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His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan and his accompanying delegation on their official visit to the country.

Kuwait Amir, UAE President reinforce strategic partnership

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Thursday President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan and his accompanying delegation on their official visit to the country. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad

Al-Sabah were also present at the audience of Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed. During the meeting, the two leaders discussed ways to support and develop bilateral relations in all fields, emphasizing the importance of expanding bilateral cooperation to serve their common interests.

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Amiri Diwan photos

KUWAIT VOWS TO DEFEND SOVEREIGNTY, SLAMS IRAN ESCALATION

Air defenses repel fresh barrage

US-Iran tit-for-tat sends shockwaves across region

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (Agencies): Kuwait's armed forces intercepted three ballistic missiles, one cruise missile and 10 hostile drones detected in the country's airspace early Thursday, the Ministry of Defense said.

Ministry spokesperson Colonel Saud Al-Atwan said the hostile projectiles were successfully intercepted and neutralized before reaching their

targets. He said falling debris caused material damage at several locations and injured one person, who was taken to hospital and is in stable condition. Army engineering explosive ordnance disposal teams were deployed to deal with remnants from the interception operations. Al-Atwan affirmed that the armed forces remain on full operational readiness to protect the country's security and ensure the safety of citizens and residents.

The General Staff of Kuwait Army urged the public not to approach or photograph any missile or drone debris, warning against sharing images or videos of the wreckage on social media. It called on citizens and residents to follow the instructions of the competent authorities and rely only on official sources for information.

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Other Voices

The Gulf could pay the price

By Abdulaziz Al-Anjeri

The most important question for the Gulf is how long this U.S.-Iran crisis will last, and how much of its cost Gulf states will have to absorb while trying to stay out of it.

The region appears to be heading toward a cycle of controlled escalation: limited strikes, calibrated responses, mediation, and a return to tension.

For Gulf states, this is a dangerous middle ground. They do not decide when the crisis begins or ends, but they will live with many of its consequences. The risk is not only missiles or drones. It is time. A prolonged crisis can steadily raise the cost of shipping, insurance, energy flows, investment decisions, market confidence, and other pressures GCC policymakers understand but rarely discuss openly.



Al-Anjeri

So far, despite differences among Gulf states, most have acted pragmatically: avoiding direct entanglement, resisting escalation, and focusing on containing the damage.

That may not satisfy those who believe the answer lies in maximum pressure or even regime change, but it reflects a basic strategic reality: the Gulf has more to lose from a widening conflict than from a careful effort to limit it.

Iran also understands that pressure on Gulf waters and regional trade routes does not affect Washington alone. It unsettles Europe, China, India, and other economies with a stake in energy security and maritime stability.

The real test for Gulf states now is managing risk, lowering the cost of escalation, narrowing internal differences where possible, and preventing their territory, waters, and economies from becoming arenas for other people's conflicts.

Kuwait in for hot dust blast

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Kuwait's Meteorological Department forecast dusty conditions and hot to very hot weather during the weekend.

Acting Director Dhirar Al-Ali told KUNA northwesterly winds are expected at light to moderate speeds, becoming active at times and raising dust over open areas.

Daytime temperatures on Thursday and Friday are expected between 44 and 46 degrees Celsius, with nighttime lows ranging from 33 to 35 degrees. Sea conditions will be slight to moderate, with waves reaching up to six feet.

On Saturday, temperatures are forecast to rise to between 45 and 47 degrees Celsius, with moderate to fresh northwesterly winds reaching 50 km per hour, causing blowing dust. Nighttime temperatures will range between 32 and 34 degrees.

Smuggling down 85%

New drug law tough on dealers, hope for addicts

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Ministry of Justice affirmed that Decree-Law No. 159/2025 on Combating Drugs and Psychotropic Substances represents a comprehensive legislative shift in confronting the drug problem.

The law combines strict measures against trafficking, smuggling, and promotion with a humanitarian approach focused on treating and rehabilitating addicts and supporting their reintegration into society.

The statement was made during the "A Nation That Protects You" symposium, organized by the ministry on Wednesday morning as part of the National Awareness Campaign to Combat Drugs.

The symposium was held under the patronage of Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait, and featured a group of legal, security, and academic experts.

The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice Awatef Al-Sanad emphasized that the law was enacted at a critical time to address the evolving methods used in drug smuggling and promotion, while also aligning with the latest international legislative standards.

She explained that the law strikes a balance between imposing stricter penalties for crimes related to trafficking, smuggling, and manufacturing, which may carry penalties of up to the death sentence or life imprisonment, and adopting a treatment-based approach focused on supporting addicts, rehabilitating them, and facilitating their reintegration into society.

The law consolidates previous legislation related to narcotics and psychotropic substances into a single framework, unifying legal concepts and provisions. It clearly distinguishes between drug use and possession for personal use versus possession for trafficking purposes, while also regulating treatment procedures.

The law increases penalties in cases involving the exploitation



Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait, Minister of Justice

of minors or public office and strengthens the confidentiality protections for the personal data of individuals seeking treatment.

The effects of implementing the law are beginning to emerge, with addition-related complaints increasing by 14.9 percent.

Al-Sanad praised the efforts of security agencies and judicial authorities in enforcing the law's provisions and achieving its objectives.

Meanwhile, Dr. Khaled Al-Rashidi, Associate Professor in the Criminal Law Department at Kuwait University's Faculty of Law, stated that the decree-law adopts a comprehensive approach based on three main pillars - prevention, treatment, and punishment, in line with relevant international agreements.

He explained that the law introduced specific regulations governing chemical precursors used in the manufacture of narcotics and established a distinction between treatment centers and rehabilitation centers.

The law requires the Supreme Council for Drug Control to establish a specialized unit for criminological studies, while also enhancing the role of educational and religious institutions in prevention programs.

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PACI launches mobile e-signature service

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) has launched a new mechanism

to activate the electronic signature service through the "Kuwait Mobile ID" application.

The new service allows users to complete the activation process easily without the need to visit PACI

self-service kiosks.

The service is currently available to Kuwaiti citizens as part of the first phase of its launch, with plans to extend availability to other categories in future phases.

Smart platform set for 2027 completion

Commerce goes digital, fraud faces heat

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The digital transformation project of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry digital (Commercial Platform) will be fully completed by 2027 and the current completion rate reached seven percent, according to an official report.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the report, stating that the total cost of the project is KD2.8 million, while its objectives include intensifying oversight, combating money laundering and terrorist financing, regulating and monitoring the sale and purchase of precious metals within legal frameworks, and automatically archive the invoices through a smart system that ensures the collection of state revenues.

The report affirmed that through this inclusive digital transformation, the ministry is keen on preventing wastage of public funds and stopping the illegal sale or exploitation of subsidized food commodities. The project provides decision-makers with an accurate and up-to-date database that enables them to formulate the necessary corrective legislation and decisions based on realistic indicators. It will reduce operating costs, cancel licensing fees, and lead to a total transition to a paperless work environment.

According to the report, the project is an effective tool for intensifying oversight of invoices issued by companies and institutions, especially those operating in the money exchange and transfer sectors. The project includes

implementing an innovative electronic system to modernize the e-auction service for companies and individuals, covering various goods, products and vehicles. The main aim is to establish a modern technological mechanism for monitoring the distribution of subsidized food items (rations) for the beneficiaries to complete their transactions online.

The report pointed out that the project entails the development of a sophisticated suite of software and platforms, including four interactive and service-oriented digital platforms, as well as restructuring and automating more than 200 electronic services and training at least 500 ministry employees.

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Zain supports landmark orchestral celebration of Kuwait's musical heritage

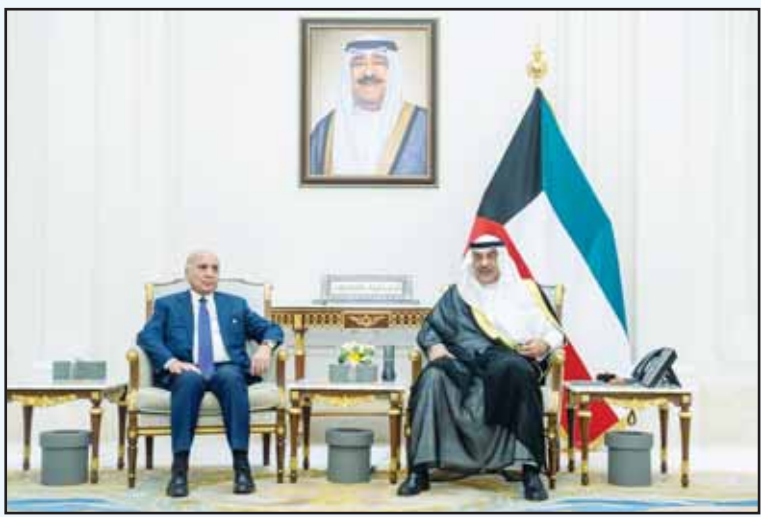


'Total eclipse of the heart' star Bonnie Tyler dies



Prayer Timings

| | | | |
|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| Fajr | 03:22 | Asr | 15:27 |
| Sunrise | 04:56 | Maghrib | 18:51 |
| Zohr | 11:53 | Isha | 20:21 |



Crown Prince Diwan photo

HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives the visiting Foreign Minister of the Republic of Iraq Dr. Fuad Hussein.



PM Diwan photo

HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receives the visiting Foreign Minister of the Republic of Iraq Dr. Fuad Hussein.

Kuwait, Iraq explore avenues to bolster security

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Wednesday Foreign Minister of the brotherly Republic of Iraq Dr. Fuad Hussein and his accompanying delegation on the occasion of their official visit to Kuwait.

His Highness welcomed the Iraqi guests at the beginning of the meeting, wishing them success in this visit.

The meeting was attended by Head of the Crown

Prince's Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and several other senior officials.

Prime Minister

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Wednesday the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, Dr. Fuad Hussein, and his accom-

panying delegation on the occasion of his official visit to the country.

During the meeting, both sides reviewed bilateral relations and discussed the latest developments in the region.

They also explored avenues to bolster regional security, consolidate peace, and maintain stability, alongside exchanging views on several issues of mutual interest.

Kuwait condemns deadly armed attacks in Pakistan

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Wednesday expressed the State of Kuwait's strong condemnation and denunciation of the armed attacks targeting police and military personnel in the Balochistan province of the friendly Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which left several people dead.

The Ministry reaffirmed Kuwait's principled and unwavering stance against all forms of violence and terrorism, underscoring its absolute rejection of acts that destabilize security and target security personnel.

The Ministry extended Kuwait's heartfelt condolences and deep sympathy to the families of the victims, as well as to the government and people of Pakistan.

'Inspection tours continue'

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah affirmed the continuation of inspections in various sectors and departments at the ministry in order to closely monitor performance and address issues, if any.

Al-Huwailah made the statement when she conducted an inspection tour at the Social Welfare and Development Sector recently, along with Assistant Undersecretary for the sector Iman Al-Anzi and Director of the Charitable Societies Department Abdulmohsen Al-Makhial.

She also underscored the importance of developing the work environment to improve the quality of services provided to the public.

She was briefed on the work mechanisms in the departments of the sector and the procedures followed in processing transactions, during which she stressed the need to streamline procedures, expedite completion, and enhance integration among departments.

'Kuwaiti women prowess in handling job excellent'

Tackling economy key to development: Sheikha Jawaher

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Ambassador Sheikha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah on Wednesday affirmed that Kuwaiti women possess the exceptional competence and leadership capabilities required to drive the national economy and bolster the competitiveness of its institutions.

Addressing a panel discussion organized by the Kuwait Economic Society titled "Empowering and Representing Women in Listed Companies," Sheikha Jawaher underscored that female economic empowerment is a fundamental pillar for comprehensive national development and a strategic investment in local talent.

Citing World Bank data, Sheikha Jawaher noted that expanding female labor force participation and promoting women to executive decision-making roles directly correlates with accelerated macroeconomic growth and enhanced market competitiveness.

The diplomat pointed out that Kuwaiti women have consistently proven their capability across challenging sectors, successfully em-



KUNA photo

Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Ambassador Sheikha Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah takes part in the Kuwait Economic Society (KES) organized discussions.

bedding themselves within the judiciary, diplomatic corps, and national security apparatus.

Furthermore, their leadership has been highly visible across key economic drivers, notably banking, telecommunications, aviation, and the oil sector.

While these milestones directly align with the state's "New Kuwait" Vision 2035 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, Sheikha Jawaher stressed that the upcoming phase demands transitioning from celebrating past successes to institutionalizing them through robust policies that broaden women's

economic integration.

Meanwhile, Shaima Bin Hussein, CEO of She He Invest, presented an analytical study titled "Women on the Boards of Listed Companies," tracking female corporate footprint across the Boursa Kuwait (Kuwait Stock Exchange) against global benchmarks.

Bin Hussein pointed out that out of 933 total board seats across listed firms, women currently hold 63 positions (6.75 percent) compared to 871 held by men.

She emphasized that this current baseline remains well below the 30 percent international standard, underscoring the urgent need for supervisory, executive, and developmental reforms to fast-track corporate gender diversity.

For her part, Amna Al-Muhamid, Director of Human Resources at the Capital Markets Authority (CMA), delineated the structural boundary between representation and empowerment.

She noted that while "representation" covers mere physical presence in the workspace, true "empowerment" entails granting corporate leverage, leadership paths, and executive decision-making authority.

Al-Muhamid revealed that out of the CMA's 426 employees, women constitute 44 percent of the workforce, while capturing a substantial 40 percent of the authority's Board of Commissioners.



KUNA photo

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with his visiting Iraqi counterpart, Dr. Fuad Hussein.

FM, Iraqi counterpart hold talks

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held an official meeting on Wednesday with his visiting Iraqi counterpart, Dr. Fuad Mohammed Hussein, on the occasion of his official visit to the country.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a press statement that Minister Sheikh

Jarrah hosted a working dinner in honor of the Iraqi Foreign Minister and his accompanying delegation.

During the session, the two top diplomats reviewed bilateral ties and exchanged views on several issues of mutual interest, alongside discussing the latest geopolitical developments on the regional and international arenas.

Other Voices

Myth of the Aryan race and origin of narrative

By Ahmad alsarraf

The term "Aryan" was originally a purely linguistic term and had no connection to race.

In the 19th century, European linguists discovered that Indian, Iranian, Greek, Latin, Germanic, and Slavic languages all descended from the same origin. This common origin was referred to as "Indo-European" or "Aryan."

The term itself originated from Sanskrit and Old Persian and meant "noble" or "honorable."

Over time, this linguistic term was transformed into a racial term by three European thinkers.

The first was the French writer Arthur de Gobineau (1853), who wrote an article on the inequality of human races and claimed that human races differed in value, with "white Aryans" being the most superior.

He further argued that the mixing of Aryans with other races resulted in civilizational decline. Although he was not a scientist but rather a writer, his ideas gained influence because they appealed to certain audiences.

The second was the German scholar Max Müller (1860), who used the term "Aryan" in a scientific and linguistic context. However, he later acknowledged his error when he saw it being applied in a racist manner.

The third was the British-born writer Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1899), who, influenced by German nationalism, wrote "The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century." In this work, he developed a comprehensive theory that placed Germans at the top of a racial hierarchy. This book later became the intellectual reference of Nazism.

But how did Hitler come to embrace this idea? Hitler was neither a philosopher nor a scientist, but rather a selective reader who sought to reinforce his preconceived notions of racial superiority.

As a young man, he read the works of Chamberlain and Gobineau and was influenced by the German Völkisch movement, which combined nationalist romanticism with racism.

He met the Germanized British writer Chamberlain in 1923, whom he regarded as his "long-awaited savior." Hitler also absorbed the ideas of Liebenfels, who published writings promoting the concept of "pure Aryan blood." This provided him with the concept of the "Aryan theory," which Hitler used to justify three main ideas:

- Germany's defeat in World War I, which he attributed to the presence and influence of Jews among its population.

- Hatred towards others, particularly Jews, and the necessity of eliminating them.

- The pursuit of building an empire and ethnically purifying it.

What revealed the contradiction in this theory was Hitler's forced recognition of Iranians and Kurds as "Aryans," given that the name "Iran" itself is derived from "Aryan," meaning "land of the Aryans," a fact documented historically. The Kurds are also an ancient Indo-European people.

In the 1930s, Hitler sought to strengthen relations with Iran as a strategic ally against Britain due to its oil resources and geopolitical importance. As a result, in 1936, Nazi Germany officially recognized Iran's Aryan heritage and exempted Iranians from the racist Nuremberg Laws.

Reza Shah Pahlavi admired Hitler's racist ideology and officially changed the country's international name from Persia to Iran in 1935. Some followers of Zoroastrianism played a role in promoting this concept, as a form of vengeance against the Arabs, who, in their view, had corrupted the purity of the Aryan race, in addition to their decisive role in eradicating their religion.

It is worth highlighting that there is no such thing as an "Aryan gene" or "pure Aryan blood," according to modern genetics. The German race is mixed, like other races, groups, and tribes. Those described as "Aryans" were diverse linguistic groups rather than a single biological race. The concept of "racial purity" has no biological basis.

The Aryan idea is one of history's most dangerous examples of how an innocent scientific term can be distorted by extremist ideologies and transformed into a deadly ideological weapon.



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KUNA photo

Kuwait's Minister of Finance Dr. Yaqoub Al-Rifaei receives the Algerian Ambassador to Kuwait Omar Belhadj.

Kuwait, Algeria seek boost in tourism and investment

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Finance Dr. Yaqoub Al-Rifaei received Algerian Ambassador to Kuwait Omar Belhadj on Wednesday to discuss ways to strengthen the longstanding and distinguished ties between both sides, which are based on mutual interests and benefits.

According to a ministry statement, the two sides exchanged views on advancing bilateral relations and future

cooperation plans in several areas, particularly tourism and investment, as well as incentives and facilities available to investors in both countries.

The meeting also discussed preparations for the upcoming Kuwait-Algeria Joint Ministerial Committee, to be co-chaired by the finance ministers of both countries and expected to be held in Algiers during the fourth quarter of 2026, the statement noted.

Egyptian trio get 7 years, fined over KD 3 million in funds scam

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Criminal Court, chaired by Judge Abdulwahab Al-Muaili, with Judges Waqyan Al-Waqyan and Mohammad Issa as members, sentenced three Egyptians to seven years in prison and fined them KD3,463,000, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

These three Egyptians were convicted in a money laundering case and embezzlement of funds from the Patients Aid Fund and a charitable committee from 2002 to 2006.

The verdict is in response to a judicial request from the Arab Republic of Egypt, where the defendants were apprehended and sued. They had earlier been sentenced to prison and fined three times the amount they embezzled.

Investigations revealed that the defendants misappropriated funds belonging to the Patients Aid Fund and a charitable committee, then laundered the money, before the Kuwaiti judicial authorities took legal action against them.

Kuwaiti jailed 1 yr, fined KD600 in reckless driving

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Traffic Division of the Court of First Instance issued a ruling sentencing a Kuwaiti citizen to one-year imprisonment, confiscating his vehicle, and imposing a fine of KD 600 after convicting him of reckless driving, reports Al-Anba daily.

The ruling reflects the state's commitment to the strict enforcement of the new law and to upholding the principle that traffic offenses threatening public safety will not go unpunished.

The ruling is particularly significant as it was issued under the provisions of the new Traffic Law, which entered into force on April 22, 2025. It confirms that the new Traffic Law is not merely a legislative amendment but a national initiative aimed at restoring order on the roads through a combination of strict security measures and deterrent judicial penalties.

Traffic experts believe that this ruling sends a clear message to all drivers that reckless driving, vehicle stunts, and violations of traffic regulations will not go unpunished.

They emphasized that the judiciary will enforce the penalties established by the legislator whenever a violation is proven.

The ruling coincided with intensified traffic campaigns carried out by the General Traffic Department throughout the country's governorates. These campaigns, which have included the widespread deployment of fixed and mobile patrols on highways and internal roads in recent months, along with an increase in surprise checkpoints, form part of a security plan aimed at identifying reckless and irresponsible drivers and reducing dangerous traffic behaviors.

