star forward Folarin Balogun, whose one-game red-card suspension was controversially lifted by FIFA, American defenders were at fault in a pair of first-half goals and Freese's howler gave the Red Devils a third early in the second half.

Second-half substitute Romelu Lukaku added Belgium's final goal in the third minute of stoppage time after Richards' giveaway. The U.S. hadn't allowed that many goals in a World Cup game since a 5-1 loss to Czechoslovakia in the Americans' 1990 opener, when they returned to soccer's biggest stage after a 40-year absence.

"A very bad day," said Pochettino, the U.S. coach. "It's

not like you are in a rocket and you improve and you grow. ... It's not linear."

This loss was a painful reckoning for a team that hoped to boost the sport but instead failed to shake a quarter-century of stagnation since 20-year-old Landon Donovan led the Americans to the 2002 quarterfinals. Since then, the U.S. has lost four times in the round of 16.

"Everyone had nerves, right, because we knew how much this meant for the whole country, not just our team," said 21-year-old defender Alex Freeman, the youngest U.S. player.

Belgium knocked out the U.S. in the round of 16 for the second time in 12 years and extended its unbeaten streak to 18 games. The Red Devils play 2010 champion Spain on Friday at Inglewood, California, for a semifinal berth against France or Morocco.

"We showed that we're ready and we want to perform," captain Youri Tielemans said.

All six CONCACAF nations have been eliminated, with the three co-hosts falling in the round of 16.

Malik Tillman tied the score 1-1 midway through the first half when he became the first player since France's Bernard Genghini in 1982 to have two free kick goals in a World Cup, but the Americans conceded less than a minute after the ensuing kickoff.

American star Christian Pulisic could only watch the end from the bench after injuring his right ankle when he hit Tielemans' boot on a 52nd-minute shot attempt. Pulisic was replaced seven minutes later, finishing the tournament with no goals.



Belgium's Dodi Lukebakio, right, heads a ball next to United States' Chris Richards during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match in Seattle. (AP)

Spain through to quarters, Merino ends Ronaldo's World Cup journey



Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo (7) shoots a goal as Spain's Pau Cubarsi (22) defends during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between Portugal and Spain in Arlington, Texas, near Dallas. Inset: Ronaldo (7) reacts after Portugal loss. (AP)

Portugal suffers late defeat

ARLINGTON, Texas, July 7, (AP) — Mikel Merino was still on the bench in the final minutes of regulation, with Spain coach Luis de la Fuente worried about hanging on to his substitutes as long as possible because of looming extra time.

The Arsenal forward made all that fretting moot.

Merino scored in the first minute of second-half stoppage time, and Spain beat Portugal 1-0 on Monday to end the World Cup career of superstar Cristiano Ronaldo.

Merino had just been knocked down, and a foul was called. While Portugal's Bernardo Silva argued, Merino played the ball back in, ran toward the goal and easily beat goalkeeper Diogo Costa after a series of passes capped by Ferran Torres' nifty ball through the middle.

"He's one of the best in his position worldwide, and he has given us a fantastic result and a fantastic goal," de la Fuente said through a translator. "I want to express the importance of substitutes that came in later in the game. Not just today, but the contribution in other games has been enormous."

Spain, which has a 35-game unbeaten streak, advanced to the

quarterfinals for the first time since winning its only World Cup title in 2010. La Roja will play Belgium, a 4-1 winner over the United States, on Friday in Inglewood, California.

Ronaldo was trying to get Portugal to the quarterfinals in a second consecutive tournament for the first time. Instead, the career on soccer's biggest stage is over for the all-time leader in international goals (146) and appearances (233).

Merino didn't enter until the 85th minute, and his heads-up play



Spain's Mikel Merino (6) celebrates at the end of the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between Portugal and Spain in Arlington, Texas, near Dallas. (AP)

showed some of the versatility that helped Arsenal win its first Premier League title in more than 20 years this spring.

The World Cup was in doubt for Merino, who turned 30 during the tournament, after right foot surgery cut short his Arsenal season.

In the biggest moment of the year for Spain, there he was with fresh legs, finishing with his left foot into the left corner of the net. After emerging from a group hug with his teammates, Merino made a circle around the flag in a corner before letting out a guttural scream while clenching both fists.

That's how his father, Miguel Merino, celebrated more than three decades ago during his club career in Spain. And his son first emulated it after a late goal to beat host Germany to send Spain to the semifinals of the European championship two years ago.

This was Mikel Merino's first World Cup goal, and 11th for the national team.

"What better way to celebrate," Merino said. "You remember all the good and the bad, and there have been difficult moments for me this year."

The latest meeting of Iberian Peninsula rivals that first played in a friendly in Madrid 105 years ago was quite the contrast to their most recent World Cup match.

It was eight years ago that Ronaldo had his only World Cup hat trick in a 3-3 draw with Spain in a group stage opener that is considered one of the tournament's best games.