These campaigns focus on apprehending drivers who commit serious violations, including reckless driving, excessive speeding, dangerous overtaking, running red lights, performing vehicle stunts, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and other offenses that endanger the safety of road users.

The campaigns have resulted in the issuance of thousands of traffic citations, the impounding of hundreds of vehicles, and the referral of several violators to the relevant investigative authorities. These efforts reflect the security forces' commitment to enforcing the law without exception, promoting general deterrence, and enhancing road safety for all.

Hit, run suspects acquitted

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Misdemeanor Court of Appeals upheld the lower court's ruling, acquitting two individuals of manslaughter charges stemming from a hit-and-run accident on the Fourth Ring Road that resulted in the death of an Asian woman, reports Al-Anba daily.

The court ruled that the case file lacked sufficient evidence to establish the element of negligence on the part of the defendants.

It noted that the evidence and witness testimonies indicated that the victim had crossed the highway outside a designated pedestrian crossing.

The court found that neither defendant had committed any act amounting to recklessness, negligence, or a violation of traffic regulations.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Gov't must act, address woes of Kuwaiti farmers

"The government is determined to enforce the law against anyone who violates its property and rights, in any manner and without exception," Kuwaiti citizen Sheikh Ali Al-Jaber Al-Ahmad wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"Such measures help citizens and residents feel confident that the law is being applied fairly. I strongly support these measures, provided that they are implemented fairly."

"The government must ensure fairness for farmers and compensate them for the losses they have suffered over the years because of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy and the Ministry of Public Works."

"We have contacted seven successive ministers in previous governments, but to no avail so far. The farmers' losses occurred after their artesian wells and central air-conditioning compressors were damaged by sudden power surges following electricity outages. This affected the irrigation systems, forcing farmers to pay for replacement pumps and resulting in the loss of field crops as well as crops grown in greenhouses."

"This occurs annually, and sometimes more than once a year, due to recurring power outages caused by the government's delays in improving the electricity supply. The electricity capacity that was once sufficient for approximately 800 farms is no longer adequate, as the number of farms has more than doubled. It has now reached around 4,000 farms in Al-Abdali, with a similar number in Al-Wafra."

"Agriculture, which plays an essential role in providing consumers with their food needs, is not an easy undertaking. It requires significant effort, financial investment, suitable weather conditions, and continuous monitoring throughout the entire growing season."

"Farmers face several challenges, including natural conditions, the high cost of renting state-owned land, electricity and water expenses, and the limited subsidies allocated for their produce. The agricultural production cycle is filled with difficulties, often resulting in returns that do not reflect the significant effort and resources invested."

"The treated water project has cost the state millions; however, treated water does not consistently reach all farms due to frequent interruptions, similar to the electricity supply disruptions. This has contributed to crop losses and production failures."

"Some farmers cannot compensate for the shortage of water through artesian wells due to their high salinity levels."

"I appeal to the government to show compassion to farmers. Just as the government protects state-owned land, it must also support and protect farmers who cultivate this land by developing solutions to reduce their losses. These solutions could include lowering annual rental fees for state-owned agricultural land and increasing subsidies for agricultural produce as temporary measures until the agricultural sector is revitalized through a reliable and uninterrupted supply of electricity and water."

"I appreciate the government's willingness to seek solutions, and farmers await a decision that will bring them reassurance and relief."

Also:

"With the development of modern technologies, smart applications have become an integral part of daily life. Electronic correspondence, text messages, and conversations through various social media applications have become important sources of information," Kuwaiti Lawyer Sarah Al-Jassem wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"Digital evidence, including text messages, emails, conversations through communication applications, digital recordings, images, electronic documents, and system and application logs, has created new legal challenges for the judiciary and other authorities regarding the admissibility of these digital means as evidence."

"Proof is no longer limited to traditional paper documents, as the legislator has recognized electronic means and granted them legal validity, provided that the necessary technical and legal safeguards are in place to ensure the integrity of the evidence and prevent tampering with its content."

"A law governing electronic transactions has been issued that grants electronic documents the same legal validity as traditional documents, provided that their source and the integrity of their content can be verified. Electronic messages and digital conversations may now be used to prove obligations, agreements, and rights, particularly when supported by other facts or documents that reinforce their authenticity and confirm their attribution to the parties involved in the dispute."

"The Cybercrime Law aims to protect individuals, communities, and vital systems from misuse and imposes strict penalties to combat cybercrime, including the unauthorized access of websites, accounts, and databases. The law also criminalizes the use of technology to deceive individuals, steal money or banking information, spread false information, or abuse others through social media platforms or other forms of hacking."

"Messages and audio and video recordings exchanged through applications have become key forms of evidence in crimes such as defamation, slander, online threats and extortion, and financial fraud. In criminal cases, evidence extracted from smartphones and social media applications is increasingly relied upon to establish proof in modern offences, including online fraud, extortion, money laundering, and other cybercrimes."

"However, the admissibility of digital evidence is subject to rigorous judicial scrutiny to ensure that it has been obtained lawfully and that the procedures for its collection, preservation, and examination comply with legal requirements."

"For digital evidence to be admissible in court, its source and authenticity must be verifiable through appropriate technical means, including the use of digital forensics and information technology experts to examine electronic devices and data. It is no longer easy to deny electronic communications and the obligations arising from them or to evade legal accountability."

"Conversations conducted through smart applications should be treated with the same care and seriousness as signed paper contracts. A single word may create a legal obligation, establish liability for a debt, or lead to a conviction for a cybercrime."

"At the same time, it is essential to uphold constitutional guarantees protecting the right to privacy and the confidentiality of communications."

"The story began when Iraqi authorities arrested Deputy Minister of Oil Adnan Al-Jumaili, who confessed to financial and administrative corruption. This led to a campaign to arrest individuals accused of corruption, known as "Operation Dawn," which began on Sunday, June 28," columnist Ahmad Al-Dawas wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"The campaign targeted government officials, former members of parliament, economic figures, senior officials, and party leaders. Those detained include government employees, directors general, politicians, and businessmen."

"Approximately \$15 million in cash was found in the home of Iraqi parliamentarian Alia Nassif, who had frequently criticized Kuwait. Images showing large amounts of cash seized from her home were subsequently made public."

"Other recovered funds were found in homes, concealed in deep pits in the desert, and hidden in secret rooms. Authorities also seized large numbers of luxury vehicles and gold bullion."

"One of the most unusual episodes in the ongoing financial and administrative corruption investigations involved the wife and sister of the Undersecretary of Iraq's Oil Ministry Adnan al-Jumaili. They burned US\$5 million and three billion Iraqi dinars in a clay oven in an attempt to conceal evidence of his involvement in theft and the misappropriation of public funds."

"Adnan al-Jumaili's case is viewed as only the tip of the iceberg in the widespread corruption that has affected Iraq for years. Recovered funds have been estimated at 98 billion Iraqi dinars and US\$10 million. Investigations involving the Oil Ministry's Deputy Minister for Distribution Affairs, Ali Ma'araj Suwaidj al-Bahadli, led to the seizure of US\$11 million, four billion Iraqi dinars, and several properties."

"Iraqi authorities continue to pursue suspects who have fled the country. After decades of wars, sanctions, and political instability, Iraq now faces a massive legacy of wasted funds, shady deals, and illicit financial transfers. Reports that large sums of money were destroyed in an effort to conceal evidence have further highlighted the scale of the corruption, while many Iraqi citizens continue to face significant economic hardship."

"History will record that Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi launched Operation Dawn as a political decision aimed at addressing corruption. The impunity previously enjoyed by corrupt officials cannot continue. The raids targeting individuals accused of corruption are expected to expand to confront even greater challenges, including powerful Iranian-backed militias."

— Compiled by Simi K. Kuty



Sheikh Ali Al-Jaber



Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah chairs the extensive meeting.

Farwaniya Governorate photo

'Roads, services priority'

Expedite development projects: Farwaniya Gov.

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah on Wednesday chaired an extensive meeting with acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Works Eid Al-Nasafi, acting Director General of the General Traffic Department Brigadier General Ahmed Al-Nimran, Director of the Traffic Engineering Department Dr. Khaled Al-Kandari, Assistant Director General of the Traffic Engineering Department Brigadier General Khaled Hamad Al-Dahoum, members of the Farwaniya Governorate Council, and representatives of the con-

cerned government agencies.

Other participants at the meeting included Farwaniya Governorate Council member Eng. Sarah Al-Mutairi who represented the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, Eng. Falah Al-Salili who represented the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR), accompanied by Eng. Abdunnasser Al-Failakawi, Lieutenant General (Engineer) Ali Abdulhadi Al-Shanfa, Hessa Abdullah Al-Mutawa and Saad Abdullah Al-Hadba, and representatives of the Ministry of Public Works Eng. Abdullah Al-Mutairi and Eng. Mohammad Boursli.

They discussed the mechanisms to expedite the implementation of development projects, improve the road network, and enhance services provided to the residents in the governorate. They also reviewed the progress of several

vital projects, maintenance and development plans for main and internal roads, and the engineering and traffic solutions aimed to raise the efficiency of the road network, enhance traffic flow and address outstanding issues.

The Governor affirmed that the Farwaniya Governorate continues to monitor the development projects in coordination with all concerned government entities, in accordance with the directives of the political leadership. He emphasized the importance of integrated roles among the relevant authorities and accelerating the pace of completion, while adhering to the highest technical and engineering standards.

Representatives of the participating government agencies expressed their sincere thanks and appreciation to the Governor, commending his leadership in unifying efforts and strengthening integration among various government bodies, as well as his commitment to continue field monitoring.



Jahra Governorate photo

The meeting in progress.

'Improve security and safety of Jahra public'

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Security Affairs Committee at the Jahra Governorate Council held its regular meeting on Wednesday, reports *Al-Seyassah* daily.

Acting Director General of the Jahra Governorate Security Command Brigadier General Faisal Al-Rabbah presided over the meeting.

The committee discussed the overall security situation and ways to strengthen coordination among the relevant authorities to improve public safety and security, and to keep pace with urban expansion and population growth.

The committee reviewed several proposals related to traffic management, addressing illegal entrances and exits, and studying locations requiring appropriate traffic solutions.

It also discussed proposals for designating suitable locations for food trucks, taking into account the organizational, security and traffic considerations, ensuring the safety of those using these locations, and minimizing their negative impact on traffic flow.

It talked about the importance of equipping vital roads and commercial markets in the governorate with smart traffic monitoring systems, in addition to following up several observations.

It affirmed its commitment to continue monitoring the issues referred to it and to submit appropriate recommendations regarding them in order to guarantee public safety and security, and meet the demands of the residents in Jahra Governorate.

Eatery set up in private Farwaniya home raided

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) announced the seizure of an unlicensed food establishment (restaurant) operating inside a private residence in Farwaniya, reports *Al-Seyassah* daily.

PAFN explained that the Farwaniya Inspection Department, in cooperation with the General Department of Criminal Investigation at the Ministry of Interior, conducted an inspection campaign that led to the discovery and seizure of the violating establishment. Several violation reports were issued, and all necessary legal measures were taken against those responsible.

PAFN urged citizens and residents to avoid dealing with unlicensed food establishments that are not subject to regulatory supervision and inspection.

KFF course registration: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) has announced the start of registration for the Bachelor of Science in Fire Engineering Technology, Fire Officer Diploma (Lieutenant), First Fire Sergeant, and Corporal (Firefighting-Security) training programs for the first training semester of the 2026/2027 academic year, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

The initiative is being offered in cooperation with the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) and will remain open until July 14.

Applications can be submitted through the government's Sahel application under PAAET services by selecting and completing the relevant application form.

After the registration period closes, applicants will be notified through the Sahel application of their scheduled test dates.

Four expats face deportation for carrying liquor, narcotics

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Security forces in the Farwaniya and Jahra governorates referred four expatriates of three different nationalities to the Drug Control General Department for possessing locally produced liquor and narcotics, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

The four individuals are expected to face deportation and have their names added to the list of persons banned from re-entering the country.

According to an informed source, two suspects were arrested in Farwaniya with seven bottles of liquor in their possession, while the other two were apprehended in Al-Mutlaa with two packets of marijuana.



If evidence of drug or alcohol trafficking is found, the suspects will be referred to the judiciary and deported after completing any sentences imposed.

Housemaids 'exploited': The Residence Affairs Investigation Department of the General Directorate of Criminal Investigations uncovered a domestic worker trafficking case by arresting a female expatriate involved in illegal activities, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

The investigation revealed that the suspect arranged for domestic workers to purchase household appliances and mobile phones through installment plans.


She would then buy the items from them for cash at prices significantly lower than their original value and resell them at higher prices, generating illegal profits.

The domestic worker's sponsor admitted to allowing domestic workers to work for others in exchange for financial compensation. The case has been referred to the Public Prosecution for further legal action.

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KUNA photo

Kuwaiti student contestants after winning the two awards.

Kuwaiti students bag two awards at H2GP engineering competition

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Students from Kuwait-based schools clinched two awards for best design (Hydro Maria) and team spirit (Sonic) in the Horizon Hydrogen Grand Prix (H2GP) global competition in Switzerland on Wednesday, an engineering contest that pitted them against their peers from around the world.

This immense achievement proves that Kuwaiti national plans to ratchet

up investment in the nation's youth have begun to "bear fruit." Kuwait University's Acting Dean of the College of Science Haidar Behbehani said in a statement, underlining that these students are now able to contest the world's biggest academic competitions.

The Kuwaiti team comprised nine high school pupils from Maria the Copt School, alongside seven Kuwait University students, all of

whom were able to go far in a competition that displayed a wide array of clean hydrogen engineering projects of 85 teams from some 26 nations, he said.

Kuwait's permanent representative to the UN and other international organizations Nasser Al-Hayn feted the award-winning students for their accomplishment, saying that they were able to propel the nation to the global stage's top echelons.

MPW: PACI HQ expansion in '26/'27 projects

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Ministry of Public Works (MPW) has included the project to construct, complete, maintain, and expand the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) headquarters in South Surra, Hawally Governorate, among its contracts for the 2026/2027 fiscal year.

The project involves expanding the existing buildings by adding three basement levels and four additional

floors, bringing the total to seven floors and increasing capacity for visitors and employees.

Meanwhile, the ministry is finalizing procedures to tender three construction projects through the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT).

These projects include the study and design of a permanent building for the Ministry of Higher Education in Ardiya, the study, design, and supervision of the new northern building for the State Audit Bureau (SAB), and the engineering, procurement, construction, operation, and maintenance of the Ahmadi Cultural Center project.

Cleaning worker stabs his colleague to death

Asian admits dispute, violent altercation

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Capital Governorate Police arrested an Asian cleaning worker accused of fatally stabbing a fellow Asian expatriate in the parking lot of Al-Razi Hospital, reports Al-Anba daily.

During interrogation, the suspect confessed that a previous dispute between him and the victim escalated into a verbal altercation after he asked the victim to continue their conversation outside the hospital, where they both worked.

He admitted to pulling out a knife and stabbing the victim multiple times, which resulted in the latter's death.

The Ministry of Interior received a report recently about a violent

altercation in the parking lot of Al-Razi Hospital. Security personnel arrived at the scene and found an Asian expatriate dead from stab wounds.

The suspect was referred to the Public Prosecution for further legal action.

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Cleaning drive intensifies: The Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality announced that field teams from the Public Hygiene and Road Occupancy Departments are continuing to intensify inspection campaigns in all governorates to monitor and remove violations related to hygiene regulations and road occupancy laws, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Public Hygiene and Road Occupancy Department in Hawally Governorate stated that the expanded field inspections aim to identify

violators and take all necessary legal action against them.

The department explained that inspection teams are focusing on raising the level of cleanliness in areas under their jurisdiction and removing anything that mars the public view or obstructs roads.

The intensive campaigns conducted throughout June resulted in the issuance of 49 citations for violations related to hygiene and road occupancy, the removal of 53 abandoned and illegally parked vehicles, and the placement of 177 warning and notification stickers. In addition, 2,516 truckloads of various types of waste, including construction debris, scrap metal, and used furniture, were removed.

The department affirmed that inspection campaigns will continue, and stressed that no leniency will be shown in implementing legal measures against violators.

CAPT gives go ahead to KPA for tender

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: In response to the request of Kuwait Ports Authority (KPA) to settle the tender for consultancy services and the preparation of its strategic plan at a cost of KD2,537,737, the Board of Directors of the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) decided in its meeting held on June 29 to authorize KPA to proceed with the submitted bid, in accordance with the provisions of Article 40 of Public Tenders Law No. 49/2016.

The CAPT Board of Directors also authorized KPA to prepare a cost estimate, in accordance with Article 60 of the abovementioned law, based on the single bid, and to submit its recommendation to CAPT.

Once KPA obtains CAPT's approval, the tender will

be referred to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) for review, audit and the application of pre-audit oversight, and to issue its approval or submit observations, if any.

CAPT had earlier requested that the companies competing for the tender extend the initial bid bond to the beginning of May, instead of Feb 1, as per Article 46 of the Public Tenders Law.

It is worth noting that KPA is keen on achieving several institutional transformation goals towards a flexible and effective system capable of responding to future challenges, governance of operations and procedures, activation of accountability and transparency systems, and raising operational efficiency and revenues through the development of services and activities.



KUNA photo

Kuwait's Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, meets India's Minister of External Affairs Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar.

Kuwait DM, Indian FM eye ways to boost bilateral ties

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, met with India's Minister of External Affairs Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, on Wednesday on his official visit to the country.

In a press statement, the Defense Min-

istry said that the meeting addressed issues of mutual interest, as well as ways to support and develop cooperation in various fields, reflecting the deep and close relations between the two friendly countries.

The Ambassador of India to Kuwait Paramita Tripathi attended the meeting.

News in Brief

PAM launches 'subsidy' e-service

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), in cooperation with the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS), has launched a new electronic service that enables individuals covered by Refund Decision No. 3/2026 to issue a "National Employment Subsidy Details Certificate" through the Sahel application, reports Al-Anba daily.

PAM explained that the certificate is among the required documents used to verify the employer in accordance with PIFSS procedures. The new service provides beneficiaries with a fast and secure method to obtain the certificate, saving them time and effort.

The certificate will not be issued to individuals whose National Employment Support payments have been suspended. They will have to contact PIFSS to complete the required procedures.

The process for obtaining the certificate includes the following steps:

- Accessing the Sahel application using the electronic civil ID
- Selecting PAM
- Entering the e-services section
- Choosing the "Issue National Employment Subsidy Details Certificate" service
- Specifying the purpose of the certificate
- Clicking "Issue"
- Downloading the certificate in PDF format
- Sharing it electronically.

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Contractors code amended: The Engineering Professions Practice Committee at the Municipal Council, chaired by Farah Al-Roumi, held its meeting on Wednesday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the meeting, the committee approved the proposal to amend Article 14 of Administrative Decision No. 161/2009 on the classification and licensing of construction and demolition contractors in Kuwait Municipality.

The amended decision mandates the contractor to submit a copy of the contract concluded between him and the owner to the Municipality prior to the commencement of construction or demolition works. The contract must include the execution period, type of required works, stages of implementation, the agreed fees and status of due payments.

The amendment stipulates that the contract must include a clause obligating the owner to pay the fees due only to the contractor who, in turn, is obligated to issue receipts to document the payments received from the owner.

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IICO, UNDP to rehabilitate Idlib water infrastructure

Project in Syria to benefit 79,000 people

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): The International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on Thursday signed an agreement to rehabilitate water infrastructure in Syria's Idlib governorate with funding from the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development.

IICO Director General Bader Al-Sumait told KUNA the USD one million project will provide safe drinking water to around 79,000 people by rehabilitating 20 kilometers of water networks, upgrading three wells and pumping stations, and strengthening 14 local water service providers.

He said the project is part of a USD 10 million grant from the Arab Fund to support recovery efforts in



Photos by Samer Shiqer

Officials from the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) during the signing of the agreement.

northern Syria, noting IICO has so far implemented six projects worth USD 3.2 million benefiting more than 967,000 people.

The projects included supplying medicines and medical equipment,

supporting healthcare facilities, rehabilitation centers, prosthetics services, dialysis centers and equipping Armanaz Surgical Hospital.

UNDP Resident Representative in Kuwait Emma Morley said the

12-month agreement supports early recovery by restoring essential water services in affected areas, helping improve living conditions, protect public health and strengthen community resilience.



Top: The International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) signing the agreement. Above: Section of attendees.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait Amir,

They also discussed the latest regional and international developments, particularly the situation in the Middle East, affirming their countries' support for all initiatives, endeavors, and efforts aimed at establishing peace, security and stability in the region.

The meeting also addressed key issues of common interest in the Gulf, and emphasized the importance of strengthening unity and advancing GCC countries to fulfill the aspirations of their people for further development and prosperity.

The meeting was attended by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, and Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Head of the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Also attending were Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Director of the Office of His Highness the Amir Lieutenant General (Retired) Jamal Al-Thayab, Undersecretary of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Abdulaziz Mishal Mubarak Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and the Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs at the Amiri Diwan Mazen Al-Issa.

The meeting was attended from the UAE side by Deputy President, Deputy Prime Minister and Head of President Court Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, Deputy Chairman of the President Court for Special Affairs Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, President's Adviser Sheikh Mohammad bin Hamad bin Tahnoun Al-Nahyan, and other senior UAE officials.

Commerce goes

Meanwhile, an official source revealed that the digital transformation project of the ministry, named 'Commercial Platform', will link it with other entities concerned with consumer protection, companies, individuals and commercial establishments. The source said this project is part of the ongoing technological development at the ministry, enabling individuals and companies to obtain licenses electronically.

The source confirmed that upon completion of the project, all forms of commercial fraud shall be eradicated and it shall play a vital role in improving the financial reputation of Kuwait and protecting it from suspicious activities through the electronic monitoring system. The source added that the project provides accurate data quickly, regardless of the quantity, thus, enhancing the ability to predict local market trends.

The source disclosed that the project will provide a secure flow of information using modern technologies, such as cloud computing, so the ministry, other government institutions and companies will be able to conduct accurate analyses that will help them make flexible and effective strategies.

The source stated that the digital transformation project extends beyond the ministry, leading to a comprehensive technological renaissance, especially since it intends to keep pace with global markets and accelerate service delivery. The source asserted that the digital transformation project of the ministry will support decision-making based on accurate data and identify the strengths and weaknesses of government agencies by evaluating past and present performance and forecasting future market trends.

The source added that digital transformation offers promising opportunities for foreign investors wishing to direct their capital to Kuwait.

New drug

The law grants legal protection for drug users who voluntarily seek treatment and expands the category of individuals authorized to report an addict to include relatives up to the third degree.

The law grants the Public Prosecution and the court broader powers to refer drug users to treatment centers or replace penalties with treatment when required by the public interest, in addition to allowing exemptions or reductions in punishment for those who report crimes in accordance with legal provisions.

Furthermore, Assistant Director of the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) Colonel Mohammed Munawer Al-Aradhi stated that DCGD continues its security, preventive, and treatment efforts by thwarting smuggling operations, dismantling criminal networks, and strengthening cooperation with international organizations.

He explained that DCGD's role extends beyond security measures to include cooperation with addiction treatment centers, supporting families, and encouraging individuals to seek treatment.

The hotline No. 1884141 has been designated to receive reports and inquiries with complete confidentiality and to provide guidance to drug users and their families on available treatment procedures.

DCGD has been conducting awareness campaigns in schools, universities, and institutes, as well as programs targeting students studying abroad to educate them about the legal and health risks associated with drugs.

Colonel Al-Aradhi revealed positive indicators following approximately six months of implementing the law, including an 80 percent reduction in certain drug-related crime indicators and an 85 percent decrease in drug smuggling operations.

Also, Lawyer Hamoud Khaled Abdulwahab, Vice President of the Kuwait Institute for Legal Studies for Training and Development at the Kuwait Lawyers Society, affirmed that the law is among the most comprehensive pieces of legislation, as it consolidates various drug-related crimes and provisions into a single legal framework.

He explained that the law extends its application to crimes committed outside Kuwait if they have consequences or effects within the country.

The law not only increases penalties but also provides drug users with opportunities for treatment and exemption from punishment under certain conditions.

The law distinguishes between a "companion" who willingly remains at the scene of drug use and a person who is present due to residence or ordinary circumstances. The law also permits the possession of certain narcotic medications for medical purposes when supported by a valid prescription, while prohibiting their distribution or acquisition through illegal channels.

Lawyer Abdulwahab advised travelers not to carry bags or parcels on behalf of others and to verify the medicines, herbs, and products they bring from abroad, as some items may be classified as narcotic or psychotropic substances under Kuwait's regulations.

In addition, Latifa Al-Yassin, Secretary of Investigations at the Criminal Records Department, stated that the decree-law aligns with the objectives of Islamic Sharia, including the preservation of human life.

She explained that the law reflects the state's commitment to combating drugs through an approach centered on prevention and treatment before punishment, while also enhancing the role of the Ministry of Justice in promoting legal awareness about the dangers of drugs.

The law places significant emphasis on family stability by referring drug users to treatment centers affiliated with the Ministry of Health, thereby contributing to protecting families and strengthening social stability.

Statistics indicate an approximate 44 percent decline in addiction and drug use rates.

The law grants the Public Prosecution authority to refer addicts to treatment and rehabilitation centers for a renewable period of three months based on medical reports, with the possibility of closing the case if the accused responds positively to treatment.

Air defenses

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly condemned the continued Iranian attacks targeting Kuwait, describing Thursday's strike as a dangerous escalation that threatens regional peace and security and undermines diplomatic efforts to ease tensions.

In a statement, the ministry said the repeated attacks reflect a hostile pattern, constitute a blatant violation of Kuwait's sovereignty, and pose a direct threat to the country's security and stability. It added that the attacks endanger the lives of citizens and residents and violate international law, the UN Charter and UN Security Council Resolution 2817.

The ministry stressed that Kuwait's security and sovereignty are a red line, affirming that the country reserves the right to take all necessary measures to protect its territory in accordance with international law and the UN Charter.

The attacks drew swift regional support. Bahrain strongly condemned the repeated missile and drone attacks, describing them as a blatant violation of Kuwait's sovereignty and a grave breach of international law. Manama reaffirmed its full solidarity with Kuwait, praised the readiness of the Kuwaiti Armed Forces, and urged the international community, particularly the UN Security Council, to take decisive action to deter further attacks and safeguard navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.

Yemen also denounced the repeated attacks on Kuwait and Bahrain, calling them a serious violation of national sovereignty and international law. The Yemeni government reaffirmed its full solidarity with both Gulf states and backed all legitimate measures taken to protect their security and stability.

Separately, Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received a telephone call from Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud. The two ministers reviewed the latest regional developments, the ongoing escalation, and efforts to contain tensions and advance diplomatic solutions aimed at preserving regional peace and stability.

In latest development, the United States launched new airstrikes against Iran early Thursday, and Tehran responded by targeting U.S.-allied Middle East countries in an exchange of fire that threatened an interim deal intended to help end the war in the Middle East.

Back-and-forth attacks, including a day earlier, have repeatedly threatened the ceasefire. But Thursday's appeared bigger all around, with sirens sounding at least three times in Bahrain, home to the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet headquarters, and missiles targeting Kuwait and Qatar.

Sirens sounded Thursday afternoon in Jordan as well, where the U.S. has stationed troops and aircraft.

An Iranian official accused the U.S. of launching an airstrike later Thursday targeting the area around Iran's sole nuclear power plant, and other explosions were reported elsewhere in the country during the afternoon.

The strikes came hours after U.S. President Donald Trump said recent Iranian attacks on ships in the Strait of Hormuz signaled the end of a fragile ceasefire and threatened to escalate the conflict if they didn't stop. That raised concerns that the region could tip back into a war that would engulf several countries and could halt energy shipments through the strait that are crucial for the global economy.

In Iran, the two days of American airstrikes have killed at least 14 people and wounded another 78, Iran's Health Ministry said Thursday. Most were reportedly members of the armed forces.

In Kuwait, the military said falling debris wounded one person as the nation shot down three ballistic missiles, a cruise missile and 10 drones. Bahrain said it shot down incoming fire, without elaborating, and Jordanian government spokesman Mohammad al-Momani said all incoming fire from Iran had been intercepted. Iranian state TV said the country's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard fired missiles at a U.S. base in Jordan.

There was no immediate word of damage in Qatar.

The U.S. military's Central Command said it hit 90 targets across Iran, releasing black-and-white footage of what appeared to be strikes on an airport runway and missile launchers.

The U.S. said the strikes were intended to "further degrade" Iran's ability "to threaten freedom of navigation" in the strait, through which a fifth of the world's traded oil and natural gas passed before the war began with U.S. and Israeli attacks on Feb. 28.

Attacks on ships - and the threat of such strikes - virtually halted traffic in the waterway during the conflict, making oil prices skyrocket and raising the cost of food and other basic goods far beyond the region.

Iranian state media reported explosions in several locations, including Bushehr, home to Iran's nuclear power plant complex, and southern port cities. The state-run IRNA news agency quoted Ehsan Jahanian, a local official in Bushehr, as accusing the U.S. of striking near the plant around noon, hours after the U.S. military's Central Command said it had ended its latest round of strikes on Iran. Central Command did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

During the war, several strikes hit the area around the plant but didn't damage it.

For the first time since April, U.S. strikes also appeared to target Iranian bridges. State media reported a strike on a railway bridge in Iran's north-eastern Golestan province, and the Revolutionary Guard said two bridges were attacked on the route to Mashhad, where officials plan to bury the late Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Thursday.

After leaving a NATO summit in Turkey, Trump posted several videos on his social media site of what he said were explosions in Iran and issued another warning to the Islamic Republic.

"This is in retribution for yesterday's bombing of ships by Iran. If it happens again, it will get much worse!" Trump wrote.

Trump said earlier in the day that the latest back-and-forth fighting would not result in lengthy military action.

Trump also renewed his past threats to hit Iran's civilian infrastructure, including electric and desalination plants, and to seize Kharg Island, through which some 90% of Iranian oil exports pass.

The exchange of fire began after Iran attacked three tankers in the Strait of Hormuz on Tuesday.

The new attacks, despite the ceasefire, could reflect a divide among Iran's leadership. Hard-liners want to ensure lasting control over the Strait of Hormuz, a critical lever in confronting the West. Pragmatists want a permanent peace deal to lift international sanctions and provide desperately needed economic relief.

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, a key negotiator in talks seeking a permanent end to the war, was defiant in a post on X on Thursday morning: "America still hasn't learned that bullying and breaking promises are no longer cost-free. Let me put it plainly: If you strike, you'll get hit."

Trump fueled concerns that the war could restart by saying Wednesday that the interim agreement to pause the fighting was "over." He added that he would allow negotiations to continue but thought negotiators were "wasting their time."



Dr. Maryam Mohammed Faraj Alwateed, Secretary-General and Founder of the Nobles Biography Encyclopedia and former Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education of the State of Kuwait with Kuwaiti hero Ayedh S F Alotaibi.



The official Membership Certificate of the Nobles Biography Encyclopedia presented to Ayedh S F Alotaibi.

Dr. Alwateed honors Kuwait hero Alotaibi

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: In a distinguished humanitarian and national initiative, H.E. Dr. Maryam Mohammed Faraj Alwateed, Secretary-General and Founder of the Nobles Biography Encyclopedia and former Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education of the State of Kuwait, paid a special visit to Kuwaiti hero Ayedh S F Alotaibi, who is currently receiving medical treatment at Al Farwaniya Hospital.

The visit was made in recognition of Alotaibi's extraordinary courage and selfless dedication to national duty, which have made him a symbol of patriotism, resilience, and sacrifice throughout Kuwait.

Recognition of an Inspiring National Hero

As a tribute to his exceptional service and inspiring life story, Dr. Alwateed presented Alotaibi with the official Membership Certificate of the Nobles Biography Encyclopedia, formally welcoming him among its distinguished Arab figures.

The honor reflects the Encyclopedia's mission to document and celebrate individuals whose remarkable achievements and unwavering commitment have left a lasting impact on their societies and nations.

Meeting with the Hero and His Family

During the visit, Dr. Alwateed met with members of Alotaibi's family and was briefed on his medical condition and ongoing recovery after his transfer from the Intensive Care Unit to a regular hospital ward.

She expressed the pride of the Kuwaiti people and the wider Gulf community in Alotaibi's courage and devotion, describing him as an inspiring example of professional in-

tegrity, loyalty, and genuine national commitment.

Commenting on the occasion, Dr. Alwateed said:

"Heroism is never accidental; it is the natural outcome of deeply rooted values. Ayedh Alotaibi has demonstrated the highest ideals of sacrifice and devotion to duty. Today, he stands not only as a dedicated public servant but also as a humanitarian hero whose inspiring story deserves to be documented for future generations. His inclusion in the Nobles Biography Encyclopedia is a well-deserved recognition of a legacy that will remain forever engraved in the memory of our nation."

Background

On June 3, 2026, Ayedh S F Alotaibi was seriously injured while performing his duties during an attack targeting Terminal 1 (T1) at Kuwait International Airport.

Despite the imminent danger, he remained steadfast at his post until sustaining severe injuries that required emergency surgery, resulting in the amputation of his left leg. His extraordinary courage transformed him into one of Kuwait's most respected symbols of dedication and sacrifice.

His story inspired widespread public admiration and solidarity across Kuwait and the Gulf region, where he has been widely recognized as a model public servant who placed duty above personal safety.

Concluding her visit, H.E. Alwateed wished Alotaibi a full and speedy recovery, emphasizing that his courage and sacrifice will continue to inspire future generations in Kuwait and across the Arab world.

America

WH launches H-1B visa fraud probe: The Trump administration has launched its first major investigation into alleged H-1B visa abuse, US Labor Department Inspector General **Anthony D'Esposito** was quoted by Fox Business as saying on Wednesday.

D'Esposito said that investigators have already begun issuing dozens of subpoenas as part of the fraud investigation, according to the report.

An H-1B visa is a non-immigrant work visa that allows companies in the United States to hire highly skilled foreign workers in specialty occupations, including software developers. Tech giants such as Amazon, Microsoft and Google have long relied on the visa program.

The H-1B visa is initially granted for a three-year period and can be extended for up to a total of six years. (Xinhua)

'Disclose McConnell's condition': Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear is directly asking Sen. Mitch McConnell, the state's most powerful figure in Congress, to disclose more about his condition after three weeks of silence from the 84-year-old since he was hospitalized in Washington.

The letter released Wednesday from Beshear, a



D'Esposito

Democrat who is considered a potential presidential candidate in 2028, to the former Senate Republican leader says, "Kentuckians have grown increasingly concerned about the current state of your health and well-being, and ability to hold office."

McConnell, whose physical condition has visibly declined in recent years, was hospitalized June 14. He has not released a public statement, photos or videos since. Aides have disclosed nothing specific about his condition, other than to say last week that McConnell "continues to improve, and is working closely with his staff on Kentucky and Senate matters while the Senate is out of session." (AP)

Judge orders Carroll be paid \$5.8m: The writer E. Jean Carroll can collect \$5.8 million held in escrow since a jury found that President Donald Trump abused and defamed her, a federal judge ruled Wednesday. Trump's lawyers immediately appealed but were denied an emergency order to block the payment from being made.

Trump deposited the money in an account shortly after a jury ruled against him in 2023. The US Supreme Court recently let the civil verdict stand, clearing the way for Judge Lewis A. Kaplan to release the money. The initial \$5 million award has grown with interest.

The jury found Trump attacked Carroll in 1996 in the dressing room of a luxury Manhattan department store, and defamed her after she described it publicly in a 2019 memoir, during his first term as president. Trump called her allegations false and said "she's not my type" in an interview. (AP)

GOP sees grip on Senate tightens amid Dems' dysfunction in Maine

NEW YORK, July 9, (AP): As Democrats scramble to contain a political disaster in Maine, the Republicans on the front lines of the GOP's fight to hold the US Senate majority are breathing a sigh of relief.

For much of the year, Republican operatives have been quietly considering the real possibility that their party might lose the Senate. No longer.

While much can change before November, Republicans have already begun to rethink their national strategy to take advantage of a political map that suddenly looks much more favorable in the wake of Maine Democrat Graham Plater's announcement that he intends to withdraw from the race. His decision Wednesday follows Plater's latest controversy - an accusation of assault that even his most loyal allies have described as credible.

Plater, who denies the allegation, was under intense pressure to quit the race. And the lineup of potential replacements has hardly inspired



At left: Sen Susan Collins, in Washington on June 17 and at right, Democratic Senate candidate Graham Plater speaks on June 9, in Blue Hill, Maine. (AP)

feared among the Republicans backing incumbent Sen Susan Collins, who is seeking her sixth term this fall. The Maine Democratic Party said it's planning a convention to choose Plater's replacement.

The incredible Democratic dysfunction transforms the Maine Senate race from perhaps Democrats' best pickup opportunity in the nation to one where dejected and divided Democrats don't know who their nominee will be four months before Election Day.

I predict that the president is trying to create chaos: Weiner

Trump administration ramping up pressure on states to change election practices

WASHINGTON, July 9, (AP): US President Donald Trump's administration is threatening to withhold some federal funding from states that don't make changes to voting practices and is warning state election officials that they face arrest if they don't remove noncitizens from voter rolls.

Letters to states and grant application details are the latest in a line of actions by Trump's administration to shape details of running elections that have long been the job of states.

Courts have largely rejected the administration's previous efforts, which reflect untrue claims about widespread voting fraud and come less than four months ahead of crucial midterm elections where Democrats seek to take control of one or both chambers of Congress and check Trump's power.

"The overall point is that Trump is trying to use whatever levers of power and persuasive power that he might have to try to interfere with how states and localities are going to conduct the 2026 election," said Rick Hasen, a UCLA law professor and the director of the Safeguarding Democracy Project. "Some of this is aimed at changing how the rules are conducted. Some of it appears to be aimed at undermining voter confidence in the integrity of the election process."

In letters sent Tuesday, to election officials for all 50 states and the District of Columbia - often secretaries of state - the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division said they and other election administrators could face criminal charges if they knowingly allow nonvoters to vote or remain on voting rolls.

It also called on the states to tell the federal government within five days how they intend to comply with the law.

Derek Muller, a law professor at the University of Notre Dame who specializes in election law, said it's not clear the 50-state letter means anything except to restate some parts of the law, with a request to follow up, "which I'm sure many states will ignore."

The letter also warns that anyone who knowingly and willfully gives false information in registering to vote or voting would face criminal prosecution.

Robert Weiner, director of the voting rights project for the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, said the rate of voting by non-citizens is "infinitesimally small," and he suggested the government's actions are motivated by factors other than securing elections.

"I predict that the president is trying to create chaos and then use that



'I voted' stickers sit near a ballot box during the Democratic primaries at Denver Public Library on June 30. (AP)

chaos to take drastic measures in states that oppose his policies or to refuse to recognize the results of the elections in those states," Weiner said.

A Federal Emergency Management Agency anti-terrorism grant announcement in June includes a list of election-related requirements, saying that 20% of grants for states and urban areas would be withheld until they comply.

The program includes more than

\$1 billion for states and local and tribal governments for a variety of programs aimed at preventing terror at crowded places, online, with border security - and around elections. FEMA expects to award 56 grants.

"Recipients can ensure that their efforts contribute to a secure, transparent, and resilient electoral process, thereby reinforcing public trust and the integrity of democratic institutions," the grant announcement says,

noting that securing election infrastructure is a national security priority.

The list of items for states includes verifying the citizenship of all registered voters and election workers.

Places that use electronic voting systems that use bar codes or QR codes to count votes would have to submit plans to switch to hand-marked paper ballots. Every jurisdiction would have to show it audits results.

UCLA's Hasen said it could be difficult even for states that want to comply. It's too close to the midterm election to make some of the changes, he said, and some would require state legislatures to pass new laws.