The 41-year-old superstar scored three times in this tournament, but didn't have many chances against Spain's Unai Simón, who extended his World Cup record to 609 minutes without conceding a goal. Spain became the first team to record six straight shutouts at the World Cup.

The best chance was Ronaldo's nifty backward kick in the 37th minute when Joao Felix's header deflected off Simón's left shoulder and popped in the air to Ronaldo. He flicked the ball with his right foot, but it was soft enough to give Simón time to recover and make a leaping grab.

"I'll wake up tomorrow like I woke up today, with a clear conscience," said Ronaldo, who a day earlier had repeated his previous declaration that his sixth World Cup would be his last. "I gave my best. I won three titles with Portugal. Before Cristiano, Portugal hadn't won any title. So, I'm happy. The biggest title that I won with the national team was in 2016 (European Championship), which for me had the same dimension as a World Cup, honestly."

Portugal desperately pushed for an equalizer in the final eight minutes of stoppage time. Silva had a header that went just over the top of the net.

Pedersen wins stage 4 of Tour

Traeen takes yellow jersey from Pogacar

FOIX, France, July 7, (AP) — Danish rider Mads Pedersen surged away in a sprint finish to win the fourth stage of the Tour de France on Tuesday, and Norwegian rider Torstein Traeen took the yellow jersey from defending Tour champion Tadej Pogacar.

Pedersen attacked with 300 meters (yards) left and was well clear when he crossed the line ahead of American rider Quinn Simmons, his Lidl-Trek teammate, and Spaniard Raul Garcia.

"This was for sure a masterpiece in teamwork," Pedersen said, praising his teammates for putting him in position to contest the win. "They worked like machines. What a team effort and what a team win today."

It was a third career stage win on the Tour for Pedersen, a powerful rider who is a former world road race champion.

Traeen finished in eighth place and was far ahead of four-time Tour champion Pogacar, who did not contest the stage victory.

Pogacar was in the main pack along with two-time champion Jonas Vingegaard, his main rival. They both rolled in 12 minutes, 59 seconds behind Traeen after nearly 4 1/2 hours in the saddle.

Traeen, who rides for Uno-X Mobility, is just under eight minutes ahead of them in the overall standings.

"To be honest, I can't believe it. I can feel it's real but it's quite hard for me to understand how big this is," the 30-year-old Traeen said. "The Tour is the biggest race in the world and I will enjoy the jersey for as long as possible. I hope I can keep it for quite some time now."

That might prove difficult, however.

Traeen is not a contender for overall victory and could lose the yellow



Denmark's Mads Pedersen celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the fourth stage of the Tour de France cycling race with start in Carcassonne and finish in Foix, France. (AP)

jersey as early as Thursday, when the race hits the high Pyrenees mountains on Stage 6.

Pogacar took the yellow jersey from Vingegaard after winning Monday's third stage. It featured the first major mountain climb of the three-week race, which ends on July 26 in Paris.

Stage 4 featured four moderate climbs on a 182-kilometer (113-mile) trek from Carcassonne to Foix in the Occitanie region of southwestern France. With sweltering temperatures hitting 38 degrees Celsius (100 Fahrenheit), Tour organizers allowed for extra feeding zones during the stage, giving riders more frequent access to water bottles.

Rosenior lands Paris FC job

PARIS, July 7, (AP) — Liam Rosenior is back coaching in French soccer after Paris FC hired him on a two-year contract on Tuesday.

Paris FC announced Rosenior's arrival in a statement on X and the 41-year-old Englishman spoke in a brief video message.

"I'm so happy to be the coach of Paris FC, I can't wait to get started with the new players," he said. "It's a fantastic project."

Rosenior was coach of Ligue 1 side Strasbourg until he left midway through last season to take charge of Chelsea, which handed him a six-year deal but then fired him less than four months into the job amid poor results in the Premier League. Chelsea was also crushed 8-2 by Paris Saint-Germain in the last 16 of the Champions League.

He replaces Antoine Kombouaré at Paris FC. The veteran coach, who did well when taking charge in late February, reportedly fell out with the club over the terms of a new contract.

Paris FC plays at Stade Jean-

Bouin, which is literally across the street from Champions League winner PSG's home, Parc des Princes - 44 meters away according to Paris City Hall. Last season saw the first capital city derby in French men's league soccer since 1990.

Rosenior also experienced Jean-Bouin as coach of Strasbourg.

"I was in this stadium not long ago," he said. "There was a great atmosphere when I had head coach of Strasbourg and I can't wait to sample the atmosphere as the home head coach."

PSG has been bankrolled by Qatari investor QSI since being taken over in June 2011. France's richest family, the Arnaults of luxury empire LVMH, bought Paris FC two years ago.

After winning promotion from the second tier, Paris FC finished 11th in Ligue 1 last season and beat French champion PSG twice at home; once in the French Cup and on the last day of the league.