The White House on Wednesday referred questions to FEMA, which did not immediately respond to an interview request.

Some states are pushing back, while others are defending the latest actions.

They seem to be breaking along party lines.

Oregon's secretary of state, Democrat Tobias Read, accused the Justice Department of "knocking on our door again with more threats and no evidence to back up their fever dreams about non-existent voter fraud."

Oregon elections are secure, accurate, and fair, he said, adding that he

isn't "intimidated by political threats or manufactured controversy."

The Michigan secretary of state's office, headed by Democrat Jocelyn Benson, said it has discussed its work repeatedly with the Justice Department and in public statements, congressional hearings and court testimony - information that it said "is either in the DOJ's possession or easy reach."

"We will be happy to provide it again to help address any confusion," the office said in a statement.

In a statement, Ohio Republican Secretary of State Frank LaRose defended the Justice Department's misstep to states, saying it's reminding them of their legal obligation regarding election integrity. A lot of states aren't taking it seriously, he said without giving examples or citing evidence. He said Ohio has worked with the federal government to ensure that its voter rolls are accurate and that only U.S. citizens vote.

Georgia's secretary of state's office says the state has already taken many of the actions required in the FEMA grant, including a citizenship audit of voter rolls.

Trump has repeatedly and wrongly asserted that fraud cost him reelection in 2020, and his administration has put forth a series of policies and actions aimed at how elections are run.



Ukrainian rescuers work at a residential building damaged by Monday's Russian missile attack in Kyiv, Ukraine on July 7. (AP)

Ukrainian drones batter Russian oil facilities, set more oil tankers ablaze

KYIV, Ukraine, July 9, (AP): Ukrainian drones on Thursday hit more Russian oil facilities and set two oil tankers ablaze in the Sea of Azov, a day after US President Donald Trump pledged to grant Ukraine a license to manufacture the Patriot air defense systems.

Ukraine's strikes on oil refineries and other infrastructure across Russia has triggered a widespread fuel crisis with gasoline shortages and fuel rationing reported in multiple regions and drivers waiting for hours to fill their tanks.

The acting governor of Russia's western Tver region, Vitaly Korolyov, said a Ukrainian drone strike triggered a fire at an oil depot in the city of Tver.

In the southern region of Stavropol, Gov. Vladimir Vladimirov said oil reservoirs has been set ablaze by Ukrainian drones in Vyzniki. He said the authorities ordered the evacuation of residents of several apartment buildings near the facility as the fire expanded.

In the Sea of Azov, Ukrainian drones set two oil tankers ablaze, according to Rostov Gov. Yuri Slusar, who said that one of the ships was still burning and the crews were evacuated. The attack was the latest in a series of strikes on oil tankers in the area in recent days, part of Ukraine efforts to cut fuel supplies to Russia-occupied Crimea.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that in addition to strikes on oil facilities in Stavropol and Tver, Ukrainian defense forces also hit a reserve fuel storage facility about 800 kilometers (500 miles) from the front line, and an oil-pumping station in Ufa nearly 1,500 kilometers (930 miles) from Ukraine's border. He said they

also struck an oil-loading terminal in the Rostov region about 200 kilometers (125 miles) from the front line, but it was not clear if that was the same strike described by Slusar.

Zelenskyy described the strikes as part of Kyiv's campaign of "long-range sanctions" carried out in response to Russian attacks and Moscow's refusal to end the war. "We have long proposed that Russia end this war, and every day of delay should bring the feeling of war to where it all began - to Russia," Zelenskyy said.

Russia's Defense Ministry said that air defenses downed 73 Ukrainian drones from late Wednesday until early Thursday.

Ukraine's Air Force said that Russia fired 94 long-range strike drones and two ballistic missiles at Ukraine last night. While 72 drones were jammed or intercepted, 19 drones and both missiles inflicted damages at 13 locations, it said.

During Wednesday's meeting with Zelenskyy on the sidelines of the NATO summit in Turkey, Trump said the US will give Ukraine a license to make Patriot air defense systems to counter missile attacks from Russia in their more than four-year war, a huge coup for Kyiv which has long requested the technology.

The tone of their meeting was a markedly different from an earlier, acrimonious encounter at the White House in February 2025 when Trump berated Zelenskyy. On Wednesday, he praised the Ukrainian leader's willingness to reach a deal to ending the war, saying he has "done an amazing job" and "been very effective."

Nominations open in contest to be UK PM, with Burnham likely only candidate

LONDON, July 9, (AP): Nominations open Thursday in a Labour Party election to replace Keir Starmer as Britain's prime minister, a contest in which there is expected to be just one candidate.

Former Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham will be collecting signatures from Labour lawmakers, and needs at least 80 to run - a target he's likely to well exceed.

Other potential contenders have all ruled themselves out. Former Defense Minister Al Carns, who had been pondering a run, confirmed late Wednesday that he will not challenge Burnham.

"I'd hoped a leadership contest would give us the opportunity for a proper debate," Carns said in a statement. "But months of internal Labour politics isn't what the country needs right now. We've got to get on with the job. Andy Burnham's earned this and he's got my full backing."

Nominations remain open until July 16. Burnham is highly likely to be announced as the new Labour



Labour Party's Andy Burnham delivers a speech at the People's History Museum in Manchester, England on June 29. (AP)

leader the following day, and to become prime minister after a meeting with King Charles III on July 20.

Starmer announced last month that he would resign as soon as his

center-left party chose a successor. He was elected in a landslide in July 2024, but quit after two years in office marred by missteps and judgment errors that eroded his standing with his party and the public.

Europe

Spain not surprised over Trump outburst: Spain said Wednesday it received the remarks of US President Donald Trump with "calm and normality" and was not surprised by their tone or manner, after Trump accused Spain of being a "terrible" ally and threatened to cut off trade with the country.

Spanish Finance Minister Arcadi Espana said relations between Spain and the United States have been "very good for many years" and that "nobody wants that to change."

Meanwhile, Spain's trade relations with the United States fall within the framework of the European Union, meaning that no individual member state can be singled out for separate trade treatment, Espana said, noting that the United States runs a trade surplus with Spain.

Trump, at a joint appearance with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte at the alliance's summit in Ankara, Türkiye, criticized Spain for refusing to commit to NATO's new defense spending target of 5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) and for its earlier refusal to allow the use of Spanish bases and airspace for operations linked to Iran. (Xinhua)

School shooting in Germany: A 16-year-old suspect was arrested after several people were injured in a shooting incident at a high school in Schongau, in the southern German state of Bavaria, on Wednesday, the German Press Agency (dpa) reported, citing the police.

At least two girls were seriously injured and taken to hospital, a police spokesperson was quoted by dpa



Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez speaks during a media conference at the NATO summit in Ankara, Turkey on July 8. (AP)

as saying. It remained unclear whether they were students of the school.

Police said earlier that the number of the injured was estimated to be in the single digit. (Xinhua)

Monaco bombing suspect found dead: The woman suspected of trying to kill a Ukrainian business tycoon in a bombing attack in Monaco last week was found dead in Ukraine with gunshot wounds to the head, Ukraine's Security Service said on Tuesday.

A Ukrainian military intelligence officer confessed to killing the bombing suspect, Anastasiia Berezovska, with the help of a former law enforcement officer, said the security service, known as the SBU. The military intelligence officer said he acted on his own and without the knowledge of his superiors, the SBU said. (AP)

Chinese premier congratulates PM on assuming office

S.Korea Supreme Court upholds prison sentence for Yoon in first martial law case

SEOUL, South Korea, July 9. (Agencies): South Korea's Supreme Court on Thursday upheld a seven-year prison sentence for former President Yoon Suk Yeol in the first case to reach the country's highest court from his several criminal trials related to his brief imposition of martial law in 2024.

The court upheld an April ruling by the Seoul High Court that found Yoon guilty of infringing on Cabinet members' right to deliberate before he declared martial law, falsifying the official proclamation to cover up the lapse before later destroying the document, and deploying presidential security forces to illegally resist law enforcement efforts to arrest him weeks after his impeachment.

Martial law lasted only hours before lawmakers broke through a blockade of heavily armed soldiers and police at Seoul's National Assembly and voted to repeal it, forcing Yoon's Cabinet to lift the measure.

Yoon remains in detention and did not attend the ruling, which is final. He is still standing trial in other cases, and he has appealed the life sentence he received for the most serious conviction against him, on the charge of rebellion.

In a statement, Yoon's legal team expressed "deep regret" over the Supreme Court's ruling, saying the justices concluded a significant case without sufficient review.

The ruling aligned with the views of the Constitutional Court, which, in removing Yoon from office in April 2025, found that his martial law decree lacked legal grounds and failed to follow required procedures.

While Yoon called 11 Cabinet members to his office shortly before declaring martial law on late-night television on Dec. 3, 2024, several participants, including then-Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, have testified



A TV screen shows an image of former South Korea President Yoon Suk Yeol during a news program at the Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea on July 9. (AP)

that Yoon unilaterally informed them of his decision rather than inviting deliberation. The Seoul High Court said Yoon also violated the rights

of nine other Cabinet members by failing to call them to the meeting or notifying them too late.

Though brief, Yoon's martial law declaration plunged South Korea into a political crisis, paralyzing politics and high-level diplomacy while rattling financial markets. The turmoil eased only after his liberal rival, Lee Jae Myung, won an early presidential election in June 2025.

In addition to appealing his life sentence for rebellion, Yoon is appealing a 30-year prison term in a case accusing him of ordering drone flights in 2024 to deliberately heighten tensions with North Korea and create justifiable conditions for martial law at home. Yoon's lawyers said the drone flights were a response to North Korea flying thousands of trash-carrying balloons into the South.

Also:

BEIJING: Chinese Premier Li Qiang on Sunday congratulated Han Seong-sook on her assuming office as South Korean prime minister.

In his congratulatory message, Li said that China and South Korea, as close neighbors across the sea, are important cooperative partners for each other.

China attaches great importance to its relations with South Korea, and is ready to work with the South Korean side to follow the strategic guidance of the two countries' heads of state, consolidate mutual political trust, deepen mutually beneficial cooperation, promote people-to-people and cultural exchanges, strengthen multilateral coordination, so as to push for the long-term, healthy and steady development of the China-South Korea strategic cooperative partnership and benefit both countries and their peoples, Li said.

Flooding from days of heavy rain in southern China kills 39: authorities

BEIJING, July 9. (AP): Authorities in southern China said Thursday that 39 people died in flooding after a tropical storm dumped heavy rainfall, as the country's east coast and Taiwan prepared for a typhoon expected to make landfall in the coming days.

Most of the deaths were in Hengzhou, where the partial collapse of a reservoir dam sent torrents of water into the city and claimed 26 lives, said Ding Wei, the vice mayor of Nanning city, which has jurisdiction over the area. Nine people remained missing in the broader Guangxi region.

Tropical Storm Maysak brought record rainfall to Guangxi starting Saturday, breaching reservoirs and stranding people for days in homes and other buildings. The previously announced death toll on Tuesday was six people.

A second storm, Typhoon Bavi, was on a northwest track that would take it over some remote Japanese islands and then just north of Taiwan before making landfall in China's Fujian or Zhejiang province on Saturday. Fishing boats could be seen tightly packed at ports in northern Taiwan on Thursday in anticipation of heavy rain hitting the island of 23 million people.

Bavi, which brought violent winds



Rescuers evacuate stranded teachers and students at Xijiang education park in Guigang City, south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region on July 8. (Xinhua)

to Saipan and other US territories earlier this week, was downgraded Thursday from super-typhoon strength but still had maximum sustained winds of 184 kilometers (114 miles) per hour, according to Taiwan's Central Weather Administration. Classes were suspended in several cities and towns in the Philippines and ships prohibited from leaving northern ports as the typhoon passed east of the northern island of Luzon.

In southern China, military rescue teams finished bringing out more than 10,000 trapped students and teachers from a cluster of schools in Guigang city, about 60 kilometers (40 miles) northeast of Hengzhou. Video on state broadcaster CCTV showed the students, wearing bright orange life vests, clambering onto boats that took them away from the surreal scene of school buildings rising out of a lake of muddy water.

Australia agrees to sell uranium to India, ending long stalemate

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, July 9. (AP): Australia will begin to sell uranium to India for peaceful purposes after the two countries' leaders signed an administrative deal Thursday, enacting an agreement on exports of the material that was held up for years over concerns about weapons use.

Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi made the joint announcement after a meeting in Melbourne.

The leaders didn't immediately supply details of how much uranium would be sold, or when. Exports of Australian uranium to India stalled after an agreement to do so in 2014, because of concern that the material could be used to make weapons.

Australia has the world's largest known uranium resources, but the country doesn't use any nuclear power or weapons and all uranium is exported. India, which has a population of 1.4 billion people and a growing middle class, wants to install 100 gigawatts of nuclear power by 2047 - enough to power nearly 60 million Indian homes a year. But obtaining uranium hasn't been simple.

India has doubled the amount of nuclear power installed in the coun-



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, (right), react during a community event in Melbourne, Australia, on July 9. (AP)

try in the last decade, but that still makes up just 3% of its electricity.

India isn't a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which recognizes only the United States, China, Britain, France and Russia as nuclear weapons powers. Australia, which is a signatory country, refuses to sell uranium to non-signatories.

India says the treaty is discriminatory because it recognizes as legitimate nuclear weapon states only those that tested nuclear de-

velopments before January 1967, which would disqualify it permanently. The country was hit with international technology sanctions and uranium trade bans after it conducted nuclear tests in 1998.

The Nuclear Suppliers Group of countries, which includes the U.S., in 2008 granted a waiver allowing India to buy uranium from its members and Delhi has since pursued bilateral pacts to permit sales of the material. It inked such a deal with Canada in March.

Africa

Over 200 terrorists neutralized in Mali: The Malian army said on Tuesday that more than 200 terrorists were neutralized during coordinated air and ground operations carried out in Anefis in the country's northern Kidal region.

According to a statement issued by the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Monday's operations involved 35 airstrikes. The provisional toll also included five armored vehicles, around 20 pickup trucks and about 100 motorcycles destroyed.

The army said operations by the Malian Armed Forces and their partners were continuing in Anefis, reaffirming its determination to pursue actions against armed terrorist groups until the set objectives are achieved. (Xinhua)

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Uganda vehicle collision kills 14: At least 14 people have died and 28 others were injured after a bus collided with a truck in a remote area of northern Uganda, police said on Wednesday.

The incident happened late on Tuesday at a trading center along the highway to the northern city of Gulu, according to a police statement. (AP)

Subcontinent

54 terrorists, 42 others killed in Pakistan: At least 54 terrorists and 42 others, including policemen, troops and civilians, were killed in three major engagements between security forces and militants across Pakistan's southwestern Balochistan province over the past four days, the Pakistani military said on Wednesday.

Speaking at a press briefing, the director general of the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, said the attacks targeted an army convoy, a police check post, and residents in separate incidents, while security forces launched follow-up operations against the attackers. (Xinhua)

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Afghanistan mine collapse kills 1: A miner lost his life after the tunnel of a coal mine collapsed in Samangan province, northern Afghanistan on Tuesday afternoon, provincial police spokesman Hashmatullah Rahmani said Wednesday.

The deadly accident took place in Dara-e-Sufi Bala district when the ill-fated man was busy extracting coal from the mine, the official said. (Xinhua)



Rescuers work at the site of a landslide at a Rohingya refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh on July 8. (AP)

Bangladesh relocates refugees after landslide kills 5

Authorities in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh used loudspeakers and a network of volunteers and community leaders to relocate people from risky areas to safety Thursday after landslides killed at least 13 refugees in the past few days.

At least five children died Wednesday when a landslide

caused by monsoon rains swept through an Islamic school at a camp in Cox's Bazar, where more than 1 million Rohingya refugees from neighboring Myanmar live.

A teacher at the Islamic school described the scene from the landslide as chaotic, saying girls at the school were preparing for lessons when part of the building

collapsed. "Those of us who were on the western side managed to get out, but everyone on the eastern side was buried under the debris," said Begum Jahan, who teaches the Quran, Islam's holy book.

"Some suffered broken arms, and some of the girls lost their lives," she said. (AP)

Drone strikes on civilian vehicles kill at least 20 in Sudan - rights groups

CAIRO, July 9. (AP): Drone strikes on civilian vehicles headed to social gatherings in Sudan have killed more than 20 people in recent days, rights groups said, as the use of unmanned aircraft becomes increasingly common in the north eastern African country's war.

A drone strike on a road west of Omdurman on the outskirts of Khartoum on Tuesday killed 10 civilians, including five women from the same family, as they drove to a wedding, the Sudan Doctors Network said Wednesday. The medical aid group, which has been tracking violence between the military and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces throughout the more than three-year war, blamed the attack on the RSF.

The vehicle immediately caught fire after the strike and all 10 people inside died, a witness told The Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals.

The doctors group said the strike "was deliberate and carried out using a guided drone" and called for the international community to pressure RSF leadership to stop targeting civilians.

A separate drone strike on Tuesday hit a transport vehicle near a water facility in the province, killing two people, according to Emergency Lawyers, which tracks violence in Sudan. The previous day, 13 civilians, including five women, were killed when a drone hit their vehicle



Sudanese families displaced from El-Fasher reach out as aid workers distribute food supplies at the newly established El-Afadh camp in Al Dabbah, in Sudan's Northern State on Nov 16. (AP)

as they headed to a wedding in al-Shaatout town, in North Kordofan province, Emergency Lawyers said.

"This attack is part of an escalating pattern of drone attacks on civilians as drones continue to fly over the northern parts of the province ... monitoring residents' movements," the group said in a statement.

North Kordofan has seen a surge in drone strikes amid international concerns about the RSF closing in on the strategic city of el-Obeid, which is home to the army's 5th Infantry Division.

Drone strikes on the city have destroyed civilian infrastructure, including power facilities and neighborhoods, and targeted bridges and key supply routes, according to the U.N.

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

Brazil police search ex-prez home for weapons but find nothing

RIO DE JANEIRO, July 9. (AP): Brazil's federal police on Wednesday searched the home of convicted former Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro for weapons and ammunition, but found nothing, a lawyer for Bolsonaro said on X.

Bolsonaro is currently under house arrest in the capital Brasilia, where he is serving a 27-year sentence for attempting a coup after his 2022 electoral defeat to President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

"I just left the residence of (Bolsonaro) after witnessing yet another search and seizure by the federal police," attorney João Henrique Nascimento de Freitas said. "Nothing was found."

A federal police official who requested anonymity as they were not allowed to speak publicly about the matter confirmed that nothing was seized.

The Brazilian Supreme Court ordered the search after a discrepancy between the number of firearms legally registered in Bolsonaro's name and those handed over to the competent authorities came to light, according to a court decision signed by Justice Alexandre de Moraes on Tuesday.

Last month, police seized a firearm owned by Bolsonaro in the possession of a military officer at a checkpoint. On Friday, De Moraes granted Bolsonaro authorization to remain under house arrest despite the incident.

A panel of Supreme Court justices convicted Bolsonaro in September, and he began serving his sentence in



Brazil's former president Jair Bolsonaro stands at the entrance of his home while he is under house arrest in Brasilia, Brazil, Sept. 2, 2025. (AP)

November. In March, the former president was granted house arrest due to ill health.

Bolsonaro's trial received broad international attention after US President Donald Trump imposed a 50% tariff on Brazilian goods citing, among other reasons, a "witch hunt" targeting his ally.

One of Bolsonaro's sons, Eduardo, was convicted this year for illegally lobbying the U.S. government to threaten Brazilian officials to stop his father's trial.

Kuwait oil price surges to \$76.03 pb

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Price of Kuwaiti crude oil rose by USD 4.36 to USD 76.03 per barrel on Wednesday's trading, compared to USD 71.67 pb the previous day, according to Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Thursday. In global markets, Brent crude rose USD 3.86 to settle at USD 78.02 pb, while US West Texas Intermediate went up USD 3.08 to USD 73.52 pb.

Business

IMF, IEA, WTO, World Bank flag risks to growth & inflation

Global institutions urge Hormuz reopening

WASHINGTON, July 9, (KUNA): The heads of four major international institutions on Wednesday jointly called for an immediate resolution to the conflict in the Middle East and the urgent reopening of the strategic Strait of Hormuz to safeguard global trade, energy security, and economic recovery.

In a joint statement following high-level talks, the heads of the International Energy Agency (IEA), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank Group (WBG), and World Trade Organization (WTO) stressed that while the global economy has shown broad resilience, the fallout from the regional war remains highly uneven.

The leaders warned that the ongoing hostilities continue to strain energy markets and disrupt the transit of goods, generating deep-seated concerns over economic growth, inflation, and price stability across vulnerable na-

tions.

While noting that global fuel and fertilizer prices have eased since June, the international chiefs emphasized that market uncertainty remains critical. They urged governments and the international community to remain vigilant, preserve the principle of freedom of navigation globally, and step up trade facilitation measures.

The multilateral heads pledged to maintain their close coordination framework, established in April, to monitor macroeconomic and energy developments.

They reaffirmed their readiness to deploy adaptive financial and technical support to help member nations build long-term economic, food, and energy resilience against future shocks.



Gas pumps are seen at a gas station in Buffalo Grove, Thursday, June 25, 2026. (AP)

US-Iran tensions rekindle fears over global oil supply

NEW YORK, July 9, (AP): The potential unraveling of a fragile truce between Iran and the United States renewed anxiety Wednesday over whether fuel prices would go back up if sustained fighting kept oil tankers from traveling through the Persian Gulf.

Oil prices rose to their highest point in weeks after President Donald Trump declared the U.S. ceasefire with Iran over, responding to Iranian attacks on commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz and on American military sites in other Gulf nations. Costlier crude oil could lead to costlier gas station fill-ups as drivers in many countries were getting a break from elevated prices brought on by the war.

"Tanker traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has essentially stopped, which tells you more about risk perception right now than any statement from Washington or Tehran," said Jorge Leon, head of geopolitical analysis at Rystad Energy, in an email. "Oil markets reacted quickly to the renewed geopolitical risk."

U.S. gasoline prices increased slightly Wednesday to an average of \$3.80 for a gallon of regular, up from \$3.79 the day before, but still well below the month-ago average of \$4.16, according to motor club federation AAA.

Crude oil makes up the bulk of the price of gasoline, so when oil prices rise, gasoline eventually follows. But it can take weeks for consumers to feel the full impacts. That's because refiners make gasoline with oil purchased in advance. The finished product then has to travel through a system of pipelines and trucks to reach gas station pumps.

Gas station owners set prices at the pump, and to stay competitive, they sometimes absorb the impact of higher oil prices instead of immediately passing it along to customers.

To suppress high oil prices during the war, the U.S. and other countries released oil from their emergency stockpiles starting in March. But those stockpiles won't last forever.

The U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve held 319.5 million barrels as of July 3. The last time the inventory was that low was in 1983, when the reserve was initially being filled up.

"Unfortunately, the draw-down of strategic stocks means that there is a lot less ammunition in Trump's holster," said Michael Lynch, a distinguished fellow at Energy Policy Research Institute in Amherst, Massachusetts.

A barrel of U.S. benchmark crude was selling for \$75.80 on Wednesday, the highest price in more than two weeks. Brent crude, the international standard, climbed close to \$79 per barrel, its highest level since June 19.

The market reaction "highlights how sensitive prices remain to any escalation around the strait, given its role as a critical transit route for global oil flows," Leon said.

A day after the U.S. ac-

cused Iran of striking three commercial vessels and revoked the country's ability to openly sell crude oil on the world market, some advised the shipping industry to reconsider whether it was safe to send crewed ships through the Strait of Hormuz - and the wider Middle East.

International Maritime Organization Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez condemned attacks on ships in the strait.

"As long as the safety and security of crews cannot be assured, I urge flag states, shipowners, operators and all relevant authorities to avoid exposing seafarers to unnecessary danger by transiting the strait," Dominguez said Wednesday. "The situation in the region remains volatile."

Some traffic traversed the strait on Tuesday, according to data and analytics company Kpler, which verified 41 crossings compared to 36 on Monday. It was unclear if the crossings happened before or after the strikes. Some vessels also are going "dark" to pass through the strait and not broadcasting their locations, further complicating a complete count.

With the central route through the strait uncrossable due to mines, ships have been using two other routes, the smaller northern route, which goes through Iranian waters, and the southern route, which goes through Omani waters. The three ships struck Tuesday appeared to be using the Omani route.

An economist at advisory firm Oxford Economics said the ceasefire probably would continue to be on-and-off and Washington and Tehran could still deescalate the latest tensions instead of returning to war.

"The question is whether the latest developments merely represent a bump in the road or if we're emerging from the 'eye of the storm,'" Ben May, the firm's director of global macroeconomic research, wrote in a research note. "While Trump said negotiations with Iran were a 'waste of time', he maintained an off-ramp by noting that U.S. negotiators would continue talks with Iran, suggesting the truce hasn't been irrevocably broken."

The new doubts about the Strait of Hormuz came after two of the biggest shipping companies, Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd, announced Monday that their Gemini Corporation joint partnership would gradually resume service in the Suez Canal, which was paused due to attacks in the Red Sea by Yemen's Houthis.

Recent stability in the Middle East created the conditions for the companies' decision, but "the recent deterioration could put this resumption in jeopardy once again," said Judah Levine, head of research at freight booking platform Freightos. "The said."

Hapag-Lloyd said in a Wednesday statement that it made the joint decision after "thorough assessments of the security situation in the Red Sea area" and "if the situation changes or deteriorates, contingency plans are in place."

IMF cuts global growth forecast as Iran war drives energy shock

AI eases war's economic blow

WASHINGTON, July 9, (AP): The International Monetary Fund on Wednesday modestly downgraded its outlook for the world economy this year, citing the energy shock caused by the Iran war. But the fallout from the conflict is being partially offset by booming investment in artificial intelligence and other technologies.

The IMF now expects the global economy to expand by a sluggish 3% in 2026, down from 3.5% last year and from the 3.1% it had forecast for this year back in April. The fund expects worldwide growth to rebound to 3.4% next year.

Iran responded to U.S. and Israeli attacks Feb. 28 by shutting down the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world's crude oil and natural gas passes. Energy prices soared, squeezing businesses and consumers. The IMF now expects oil prices to be up nearly 32% this year and for global consumer



Delegates walk to the entrance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) headquarters during the World Bank/IMF Spring Meetings at the IMF headquarters in Washington, April 15, 2026. (AP)

prices overall to increase 4.7% in 2026. That would be up from 4.1% in 2025 and would mean that two years of progress against inflation has stalled.

The IMF forecasts assume that the Strait of Hormuz reopens later this month - even though U.S. strikes on Iran resumed and President Donald Trump declared Wednesday that a ceasefire with Iran was over. They also assume that commerce through the strait returns to normal by next March.

"The world economy has weathered the shock from the

war better than feared," Petya Koeva Brooks, deputy director of the IMF's research department, told reporters Wednesday. The economic damage from the energy shock has been limited partly because countries could draw on existing oil stockpiles and because oil-exporting countries outside the Persian Gulf stepped up production.

Countries that produce and export their own energy and that benefit from AI investment are insulated from the war's economic damage. Among them is the United States. The IMF

expects the U.S. economy - the world's largest - to grow a solid 2.3% this year, up from 2.1% in 2025 and unchanged from the April forecast. President Donald Trump's 2025 tax cuts, big gains in productivity and a strong stock market are also giving the American economy a lift.

The 21 European countries that share the euro currency, hit hard by higher energy prices, are collectively forecast to grow just 0.9% this year, down from 1.4% in 2025.

China, the world's No. 2 economy, is expected to expand 4.6% this year, down from 5% in 2025 but a bit faster than the IMF had expected in April. Weighed down by higher energy prices and a property market collapse, the Chinese economy is getting off-setting help from public works spending, a surge in high-tech manufacturing and booming exports.

India is once again forecast to be the world's fastest-growing major economy, advancing at a 6.4% clip (down from a sizzling 7.7% last year) on strong consumer spending.

The IMF is a 191-nation lending organization that works to promote economic growth and financial stability and to reduce global poverty.

Trading activity remains moderate

Kuwait stocks mixed, all share inches higher

KUWAIT CITY, July 9, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Thursday's trading session on a largely stable note, with the All Share Index edging up by 1.07 points, or 0.01 percent, to close at 8,663.33 points. Trading activity saw 291.9 million shares change hands through 18,776 transactions, with a total value of KD 68.3 million (approximately USD 209.6 million).

The Main Market Index posted a stronger performance, gaining 10.88 points, or 0.12 percent, to reach 8,769.01 points. A total of 185.18 million shares were traded across 10,246 transactions, valued at KD 29.1 million

(around USD 89.3 million).

In contrast, the Premier Market Index recorded a marginal decline of 0.96 points, or 0.01 percent, closing at 9,090.48 points. Trading volume stood at 106.7 million shares through 8,530 transactions, with a value of KD 39.2 million (approximately USD 120.3 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index delivered a notable gain, rising 44.71 points, or 0.45 percent, to settle at 10,000.10 points. The index saw 146.14 million shares traded in 7,366 transactions, with a total value of KD 23.6 million (about USD 72.4 million).

GCC, WIPO sign intellectual property agreement

RIYADH, July 9, (KUNA): GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi and World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Director General Daren Tang signed a cooperation agreement to support and develop Gulf expertise in intellectual property.

The GCC Secretariat said the agreement, signed

in Geneva on Wednesday, aims to strengthen the Intellectual Property Training Center of the GCC Patent Office through specialized training programs and knowledge exchange.

The agreement seeks to enhance intellectual property systems across GCC countries and sup-

port innovation and creativity in line with global developments.

Following the signing, the two sides discussed ways to deepen cooperation and reviewed joint initiatives to enhance collaboration with relevant international organizations and benefit from their expertise.

'Financial literacy key to safeguarding elderly'

ABK encourages families to help protect elderly relatives from financial fraud under the 'Let's Be Aware' campaign

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: As part of its ongoing support for the 'Let's Be Aware' (Diraya) campaign, launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) in collaboration with the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) and local banks, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is raising awareness about the importance of protecting elderly family members from financial fraud and encouraging families to play an active role in promoting financial and cybersecurity awareness among older adults.

ABK emphasized that fraudsters often target individuals through deceptive communications designed to obtain personal, financial, or banking information. Elderly individuals may be particularly vulnerable to certain scam tactics due to the increasing sophistication of fraud methods and the growing reliance on digital communication channels.

The Bank encouraged families to regularly discuss common fraud tactics with elderly relatives and ensure they are familiar with the warning signs of suspicious communications. These may include unexpected phone calls, text messages, emails, or social media messages requesting personal information, banking details, passwords, or one-time passwords (OTPs).

ABK stressed the importance of verifying the authenticity of any communication that appears unusual or requests sensitive information. Customers should avoid acting immediately on unsolicited requests and instead confirm their legitimacy through official channels before sharing any information or taking any action.

The Bank also reminded customers that banking credentials, account

details, passwords, PINs, and OTPs should never be shared with anyone under any circumstances. Fraudsters often impersonate trusted organizations, government entities, service providers, or even family members in an attempt to gain access to sensitive information.

In addition, ABK encouraged families to create an environment in which elderly relatives feel comfortable seeking advice whenever they encounter unfamiliar requests or situations involving financial matters. Consulting a trusted family member or contacting the Bank directly can help prevent fraud attempts from succeeding and provide reassurance when uncertainty arises.

The Bank further highlighted the importance of remaining informed about emerging fraud trends and cybersecurity risks, noting that awareness remains one of the most effective tools in protecting individuals from financial crime. Open communication within families can help ensure that elderly family members remain informed, confident, and better equipped to recognize suspicious activity.

ABK emphasized that financial awareness is a shared family responsibility and that protecting loved ones from fraud requires ongoing education, vigilance, and cooperation among all family members.

Through its participation in the 'Let's Be Aware' campaign, ABK remains committed to promoting financial literacy and cybersecurity awareness, empowering customers and their families with the knowledge needed to protect their personal and financial information and make informed decisions in an increasingly digital world.

'Same product, different rules'

Polymarket bets on trust to win over US regulators

NEW YORK, July 9, (AP): After four years in exile, the prediction market platform Polymarket has begun a well-funded campaign to sell a new version of itself to the American public.

To do so, the company is trying to convince policymakers, regulators, the public and prospective customers that the business it is building onshore is a more disciplined operation than the freewheeling offshore exchange that has at times been the subject of unfavorable headlines.

Polymarket has hired social media influencers to produce viral marketing on TikTok and other platforms. Its account on X, formerly known as Twitter, is now followed by millions and posts about current events throughout the day. It has signed partnership deals with major sports teams and Major League Baseball, as well as news organizations ranging from CNBC to CNN. It's all part of a pitch that its real-time markets are a more accurate read on the future than traditional polling or punditry.

The campaign is, effectively, an effort to sell Polymarket as something different from the Polymarket people know today.

What the American public knows as Polymarket has, at least by the letter of the law, been unavailable to Americans. In 2022, it was pushed offshore after settling federal charges that it operated an unregistered derivatives market. But Americans have regularly found ways around the prohibition, and the offshore business faced criticism over allegations of insider trading and allowing wagers tied to war and other violence.

Polymarket's push into the U.S. means Americans now have legal access to Polymarket through their U.S. platform, albeit it will be limited access. It adds another competitor to the U.S. prediction market industry, now dominated by Kalshi, and also featuring Robinhood and others offering similar services.

Polymarket began operating again in the U.S. at the end of 2025 after buying the derivatives exchange CQEX to get the regulatory license to operate in the country. Executives say the U.S. exchange is walled off from the international platform, and they have hired a slate of compliance, surveillance and regulatory specialists in recent weeks to keep it that way.

"Trust is the product we are building here," said Dan Lee, head of U.S. operations at Polymarket, in an interview. Lee started with Polymarket in February from Coinbase.

Among the hires, the company added Megan McGrath from Robinhood as its new chief compliance officer. Lee and another executive, Natalie Oblazny, were hired from Coinbase. It's also hired former Department of Justice and FBI officials as the platform's head of enforcement and new surveillance head. Lee said Polymarket's successful reentry into the U.S. depends almost entirely on whether it can convince people that Polymarket U.S. can be a trusted prediction market platform, and the new hires are key to that effort.

Both Polymarket International and Polymarket U.S. provide the same service: trading on the likelihood of events, such as weather, sports, politics or news. But the underlying structures differ. Polymarket's international platform is built on blockchain technology and requires users to trade with cryptocurrency, while Polymarket U.S. operates through a more centralized structure regulated by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission

and funded with traditional U.S. dollars.

Customers using Polymarket U.S. versus Polymarket International won't notice the difference, with the exception of how they fund their accounts. Also Polymarket U.S. is going to have a much narrower number of contracts, and more regulations, than its international counterpart.

"Polymarket U.S. is supposed to comply with U.S. law and regulations. Polymarket International is where anything goes," said Todd Phillips, who has written extensively on prediction markets at the Roosevelt Institute.

The stakes are high for Polymarket. Between its departure in 2022 and return six months ago, the prediction market industry has changed and grown in popularity. The trading volume across the platforms for Polymarket and rival Kalshi is now \$26.6 billion, according to blockchain analytics firm Dune. That's up from \$9.75 billion in volume across the platforms in October last year. About two-thirds of that activity is on Kalshi, which dominates the U.S. market on the strength of sports wagering. Kalshi was valued at \$22 billion in its most recent funding round.

Both platforms are also benefiting from a more favorable treatment of the industry in Washington. The Trump Administration has been generally supportive of prediction markets. The CFTC has sued states to argue that federal law should preempt any regulations that state politicians have wanted to place on the prediction market industry. The president's son, Donald Trump Jr., is also an investor in Polymarket through his venture capital firm 1789 Capital.

Even so, it's been a rough start for Polymarket's reintroduction to American audiences. The Wall Street Journal found evidence that Polymarket's advertising and marketing campaigns used allegedly deceptive strategies that showed hired influencers making money trading on Polymarket when the trades were fake.

Politico reported in June that a Polymarket executive paid at least 20 political content creators, many of which did not disclose those partnerships to the public. Both projects have been part of the campaign Polymarket was using to reintroduce to American audiences.

In response to the WSJ and Politico reports, the company says it is investigating its marketing and promotional campaigns.

It's too soon to tell whether Polymarket U.S. will be able to differentiate itself from its international counterpart. Polymarket's international platform has made headlines, often to public and political outrage.

When a U.S. Army sergeant was indicted earlier this year over bets on the capture of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, he was trading on Polymarket's international platform. The Associated Press reported in April that 50 brand new accounts on Polymarket's international platform placed substantial bets on a U.S.-Iran ceasefire in the hours, even minutes, before President Donald Trump announced a ceasefire on social media, raising concerns of insider trading.

Lee said he believes the steps the U.S. business is taking will help further legitimize it, despite the issues the international platform has faced.

"I think having the international business being the bulk of the volume, it often sort of masks the progress we are making here in the U.S. to broaden Polymarket's acceptance," Lee said.

Trade & security drive Carney's historic Saudi visit

Carney visits Saudi to boost trade ties

TORONTO, July 9, (AP): Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney arrived in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday - the first visit to the kingdom by a Canadian leader in 26 years - as he seeks to expand his country's economic ties beyond its heavy reliance on the United States.

Carney is to meet Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman - the kingdom's de facto ruler - on Thursday, and he will also address the Saudi Arabia-Canada Investment Forum and attend a signing ceremony.

The trip underscores Ottawa's effort to diversify trade and attract investment as U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs and threats to the U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade agreement highlight Canada's dependence on the U.S., its largest trading partner.

For its part, Saudi Arabia has sought to attract foreign investment as Prince Mohammed pursues an ambitious plan to diversify the kingdom's economy beyond oil.

Nelson Wiseman, professor emeritus at the University of Toronto, said "Trump's erratic trade and foreign policies" have forced Carney to reach out "to others in a new and evolving world order."

Canada and Saudi Arabia restored full diplomatic ties in 2023, ending a yearslong rift sparked by Canada's criticism of the kingdom's human rights record.

The rift erupted in 2018, when Saudi Arabia expelled Canada's ambassador and recalled its own after Canada's Foreign Ministry called for the release of jailed women's rights activists. Riyadh froze new trade and investment, sold some Canadian assets and ordered thousands of Saudi students in Canada to study elsewhere. The activists have since been released.

Also in 2018, Prince Mohammed's reputation was tarnished by the killing of Washington Post



Canada Prime Minister Mark Carney and his wife Diana Fox Carney walk with Minister of Finance of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Abdullah Al-Jadaan (middle) Prince Saud bin Mishal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Director of Makkah Region Police Major General Saleh Al-Jabri (right) as they arrive in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Wednesday, July 8, 2026. (AP)

columnist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul. A U.S. intelligence assessment declassified in 2021 concluded the crown prince had likely approved the operation.

Daniel Béland, a political science professor at McGill University in Montreal, said the timing of Carney's visit matters not just because of his push to "diversify trade and help attract new foreign investments to Canada" but also "because of the ongoing geopolitical uncertainty in the Middle East"

and the war in Iran. "It seems increasingly clear that, for Mark Carney, trade and security are much more pressing concerns than human rights," Béland said.

But Wiseman stressed that "Carney says he is taking the world as it is."

"It doesn't mean looking beyond human rights; it means being realistic about what preaching about it to authoritarian leaders can accomplish," he said.

'Largest data center outside the US'

Meta plans billions for first AI data center in Canada

EDMONTON, July 9, (AP): Facebook and Instagram parent Meta said Wednesday it will invest more than US\$9.1 billion to build its first artificial intelligence data center in Canada and its largest outside the United States.

The facility will be built in Sturgeon County, Alberta, and powered by a natural gas-fired plant being developed by a consortium that includes Calgary-based Pembina Pipeline Ltd.

Technology and Innovation Minister Nate Glubish called the project "a big deal for Alberta," saying the province had created a regulatory framework to attract data center investment.

Alberta has been courting hyperscale data centers as demand for artificial intelligence infrastructure surges. But the rapid growth of AI has fueled concerns about the vast amounts of electricity and water such facilities require, as

well as their strain on power grids and nearby communities. Because Alberta's electricity grid cannot support multiple large AI data centers, the province is prioritizing projects that build or secure their own power generation, as Meta plans to do.

Meta said the data center will use a closed-loop cooling system that won't draw water from surrounding sources. The company also plans to invest US\$42 million in local infrastructure, including roads and water systems.

Last week, Pembina Pipeline, Morgan Stanley Infrastructure Partners and Kineticor Asset Management announced they would proceed with the Greenlight Electricity Center in Sturgeon County. Meta was identified Wednesday as the customer. The 932-megawatt power plant is expected to begin operating in the second half of 2030.

Layoffs remain at historically healthy levels

US jobless claims dip modestly to 215,000

WASHINGTON, July 9, (AP): The number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits dipped slightly last week as layoffs in the U.S. remain historically low.

U.S. applications for jobless aid in the week ending July 4 ticked down by 2,000 to 215,000, the Labor Department reported Thursday. Analysts surveyed by the data firm FactSet forecast 220,000 new applications.

Weekly filings for unemployment benefits are considered a proxy for layoffs and are close to a real-time indicator of the health of the U.S. job market.

In its more comprehensive June jobs report last week, the government reported that employers pulled back on hiring in June, adding only 57,000 jobs. That's less than half the previous

month's total and a sign that companies remain cautious. The unemployment rate dropped to 4.2% from 4.3% in May, though that decline is mostly because many out-of-work people gave up looking for jobs and were no longer counted as unemployed.

June's tepid hiring comes after a relative surge in job gains the previous three months, countering concerns that the war in Iran could trip up an already wobbly labor market.

Weekly jobless aid applications have stabilized in a range mostly between 200,000 and 250,000 since the U.S. economy emerged from the pandemic recession. However, hiring began slowing about two years ago and tapered further in 2025 due to President Donald Trump's tariffs, his purge of the federal workforce and the

lingering effects of high interest rates meant to control inflation.

Among the companies that have trimmed their workforce recently are Verizon, UPS, Amazon, Disney, Starbucks and Walmart.

Earlier this week, Microsoft said it was cutting 4,800 jobs, about 2.1% of its global workforce, including a large number of workers at its Xbox video game business.

Thursday's layoffs data showed that the four-week moving average of jobless claims, which softens some of the week-to-week swings, fell by 3,750 to 218,750.

The total number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits for the previous week ending June 27 rose by 8,000 to 1.81 million, also a historically healthy figure.

'Farmers gain repair freedom'

John Deere settles FTC right-to-repair case

WASHINGTON, July 9, (AP): It looks like John Deere owners can soon feel free to fix their own machines.

The Federal Trade Commission and attorneys general from several states secured a right-to-repair settlement Wednesday with agriculture equipment giant Deere & Co. - commonly known as John Deere - that requires the company to let farmers and independent shops fix their own equipment.

The Illinois-based manufacturer has faced complaints for years for withholding the software needed for repairs and forcing customers to use authorized dealers instead of independent ones.

This marks the second right-to-repair settlement Deere has reached this year, following a separate \$99 million class-action settlement with farmers in April. Though the class-action compensated consumers, the FTC's settlement instead requires Deere to make its repair services available to equipment owners and independent shops.

The FTC and attorneys general from Arizona, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin

brought the antitrust lawsuit in January 2025, arguing that Deere had illegally restricted farmers and independent shops that might otherwise service them from repairing farm equipment such as tractors. Deere also makes engines and equipment for forestry, landscaping and construction.

Under the order filed in Illinois, Deere will now be required to make diagnostic and repair tools available to equipment owners and independent repair shops, not only its own network of authorized dealers. It also prevents Deere dealers from retaliating against equipment owners or repair shops who choose to fix their own equipment instead of paying for Deere's services. The order is headed to Judge Iain D. Johnston for his approval.

"For too long, Arizona farmers and independent mechanics have been at the mercy of Deere's monopoly over repair tools, forced to wait - and pay - for authorized dealers just to fix broken tractors and other equipment," Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes said in a statement Wednesday.

Deere must pay \$1 million collectively to the five states for antitrust enforcement costs and will

be subject to strict compliance oversight for the next 10 years.

In the complaint, the FTC argued that Deere provides a service software tool to authorized dealers but does not provide the full version to equipment owners or independent shops. Deere had said the lawsuit was baseless, denied that its distribution of service tools was anticompetitive and argued that it could not monopolize services since it does not directly provide them.

Deere maintained its commitment to independent repair in a statement Wednesday, adding that the agreement with the FTC reinforces its innovation of more flexible repair options.

"This is good news for our customers and for the future of how Deere equipment is supported," said Denver Caldwell, vice president of aftermarket and customer support.

Right-to-repair has become an increasingly common issue over the years, especially for tech products, with consumers complaining that even simple repairs can only be done by company-authorized dealers.

EV demand grows

China's passenger car exports up 80% in June

HONG KONG, July 9, (AP): China's passenger car exports surged 80% in June from a year earlier, mainly due to strong demand for electric vehicles, though domestic sales fell 26%.

In the first half of this year, Chinese passenger vehicle exports jumped 72% to more than 4.4 million, according to the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers.

Sales inside China were still larger, at nearly 8.3 million for January-June and around 1.5 million passenger cars in the month of June.

China exported about 905,000 passenger cars last month, up from 809,000 in May.

China's domestic car market has been under pressure as the overcrowded market is plagued by fierce price wars. A prolonged slump in the property market has hurt household budgets, hitting demand. Cutbacks in government support for purchases of EVs have also taken a toll.

Consultancy AlixPartners forecast that sales of light vehicles including passenger cars in China will likely fall 10%, partly because potential buyers could be holding off on purchases as they wait for prices to fall further.

Chinese automakers like BYD have been expanding into overseas markets and setting up factories in key markets. That can help improve their profitability, but it's added to friction with trading partners.

China's passenger car exports could grow by 30% to 50% for the whole of 2026 from a year ago, said Stephen Chan, an analyst at S&P Global Ratings. Auto analysts have also predicted that higher gasoline prices due to the Iran war would lift global interest in EVs.

AlixPartners recently forecast Chinese exports for 2026 could rise to about 10 million vehicles this year, up from around 7 million in 2025.

Chinese car brands are also making inroads in Canada after it approved an annual import quota of 49,000 EVs from China at a low tax rate. Auto analysts are watching to see if that might pave the way for exports to the U.S. market, where hefty tariffs have effectively blocked Chinese EV exports.

Last month, Sweden-headquartered EV maker Polestar, which is controlled by Chinese auto group Geely, said the U.S. Commerce Department has banned it from selling vehicles in the U.S. from the 2027 model year.

Going global has "become a necessity" for automakers in China, Wei Haigang, president of automaker GAC International, said at an autos expo in Hong Kong in June. "In China's highly competitive environment, companies that don't venture overseas will face immense difficulties in surviving."



The prediction market app Polymarket is displayed on a mobile phone, April 16, 2026, in Chicago. (AP)

What's On

SPOTLIGHT



Got a birthday or event?

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



A Kuwaiti ensemble featuring more than 70 musicians and vocalists, led by Maestro Dr. Khaled Nouri.

Zain supports landmark orchestral celebration of Kuwait's musical heritage

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Zain Kuwait has sponsored the national artistic performance *Watani*, held at Jaber Al-Ali Theatre in Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre (JACC). Presented by Scene Productions, the live orchestral work brought back to life a selection of Kuwait's most beloved national music classics, songs that have remained deeply connected to the nation's memory and the hearts of its people for decades.

Zain's support for this production embodies the private sector's role in supporting artistic, cultural, and creative efforts, particularly those that celebrate national identity, reintroduce Kuwait's artistic heritage with a contemporary spirit, and contribute to strengthening Kuwait's cultural and artistic presence through refined, high-quality public experiences.

Watani held special significance as it coincided with the 65th anniversary of Kuwait's independence. The performance came as a national artistic evening that revived a collection of timeless songs associated with key moments in Kuwait's history, forming an authentic part of the collective memory of Kuwaitis and carrying noble meanings of loyalty, belonging, unity, and solidarity.

The production delivered a powerful live musical experience, featuring a Kuwaiti ensemble of more than 70 musicians and vocalists led by Maestro Dr. Khaled Nouri. A number of national songs were rearranged in a modern orchestral style that preserved their original spirit while giving them a new artistic dimension worthy of their place in the Kuwaiti conscience.

Zain also hosted a distinctive interactive booth inspired by the atmosphere of Kuwaiti national songs and their timeless legacy, offering attendees an added experience that complemented the spirit



Zain's booth gave audiences an opportunity to create wonderful memories from the concert.

- *Watani* revived Kuwait's most cherished national songs in celebration of 65 years of independence
- The largest concert staged by a Kuwaiti ensemble at Jaber Al-Ali Theatre, featuring more than 70 musicians and vocalists

of the evening before and during the concert. The booth allowed guests to take photos and capture moments in a patriotic setting filled with belonging and unity, adding an interactive dimension

to the experience and helping create lasting memories from this special night.

The performance also featured acclaimed actor Jassim Al-Nabhan as narrator, taking the audience on an emotional journey through songs and memories. Through artistic narratives, he shed light on selected national works, their historical contexts, and the creators behind them, adding a documentary and human dimension to the production while bringing new generations closer to this rich artistic heritage.

Zain's participation serves as an extension of its role in supporting national and cultural events that bring the community together around values of pride and belonging, while presenting refined artistic content worthy of Kuwait's name and stature. Kuwaiti national music has long served as a space for expressing love and loyalty to the nation, and as a field in which poets, composers, and singers created timeless works that remain present in the public memory.

Watani is one of the artistic productions that brings together authenticity and modernity. Through a fully integrated live performance combining music, vocals, choir, and dramatic narration, it revived the classics of Kuwaiti national music and offered audiences a fresh experience that reintroduced these works in a new form without compromising their artistic or historical value.

Supporting such initiatives forms part of Zain's continued commitment to backing projects that enrich Kuwait's artistic and cultural scene, while encouraging local entities and talents with creative ideas and ambitious visions, especially those that strengthen engagement with audiences and highlight Kuwait's civilized and creative image.



KFH continues Al-Hassad rewards.

Grand prize totaling KD 1.5 million

KFH announces winners of 'Al-Hassad' semi-annual & Al-Rabeh monthly draws

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has announced the winner of the Al-Hassad Semi-Annual Draw and the winners of the June 2026 Al-Rabeh monthly draws.

Al-Hassad account offers total annual prizes of KD 3 million, while Al-Rabeh account awards KD 1,000 each to 30 winners every month, reflecting KFH's commitment to rewarding customer loyalty and trust.

KFH conducted two draws, awarding 31 winners a total of KD 530,000 in cash prizes, distributed as follows:

- Al-Hassad Account: One winner received KD 500,000.
- Al-Rabeh Account: 30 winners received KD 1,000 each.

The full list of winners is available on KFH's official social media channels.

The new campaign for Al-Hassad account features substantial prizes, headlined by a KD 1.5 million Grand Prize, a KD 500,000 semi-annual prize, and a KD 100,000 monthly prize.

Effective January of this year, the new Al-Hassad prize campaign coincided with the resumption of investment account draws conducted under the supervision of independent auditors appointed by the bank to ensure the highest standards of integrity and transparency.

KFH continues to enhance the features of its Al-Hassad account, one of

the bank's flagship products that has gained remarkable popularity and strong customer trust.

Al-Hassad account offers increased chances of winning, with one entry for every KD 50 deposited. The longer the balance is maintained, the greater the number of entries, bringing customers closer to the title of "KFH Millionaire".

As for Al-Rabeh account, it is a dedicated salary account. To qualify for the draws, customers must deposit at least three salaries over the three months preceding the draw and maintain a minimum monthly closing balance of KD 50 throughout that period. The account awards 30 winners KD 1,000 each month.

KFH remains committed to offering premium banking products that fulfill customer aspirations and provide unique opportunities to win significant cash prizes. This makes the account a highly appealing savings and investment solution.

Based on the Wakala investment structure, Al-Hassad account allows the bank to invest the full balance at a pre-agreed expected profit rate, in addition to the monthly, semi-annual, and annual prize draws.

Customers can open Al-Hassad and Al-Rabeh accounts through KFH branches, KFHonline, or ATMs to enjoy exclusive draw opportunities and a wide range of banking benefits.

Kala Kuwait bids farewell to Sivakumar

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Kala (Art) Kuwait members and well-wishers organized a warm farewell and a tribute for Kala (Art) Kuwait President P.K. Sivakumar, Executive Committee member Jyothi Sivakumar, and their daughter Nikhita Sivakumar, as they return to their home country after three decades of expatriate life.

Association General Secretary Aneesh Varghese delivered the welcome address at the friendly gathering held at Abbasiya Evergreen Hall. President-elect Mukesh V.P. presided over the event.

In his presidential address, Mukesh noted that Sivakumar, who has held various positions such as General Secretary, NiramGeneral Convener and President has earned the affection and respect of his colleagues and the Kuwaiti Malayali community through his organizational acumen and social commitment.

Felicitations were conveyed by Jihash Abdul Kareem (General Convener, Niram-2025), Sisitha Girish, Ragesh P.D., Sunil Kumar, Mustafa, Najeeb, Haneef, Sumesh, Ambili Ragesh, Sunil Kulanada, and Manoj Kappad with their best wishes.

A memento was presented to Sivakumar and his family as a token of appreciation from Kala (Art) Kuwait.

Shivakumar, JyothiShivakumar, and Nikhita delivered a speech in response, expressing their gratitude and affection towards Kala (Art) Kuwait colleagues and the Kuwaiti community.

Treasurer Ajith Kumar proposed the vote of thanks.



Photos during the event.



This combination of images shows Emmy nominees for best drama series, top row from left, 'The Diplomat,' 'The Gilded Age,' 'A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms,' 'Paradise,' bottom row from left, 'The Pitt,' 'Pluribus,' 'Slow Horses,' and 'Your Friends & Neighbors.' (AP)



This combination of images shows promotional art for Emmy nominated shows for best comedy, top row from left, 'Abbott Elementary,' 'The Bear,' 'Hacks,' and 'Margo's Got Money Troubles,' bottom row from left, 'Nobody Wants This,' 'Only Murders in the Building,' 'Shrinking,' and 'Widow's Bay.' (AP)

From Bad Bunny to Taylor Swift, TV's biggest awards night leans into pop power

'The Pitt' and 'Hacks' dominate Emmy nominations

LOS ANGELES, July 9, (AP): "The Pitt" led all nominees with 25 in a dominant sophomore season, while "Hacks" got a graduation party with a record-setting 24 to lead all comedies in its final season as Emmy nominations were announced Wednesday.

The totals give HBO Max the top spot for both drama and comedy, with "Hacks" breaking the record for most nominations for a comedy series held jointly by "The Studio" last year and "The Bear" in 2024. HBO Max led all outlets with 122 overall nominations and has three shows up for both best drama and best comedy series.

The nominees announced for 118 Primetime Emmy categories included the late Rob Reiner for his guest acting on "The Bear," Bad Bunny for his Super Bowl halftime show, and newlywed Taylor Swift for "The Eras Tour - The Final Show" concert special.

Emmy voters love a departing show, and have loved the tension-between-comedy-generations "Hacks" since its first season, allowing it to run up the numbers as a fifth-year senior. Star Jean Smart has won best actress in a comedy for all four previous seasons, and it would be stunning if she didn't claim a fifth.

Her sidekick throughout the series Hannah Einbinder, who last year broke through and won supporting actress in a comedy in her fourth nomination, got a fifth. Her castmate, the show's co-creator Paul W. Downs, got three nominations, for acting, writing and producing.

The day-in-the-life emergency room series "The Pitt" was a rookie upstart last year with big wins including best drama series, best actor for Noah Wyle and best supporting actress for Katherine LaNasa.

Already a beloved veteran show, it owned this year's acting categories. Wyle was nominated again for best actor (along with nods for his directing and producing) as was LaNasa. Taylor Dearden, Fiona Dourif and Sepideh Moafi also got nominations, with "The Pitt" taking four of the seven supporting actress spots and three supporting actor slots.



This combination of images show Emmy nominees for best TV movie, from left, 'Heads of State,' 'Miss You, Love You,' 'People We Meet on Vacation,' 'Remarkably Bright Creatures,' and 'Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan: Ghost War.' (AP)



This combination of images shows promotional art for Emmy nominees for best limited or anthology series, from left, 'All Her Fault,' 'The Beast in Me,' 'Beef,' 'DTF St. Louis,' and 'Love Story: John F. Kennedy Jr. & Carolyn Bessette.' (AP)

In an era when major Emmy contenders - like 2025's top drama nominee "Severance" - take years off between seasons, "The Pitt" came right back for another round. And its claim on the acting categories was helped by the between-seasons absence of "The White Lotus," and its elite ensembles.

Two new shows from Apple TV, the one-woman-against-the-hive-mind drama "Pluribus" and the horror comedy "Widow's Bay," both scored big in their first seasons.

"Pluribus," from "Breaking Bad" and "Better Call Saul" creator Vince

Gilligan, got 18 nods. They included best actress in a drama for its only lead cast member Rhea Seahorn, considered the favorite to win.

"Widow's Bay" got 19, including best actor for star Matthew Rhys, who was also nominated as a producer and for his acting in the limited series "The Beast in Me."

Two other Apple TV shows are also up for best comedy, "Margo's Got Money Troubles," whose stars Elle Fanning and Michelle Pfeiffer got acting nominations, and "Shrinking."

The "Shrinking" nominations in-

cluded best supporting actor in a comedy for Harrison Ford. The force could be with Ford, with many prognosticators saying this will be the year the Hollywood legend finally wins an EGOT-tier award. His castmate Jason Segel is up for lead actor.

Many close observers also think this will be the year the perennially nominated Martin Short wins best actor in a comedy for "Only Murders in the Building." He was nominated for three trophies, including nods for his producing of "Only Murders in the Building" and hosting "The Match Game." A Netflix documenta-

ry about him, "Marty, Life is Short," also got two nominations.

Jason Bateman got four nominations, for his performing and producing on both "Black Rabbit" and "DTF St. Louis."

ABC's "Abbott Elementary" remained a rare bright spot for the traditional broadcast networks that have been marginalized in top categories by cable and streaming shows. Creator, star and two-time Emmy winner Quinta Brunson was nominated for three more, and the show got seven.

The vast range of Emmy catego-

ries brings unexpected stars and beloved figures into the mix.

Rob Reiner, who was killed along with wife Michele Singer Reiner in December, has a chance at his third Emmy. He was nominated for guest actor for "The Bear," about 50 years after winning two for his acting on "All in the Family."

Five-time Emmy winner Michael J. Fox, also got a nomination in the same category for playing a patient with Parkinson's disease, which the actor was diagnosed with in the 1990s, on "Shrinking."

The Super Bowl halftime show is nearly always nominated, but this year's featuring Bad Bunny on NBC went above and beyond with nine nominations.

Swift's "Eras Tour" concert special got five nominations days after her marriage to Travis Kelce, one of them for the singing superstar herself as producer. She has one previous Emmy, for interactive media in 2015, to go with her 14 Grammys.

And after a year of targeting from the Trump administration for late-night hosts and their shows, the now-off-the-air "Late Show With Stephen Colbert" got nine nominations and "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" got six.

Netflix's "Beef" was tops in the limited or anthology series categories with 16 nominations. "Beef" had a dominant first season in 2023, and the anthology's all-new grudge holders, Carey Mulligan, Oscar Isaac and Charles Melton, all got nominations.

"Euphoria" made its Emmys return after a long absence and got seven nominations. Zendaya, who won best actress in a drama for the first two seasons in 2020 and 2022, got a nod for the recently aired third season.

Liza Colón-Zayas and Jeff Hiller announced the nominees at the Television Academy in Los Angeles. The 78th Primetime Emmy Awards, airing on NBC, will be held Sept. 14. Mariska Hargitay, the longtime star of NBC's "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit," will host and is a double nominee for directing and producing the documentary "My Mom Jayne."

Disney's latest live-action tide goes out

Moana loses some of its animated soul



This image released by Disney shows promotional art for the live action film 'Moana.' (AP)

Say what you will about them, but the Disney live-action remakes have at least given us a choice. Which would you rather see? A spirited, soaring, animated "Moana," or a purposeless remake featuring Dwayne Johnson with Fabio hair?

The sea is wide, my friends. Yet Moana, the Polynesian wayfaring princess, has seemingly been stuck swimming laps since she first emerged on our screens 10 years ago. She's one of Disney's greatest heroes. The original movie, computer animated by hand-drawn masters Ron Clements and John Musker and buoyed by Lin-Manuel Miranda's energetic songs, represents the height of Disney animation this century.

But since then, the waters have been rough. "Moana 2," originally planned as a streaming series, did little to expand the tale. And the new live-action remake does even less. Few of the live-action remakes, regardless of box-office receipts, are covered in glory. But "Moana," directed by "Hamilton" veteran Thomas Kail, feels especially off course, offering little more than a lamentable swap of cartoon imagination for live-action do-over. The lifeless result veers perilously close to "Saturday Night Live" parody or one of those joke parallel universes in the "Spider-Verse" movies.

The new "Moana" is an often shot-for-shot, note-for-note remake of the original, with small pockets of new material. This is understandable, to a certain degree. The songs are still great. Catherine Laga'aia, who plays Moana, sings beautifully. The

ocean, in digital splendor, is even bluer.

But all inventiveness has gone out to sea. One of the great things about animation is that it can do anything with a snap of the fingers. You can sense imagination at play. The glories of the original "Moana" lied both in its rich Polynesian connections and its cartoony fun: the goofy shape-shifting of the demigod Maui (Johnson), the toe-tapping moves of the giant crab Tamatoa (Jemaine Clement), the way the ocean heaves Moana back aboard the ship.

Making these things physical realities isn't just an update in format; it saps them of their animated soul. The result comes across more like play acting than genuine artistic creation. There is, I would wager, no one who ever saw the little coconut pirates in the first "Moana" and said to themselves: "I need a more realistic looking Kakamora."

The greatest benefit of the live-action update comes in the recreation of Moana's native Motunui. If the original "Moana" was crafted in homage of Polynesia culture, the presence of real people makes that more tangible. John Tui, a New Zealand actor of Tongan descent, is especially good as Moana's chief father.

But more often than not, the leap from animation to live action comes at a loss. This is especially true of characters destined to be cartoons, like the rooster Heihei. And it's painfully the case with Tamatoa, whose "So Shiny" tune was once an undeniable highlight but is now perhaps

the most awkwardly staged scene of the movie.

None of this is any fault of Laga'aia, whose lively performance is the film's primary source of forward momentum. Maui - boastful, slyly comic, inevitably heroic - is among Johnson's most perfectly suited roles. So, it's a surprise how much his performance here struggles to match the verve of the animated Maui. It could be that Johnson, who's been drawn increasingly to dramatic roles recently, has aged out a character who was a fantasy to begin with, and a wig isn't enough to cover the discrepancy.



Lin-Manuel Miranda arrives at the premiere of "Moana" on Tuesday, July 7, 2026, at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles. (AP)

Track confronts America's divide

Stones break their silence

NEW YORK, July 9, (AP): "When I was oh so young I used to want to go to Mars," sings Mick Jagger - that staccato voice still remarkably sharp and clear - on "Foreign Tongues," the Rolling Stones' 25th studio album.

"Now I'm older," the frontman notes, a few lines later. "I would like to ask you if tonight we could stay at home."

Say what?

Are these the Stones, our perennial bad-boy Brits with yet-full heads of hair, our proud Peter Pans of rock 'n' roll, singing about growing old?

But we'll allow this slight nod to mortality in the tune called "Mr. Charm," especially because plans for this evening at home DO sound nice - with the promise of cocktails and wine. "You see I'm really quite polite," the song goes.

Polite is not always the word associated with this 64-year old band - remember the run-ins with various police departments? These days, Jagger, Keith Richards and Ronnie Wood are neither rebels nor degenerates - they're natty multimillionaires. But they're cheeky enough to add a jab, in "Mr. Charm," at "mad mogul Mr. Musk." A compliment, it is not.

More seriously, the Stones get downright political in one song on the excellent and eminently listenable "Foreign Tongues," an album that expands on an improbable late burst in creativity launched by the Grammy-winning 2023 "Hackney Diamonds." That song, "Ringing Hollow," is at turns biting and depressing, since it chronicles a failing love story between the band and the country they conquered decades ago: the United States.

"Well I was madly in love with you before we ever met," it goes. "Watched all your movies, smoked your cigarettes."

But things have changed in current-day America, where "there's always a scoundrel trying to whip up the crowd" (no current leaders are mentioned by name). "Lady Liberty



This album cover image released by Capitol Records shows 'Foreign Tongues' by The Rolling Stones. (AP)

don't look so good when she's wearing a frown."

We'll tell you what DOES look, or rather sound, good - Jagger's voice. How has it stayed this potent, as he turns 83? We'll have what he's having, as they say. In "Jealous Lover," a breakup song, he even flexes a fierce falsetto, à la "Emotional Rescue." Richards, unsurprisingly, matches that potency on guitar, and also delivers a truly poignant lead vocal turn in "Some of Us," about a lover who keeps him on his toes -- or actually, on his knees. ("Some of us are on our knees, begging, baby.") As for Wood, listen to Jagger call out "C'mon Ronnie!" as the guitarist digs into a searing solo on "Back in Your Life."

The album is strikingly consistent, with no true clunker in the bunch, though some tunes are more memorable than others. And as with "Hackney Diamonds," there's an enviable guest contingent: Bruno Mars plays cowbell on "Never Wanna Lose You," and Paul McCartney guests on bass in "Covered in You." (Paul also dropped by on the last album. Is this a regular visit that might extend one day to the concert stage? Maybe?) Steve Winwood has organ duties and The Cure's Robert Smith contributes on guitar and backup vocals.

FIFA reveals worldwide music event

Bieber added to WC show

NEW YORK, July 9, (AP): Justin Bieber will bring his swag to the World Cup's star-studded, Super Bowl-style halftime show, joining fellow headliners Madonna, Shakira and BTS, FIFA announced Wednesday.

Afrobeats star Burna Boy, Venezuelan conductor Gustavo Dudamel and the PS22 Chorus - a choir of elementary school students based in Staten Island, New York - will also perform, the last joined by Coldplay.

The 11-minute halftime performance, curated by Coldplay's Chris Martin, will take place during the final outside New York on July 19. The show will support the FIFA Global Citizen Education Fund, which is raising \$100 million to help children access education and soccer.

"The FIFA World Cup brings the world together in a way nothing else can," Bieber said in a statement. "I'm grateful to be part of this Halftime Show, and even more grateful knowing it's already helping expand access to education for children around the world."

Of all the performances, the addition of Burna Boy is particularly noteworthy: He's one-half of this year's official song for the World Cup, "Dai Dai," led by Shakira. The song is a mesh of their musical landscapes: Afrobeats and Latin rhythms, an undeniably global, multilingual pop track. In one verse, they name a



Justin Bieber performs during the 68th Annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles on Feb. 1, 2026. (AP)

number of the world's most famous soccer players and countries competing in this year's World Cup: "Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Colombia," Shakira cheers. "Mexico, Japan, Korea, Netherlands."

"The FIFA World Cup is one of the few moments that truly brings the entire world together," Burna Boy said in a statement. "To represent Africa on the first-ever FIFA World Cup Final Halftime Show is a privilege and a responsibility that I don't take lightly."

And while the Super Bowl is famed for its halftime show, such performances are not commonplace in soccer, with events like the Champions League final featuring a pre-match concert.

Obituary

80s ballad legend leaves behind a lasting musical legacy

'Total eclipse of the heart' star Bonnie Tyler dies

LONDON, July 9, (AP): Bonnie Tyler, the gravelly voiced, Grammy-nominated Welsh pop star best known for singing the chart-topping power ballad "Total Eclipse of the Heart" in 1983 and seeing new generations succumb to its bombastic charms during solar and lunar eclipses, has died. She was 75.

Tyler died "unexpectedly" in a hospital in Portugal where she was being treated for an illness, her family said Thursday in a statement on her website. She was hospitalized in May in Faro, where she had a home, for emergency intestinal surgery and was later placed in an induced coma.

"Bonnie's family and team are heartbroken to announce that Bonnie unexpectedly passed away last night in hospital in Portugal as a result of the illness that she was being treated for, her family said.

Tyler earned three Grammy nods, represented Britain at the Eurovision Song Contest 2013 - where she came in 19th - and was awarded an MBE for her services to music by Queen Elizabeth II in 2023, all largely thanks to "Total Eclipse of the Heart," which has had more than 1 billion streams, boosted by real eclipses in 2017 and 2024.

The song spent four weeks at No. 1, the video has surpassed 1 billion views and when Stereogum reevaluated it in 2020, the music outlet declared it an "extinction-level event rendered in musical form."

"It's pop music as heart-pounding, chest-thumping, blood-gargling, heavens-falling passion explosion. It's sheer spectacle. It's fireworks and lasers and lightning and thunder. It soars and swoops and barrel-rolls," the site said.

The song has never really gone away, covered by the English singer Nicki French in 1995 and the band Westlife in 2006. Cate Blanchett sang it while hitting Billy Bob Thornton with her car in 2001's "Bandits," it appeared at a wedding scene in 2003's "Old School" and One Direction sang it in 2010 on a U.K. version of "The X Factor."

Tyler was born - as Gaynor Hopkins - a coal miner's daughter in public housing with an outside toilet in Skewen, Wales, about seven miles outside Swansea. She grew up with three sisters and two brothers.

She adored the Beatles and her first album was "A Hard Day's Night." The first song she bought was "Hippy Hippy Shake" by the Swinging Blue Jeans at 13 and watched "Top of the Pops" religiously, according to her memoir, "Straight From the Heart."

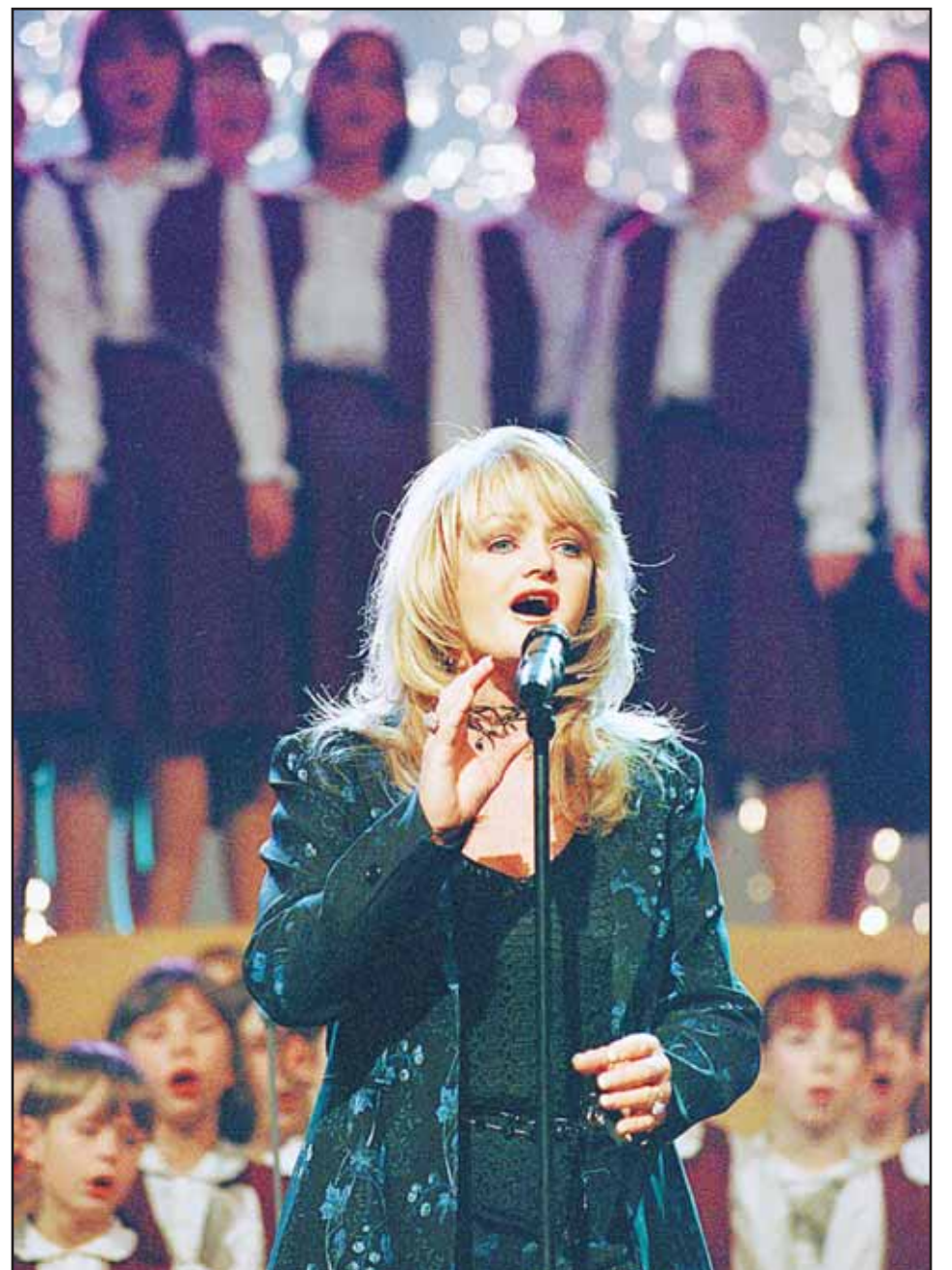
She would record "Top of the Pops" on a reel-to-reel two-track recorder and write down the lyrics of songs she loved. Her favorites were songs by Janis Joplin, Nina Simone, Tina Turner, Wilson Pickett and Otis Redding.

"I used to sing them into my hairbrush for hours and hours, and that's how it all started for me. I fell in love with singing just from doing that. Looking back, even then my voice had a husky tone to it, but I didn't think much of it. I thought everyone's voices were different from each other's," she wrote.

In 1976 she had to have surgery to remove nodules on her throat, leaving her with that trademark vocal sound. Changing her name to Sherene Davis, she was fronting a soul band when she was discovered by talent scout Roger Bell, who brought her to London for demo sessions. Then she waited for a label until RCA said it was interested.

Under her new RCA-sanctioned name Bonnie Tyler, her debut album "The World Starts Tonight" in 1977 contained her first chart hit, "Lost in France," and she was nominated for a breakthrough artists award at the Brits Awards. She then had a No. 3 hit in 1978 with "It's a Heartache," but soon drifted. She then signed with Sony and saw Meat Loaf perform "Bat Out of Hell" on the BBC. Impressed, she requested to work with Meat Loaf songwriter and producer Jim Steinman.

Steinman introduced her to his song "Total Eclipse of the Heart," which would be-



British rock-singer Bonnie Tyler sings "Silent Night" with a children's choir during the dress rehearsal for the Jose Carreras Gala in Leipzig, Germany, on Dec. 20, 1998. (AP)

come the debut single for her fifth studio album, "Faster Than the Speed of Night." He borrowed one of the song's lyrics - "Turn around, bright eyes" - from his 1969 musical "The Dream Engine" written as a student at Massachusetts' Amherst College. He told her the song was from a prospective musical version of "Nosferatu."

"Jim liked to put down a basic rhythm track, do nine takes of the song, choose the best one and then put the kitchen sink on there, like Phil Spector used to," Tyler told The Guardian in 2023. "He gave me a cassette to listen to in my hotel and we both preferred take two."

Featuring E Street Band members Roy Bitan on piano and Max Weinberg on drums, "Total Eclipse" is a rumination on lost love: "Once upon a time there was light in my life/ But now there's only love in the dark," she sings.

The video, a staple of early-days MTV, was shot in a frightening gothic former asylum in Surrey, where the guard dogs apparently wouldn't set foot in the rooms downstairs where they used to give people electric shock treatment. The visuals included slow-motion tossed doves, candles, dancing ninjas, dancing greasers, Tyler in frighteningly big shoulder pads, fencers, gymnasts, wind machines and shirtless boys wearing swim goggles being doused with water.

"Faster Than the Speed of Night" earned a Grammy nomination for best rock vocal performance - losing to Pat Benatar's "Love Is a Battlefield" - and Tyler got another nod for "Total Eclipse of the Heart" in the best pop vocal performance category, losing to Irene Cara's "Flashdance - What a Feeling."

Tyler never reached such dizzying heights again but stayed current with such movie soundtrack singles as "Holding Out for a Hero" - from 1984's "Footloose" - and "Here She Comes" from "Metropolis" also in 1984.

Her 2019 disc "Between the Earth and the Stars" featured duets with Rod Stewart, Cliff Richard and Status Quo's Francis Rossi, and she ended that year performing a Vatican Christmas concert before Pope Francis.

In 2013, she switched gears to make a country-flavored record in Nashville, "Rocks and Honey," which included the Vince Gill duet "What You Need From Me" and a little ballad called "Believe in Me," written by American songwriter Desmond Child and British songwriters Lauren Christy and Christopher Braide. "Believe in Me" was picked to represent the United Kingdom at that year's Eurovision Song Contest in Sweden.

"It was an absolutely wonderful atmosphere there," she told the San Francisco Examiner in 2023. "I was being interviewed every 15, 20 minutes, and when I walked out onstage behind the British flag, I thought the roof was going to come off! It was awesome, just awesome!"

In 2017, she joined Joe Jonas' band DNCE for a performance on the cruise ship Oasis of the Seas as part of a "Total Eclipse Cruise." When the moon passed in front of the sun, they played "Total Eclipse of the Heart."

Tyler was married to property developer and former Olympic judo competitor Robert Sullivan.

The Conversation

Reading for pleasure: A simple way to raise kinder children

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

William Dee Nichols, University of Maine & Michelle Kearney, University of Maine

Reading allows children to live in a vibrant world, surrounded by fairies, elves and talking animals, transporting them to places where the impossible becomes real. But reading for pleasure also helps children learn more effectively and broadens how they view, interpret and interact with the world. It gives them a form of expression that fuels their imagination and empathy for themselves and others.

But the percentage of children who read for fun is declining.

Just 37% of 9-year-olds and 14% of 13-year-olds read for fun almost every day in 2025, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress. By middle school, just 1 in 7 kids say they read for pleasure each day.

The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics has also tracked declines in kids and teens who read for fun, finding that in 2023, 14% of 13-year-olds read for fun each day, down

from 27% who said they did so in 2012.

Slightly younger kids tend to read for pleasure a bit more. Approximately 39% of 9-year-olds said they read for fun in 2022, down from 53% of 9-year-olds who said they did so in 2012, according to the Department of Education.

This trend is showing up alongside another concern: stagnant reading scores, especially among teenagers. It's tempting to treat those as separate problems. But as scholars of literacy, we don't think they are.

Outside of schoolwork, a child can read anywhere from as few as 100,000 words per year to 10 million or more for the most voracious readers.

This gap can help explain why some children's vocabularies grow so much faster than others.

Kids absorb words from context, over and over, across thousands of pages. One of us, for example, has a son named Andrew, who, at the age of 2, once absorbed and correctly used the word "viaduct," without anyone defining it for him, after he encountered it in a book about trains.

Older kids and teenagers who describe themselves as committed readers tend to have families that read to them since they were young, kept books around as their interests changed and made reading together

a genuine priority.

A well-selected book, in particular, has the ability to enhance a child's reading pleasure and reading ability, allowing them to see and feel the world with fresh insight.

Research shows a connection between teenagers who read for pleasure as young children: They tend to score higher on cognitive tests that measure verbal learning, memory and speech development.

Reading for pleasure can also help build vocabulary and reading fluency while enhancing focus.

There are other benefits to reading that won't show up on a reading as-



Kids who read for pleasure tend to stick with the habit as they grow older. (AP)

essment.

We believe that reading is empathy operating in its simplest form: imagining your way into someone else's experience and understanding the ripple effects of their actions.

Reading for pleasure, especially the kind that starts on a parent's or caregiver's lap, is one of the earliest and most reliable places kids get repeated practice doing that complex work.

Reading with a caregiver often progresses into children reading on their own, whether with a flashlight in bed or in the middle of the day on the couch.

When children become immersed in a book series on their own, in particular, it can help them develop connections with characters they grow to know, love or scorn. They inhabit a character who isn't them. They sit with an idea long enough to understand why someone acts the way they do.

Feeling emotionally invested in a character's decisions can also influence how young readers decide how to engage with others and treat people with civility and kindness in real life.

This skill doesn't arrive automatically with age. It is built through practice, and recreational reading in childhood is the main training ground for it.

Within the past 10 years, many schools have invested in evidence-based

reading instruction, with a renewed emphasis in phonics instruction to improve students' reading proficiency.

This shift has been an important and necessary step in helping students develop the foundational skills they need to become successful readers. At the same time, some classrooms have had fewer opportunities for independent reading and reading simply for enjoyment.

In 2024, literacy researcher Chase Young recalled asking a second grader whether a classroom reading activity had made him a better reader. The child responded, "No, because it's fun."

Already, that young student senses that fun and learning have been filed into separate categories at school. This highlights the real cost of letting effective instruction and engaging instruction drift apart, as though a teacher must choose between them.

This doesn't mean abandoning structured reading instruction, which matters enormously for students who are learning to decode written language by connecting sounds and symbols. It means reading a book that a child actually chose, rereading an old favorite, and allotting time for a teacher to read aloud purely because it brings joy to the class.

This effort extends outside of a classroom. When children live in

homes where they see books around, where their parents and siblings read together, and where their caregivers also read for fun, they are likely to see reading as enjoyable and not an item on a to-do list.

People who enjoyed reading as children are more likely to read books every day as an adult.

We each read to our children from when they were young and watched as they grew and developed their own love of books, ranging from the "Fantastic Four" comic series to the "Harry Potter" and "The Hunger Games" series.

Another one of us, Dee, has a daughter named Addie who remains an avid reader in her early 20s. She is currently reading the "Court of Thorns and Roses" fantasy series, among others.

And Andrew, the 2-year-old who once learned the word "viaduct" from a book, is still an avid reader. At 18, his shelves are now filled with manga and comic books, including a special section for "JoJo's Bizarre Adventure." His choice of genre and formats has evolved over the years, but his joy of getting lost in a story has not.

That's the version of reading we'd like more kids to fall in love with - before school, however well meaning, might convince them that fun and learning have to live in different places. (AP)

HEALTH/SCIENCE

President Xi calls for advancing Chinese modernization through sci-tech innovation

BEIJING, July 9, (Xinhua): Chinese President Xi Jinping on Wednesday called for accelerated efforts to achieve high-level self-reliance and strength in science and technology, and leverage sci-tech innovation to underpin and drive Chinese modernization.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks at a meeting in Beijing that brought together the national science and technology award conference, the general assemblies of the members of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and the Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE), and the 11th national congress of the China Association for Science and Technology.

He said the 15th Five-Year Plan period (2026-2030) is a critical phase for tackling tough challenges in building up the country's strength in science and technology.

"We must seize the historic opportunity, rise to the challenges of the times, accelerate efforts to achieve high-level self-reliance and strength in science and technology, and make steady progress toward the 2035 goal of becoming a leading country in science and technology," he said.

At the meeting, Xi presented China's top sci-tech award for the year 2025 to Chen Liqun, a researcher at the Institute of Physics under the CAS and a CAE academician, and Ben De, a researcher at the China Electronics Technology Group Corporation and also a CAE academician. After presenting the medals and certificates to the two scientists, Xi shook hands with them and extended his congratulations.

Xi and other Party and state leaders, together with the two top-award

winners, presented certificates to representatives of recipients of other awards, including the State Natural Science Award, the State Technological Invention Award, and the State Scientific and Technological Progress Award. Enditem

Also:

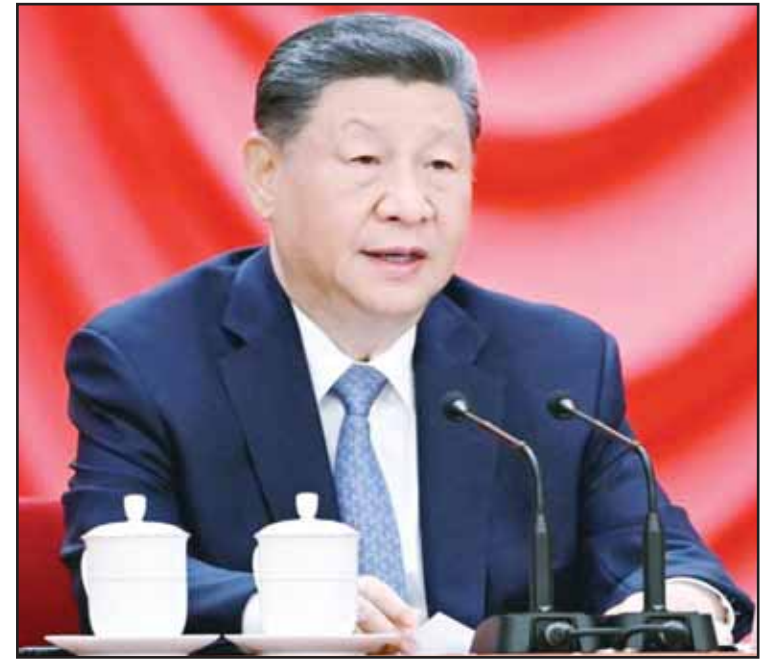
GENEVA: Shen Jian, China's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland, attended the launch of a United Nations (UN)-promoted global AI capacity development network on Sunday.

Shen welcomed the launch of the Global Network of Centers for Exchange and Cooperation on AI Capacity Building, saying that China supports advancing global AI governance within the UN framework, which is expected to ensure equal participation, joint development, and shared benefits for all countries, and make AI a new driving force of common development.

More concrete and sustainable cooperation should be carried out to meet the needs of developing countries in talent training, technological application, and other areas, so as to effectively bridge the AI divide, Shen noted.

Shen said China stands ready to work with all parties to support the Network in expanding its partnerships, and build it into an important bridge for Global South cooperation and a strong pillar for inclusive AI development.

Shen also congratulated the Center for Global AI Innovative Governance at Shanghai-based Fudan University on being a founding member of this UN-promoted network.



Chinese President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, attends a meeting bringing together the national science and technology award conference, the general assemblies of the members of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and the Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE), and the 11th national congress of the China Association for Science and Technology at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China on July 8. (Xinhua)

Cyclospora surges can be tricky to investigate

Outbreak of diarrhea-causing parasite grows to more than 1,000 cases

NEW YORK, July 9, (AP): Nearly 1,000 people in Michigan have been diagnosed with a parasitic infection that can cause weeks of watery diarrhea, making it the largest such outbreak in state history and one of the nation's largest in years.

No deaths have been reported and the source of the cyclospora infections hasn't been identified. Meanwhile, investigations into similar illnesses have been going on in 28 other states, including in Ohio, where people just across the Michigan border are also becoming sick.

Michigan officials first announced the outbreak last week, when they were aware of more than 170 cases - all in the southeastern corner of the state - since June 22. Michigan usually identifies only about 50 cases each year.

On Wednesday, the state reported the number had grown to 992, including about 40 hospitalizations. Just across the state line, Lucas County, Ohio, reported 306 cases as of Wednesday. Northwest Ohio has seen more than 500 cases.

Cyclospora surges can be tricky to investigate, and food poisoning sources can be hard to establish. But "there is clearly a linked outbreak happening right now," Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, Michigan's chief medical executive, told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

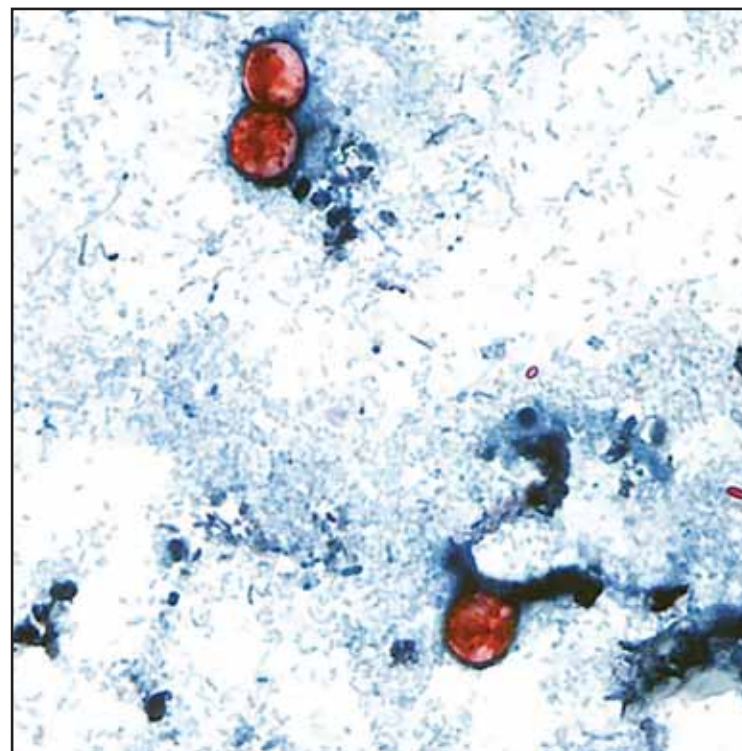
Here's what to know about the current situation:

Cyclospora is a microscopic, spherical parasite that commonly causes watery diarrhea "with frequent and sometimes explosive bowel movements," according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The illness, called cyclosporiasis, is not usually life threatening and is typically treated with antibiotics. Outbreaks tend to occur most often in the late spring and summer.

The heat-loving parasite infects the bowels and spreads through feces. In the past, people have been infected by consuming fruits or vegetables that were exposed to feces-contaminated irrigation water.

It's less common than a number of other kinds of foodborne illnesses, including salmonella and E. coli. For years, few U.S. cyclospora outbreaks were reported each year. But the number started rising about a decade ago, with a particularly notable spike in 2018 and 2019. Experts attribute the increases to climate change and better detection.

Comprehensive data on cyclospora outbreaks is lacking. But available information shows only a small number of documented outbreaks in the last 20 years have surpassed 1,000 cases. That short list includes a 1997 outbreak



This undated photo taken through a microscope provided by the CDC shows Cyclospora cayentanensis oocysts found in a fresh stool sample which had been prepared with a formalin solution and stained with safranin. (AP)

tied to Guatemalan raspberries that sickened more than 1,000 in the US and Canada, and a 2019 outbreak linked to Mexican basil that sickened more than 2,400.

There are several reasons it's challenging to know the exact toll, said Melanie Firestone, a University of Minnesota foodborne illness researcher. Some tests used to check for types of food poisoning are not geared to detect cyclospora, "so there is a lot of underreporting when it comes to this," she said.

Other challenges: Technicians aren't able to grow the parasite in labs, making it hard to draw evidence from contaminated produce. And it can be hard to figure out what food sick people had in common, because sometimes it's a single ingredient that might be common in multiple recipes - like basil or cilantro.

Also, it's possible that food distributors may channel contaminated foods to both grocery stores and restaurants, making it hard to discern where tainted food came from. Investigations can take months and sometimes never find a clear source.

Cases seem to be surging in and around southeastern Michigan. But it's not considered a national health emergency.

There's no evidence that the parasite has evolved to become more infectious, said Dianna Blau, the CDC's acting parasitic diseases branch chief.

Thousands of cyclospora illnesses are reported in the U.S. each year and it's not yet clear how unusual this year will be, she added. That said, the case total so far is four times higher than at the same point last year, according to current CDC national data, which lags dramatically from what's being reported by the states.

Michigan appears to be suffering the worst of it, but the state's aggressiveness in investigating and reporting cases may be "part of the reason why this looks like a Michigan problem," Bagdasarian said.

People who have diarrhea that hasn't gone away on its own within a few days should see a health provider and discuss the possibility of cyclospora, officials say.

The best way to prevent infection with a parasite is to avoid food or water that may have been contaminated.

Fresh produce should be thoroughly washed before being eaten. But be aware that cyclospora can really stick to some foods, so washing may not eliminate the risk of infection.

As Michigan officials investigate the potential source, they recommend consumers purchase whole heads of lettuce rather than prewashed, bagged lettuce or salad mixes, and to remove the outer two to three leaves before washing the remaining leaves under running water.



People gather around NASA's Artemis II capsule aboard the USS John P. Murtha at Naval Base San Diego on April 11 in San Diego. (AP)

Artemis II astronauts reunite with moonship 3 months after flight

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., July 9, (AP): The Artemis II astronauts reunited with their capsule Wednesday three months after flying around the moon and traveling deeper into space than anyone in history.

It was their first visit to Kennedy Space Center since they blasted off in April. The last time the four saw the pad, the massive Space Launch System rocket had stood upon it.

"It's a lonely place without that rocket on it," commander Reid Wiseman said. He and his crew spent the day thanking all those who helped send them on the flight.

The three NASA astronauts and one Canadian set a new record for distance travel during the lunar fly-around - 252,756 miles (406,771 kilometers). It was humanity's first trip to the moon in more than half a century.

Public enthusiasm over the mission is still high, Wiseman noted. While boarding a plane in France about a week ago, he said, a woman handed him her boarding pass with



Artemis II crew members Reid Wiseman, (from left), Victor Glover, Christina Koch and Jeremy Hansen stand as US President Donald Trump speaks during Salute to America, an Independence Day event honoring the nation's 250th anniversary on July 4 on the National Mall in Washington. (AP)

this message written on it: "Thank you for reminding us about joy and hope in the universe again."

They're excited about heading off to the next Artemis crew: three NASA astronauts and one Italian announced last month. Set for next

year, the Artemis III mission will remain in orbit around Earth and practice docking with lunar landers in development by SpaceX and Blue Origin. Artemis IV will follow as early as 2028 with a moon landing by two astronauts not yet identified.

Ebola death toll in Congo reaches 600 as new cases suspected in unaffected province

KINSHASA, Congo, July 9, (AP): New suspected cases of Ebola have been reported in parts of Congo that were previously unaffected, the government said, as the death toll in the country's latest Ebola outbreak reached 600.

The Congolese government's latest report, published late Wednesday, said two new cases were suspected in Kisangani in the Tshopo province, where cases had not been previously recorded. The total number of confirmed cases across the country has now reached 1,759.

According to the report, one of the two suspected cases was linked to the Nia-Nia health zone in Ituri province, where the first cases were reported, while the other case "has no apparent geographical connection to known outbreaks." Authorities were investigating.

The Congolese authorities declared a fresh Ebola outbreak on May 15, after the disease had been transmitted for weeks without official detection, according to the World Health Organization. The latest outbreak is caused by the rare Bundibugyo virus, which has no approved vaccine or treatment.

Last week, clinical trials for treatment began after research-



Vanny Birungi, a Red Cross volunteer, speaks to people during a public sensitisation campaign amid the Ebola outbreak in Bunia, Congo on May 25. (AP)

ers launched a highly anticipated study in the hope of fighting the virus.

Efforts to contain the virus have also been hampered by a funding gap, attacks on health centers, and an ongoing conflict in eastern Congo, the epicenter of the outbreak.

Meanwhile, escalating violence has injured 45 response and aid workers since the mid-May Ebola

outbreak in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), UN humanitarian said Wednesday.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said its partners recorded the injuries in 76 security incidents targeting Ebola response personnel and other aid workers across the Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu provinces.

Experts use data-carrying sea turtles to track cyclone

SYDNEY, July 9, (Xinhua): Sea turtles fitted with tracking devices and oceanographic sensors are helping scientists in Australia improve tropical cyclone forecasts by collecting critical data from otherwise inaccessible waters.

The storm-chasing sea turtles are gathering information that could revolutionize cyclone forecasting and make communities safer and more resilient during cyclone season, according to a release from Australia's University of New South Wales (UNSW) on Wednesday.

The team analyzed data from dozens of Olive Ridley and Flatback turtles tagged between 2014 and 2024 across northern Australia, which recorded more than 8,000 ocean temperature profiles at depths up to 80 meters before, during, and after cyclones, the release said.

The instruments were attached to turtle shells with a special adhesive designed to degrade with the turtles' natural oils and remain in place for up to a year, it said.

Tropical cyclones draw strength from warm seas, but current forecasts rely mainly on sea surface temperatures and lack data on deeper water layers, reducing accuracy, especially in remote regions, researchers explained.



This photo provided by Oceanic Society shows a hawksbill turtle underwater in Indonesia in 2019. (AP)

Staff notice significant player progress during the camp

Kuwait men's volleyball team arrives in Muscat for the West Asia Championship

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: The Kuwait men's national volleyball team has left Cairo and headed to Muscat to take part in the second edition of the West Asia Championship, scheduled to run from July 14 to 22 with the participation of leading teams from across the region.

Kuwait will enter the tournament after completing a preparatory camp in the Egyptian capital, where the squad spent several days undergoing intensive training and playing four friendly matches against the Egyptian national team.

The camp formed a key part of the team's preparations, with Argentine coach Julian Alvarez focusing on improving physical fitness, sharpening technical skills, and building greater understanding among the players. The coaching staff also used the friendly games to test different tactical approaches and evaluate the squad ahead of the regional challenge.

Kuwait Volleyball Federation board member and team delegation head Ziad Al-Anzi said the Cairo camp achieved its intended goals, both technically and physically. He highlighted the benefit of facing a strong Egyptian side, saying the experience helped the players improve their readiness and gain valuable match experience.

Al-Anzi added that the coaching and administrative staff noticed significant progress from the players throughout the camp, particularly in teamwork, tactical discipline, and overall performance. He also praised the team's positive atmosphere and determination to represent Kuwait strongly.

He acknowledged that the West Asia Championship will be highly competitive due to the balanced level of the participating teams but emphasized that Kuwait is aiming for strong performances and a place among the top contenders.

According to the tournament draw, Kuwait has been placed in Group A and will open its campaign against Syria on July 15 before meeting Qatar on July 18 in the preliminary stage.



Kuwait men's national volleyball team coach instructs players during a training session.

Staff scouting foreign players

Al-Nasr maintains Davor as coaching plans take shape

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 9: Al-Nasr handball team coach Manawer Dahash revealed that the club's coaching staff for all age groups will arrive in Kuwait at the start of August, ahead of preparations for the 2026-27 season.

Dahash said the club's management has completed its coaching structure early, extending the contract of Bosnian head coach Davor after the team's positive performances under his guidance.

The club has also appointed Tunisian Mohamed Ali as goalkeeping coach, while compatriots Emad Eddine and Hossam Eddine will take charge of the U-17 and U-15 teams respectively. Egyptian coach Mohamed Saeed has been named to lead the U-13 squad.

He added that the arrival of the technical staff will allow the teams to begin preparations according to a detailed program focused on improving players' physical and technical levels, assessing young talents, and developing a strong foundation to support the first team in future seasons.

On the foreign player file, Dahash



Action from Al-Nasr's handball campaign as players compete for the ball.

said the coaching staff is reviewing several profiles from different handball backgrounds to select reinforcements that match the team's needs. He stressed that any signings will be made based on strict technical criteria and with the aim of helping Al-Nasr compete for trophies in the upcoming season.

Dahash also praised the club's early preparations, saying the management is working to finalize all requirements ahead of the new campaign and ensure the teams enter competitions at their highest level.

CAS yet to confirm case

Russia challenges track & field ban at sports court

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, July 9, (AP): Russia's track and field federation says it has gone to the Court of Arbitration for Sport to overturn a World Athletics ruling suspending its athletes from international events due to the war in Ukraine.

World Athletics excluded all athletes from Russia and its ally Belarus from its international events in March 2022, days after Russian forces invaded Ukraine.

It kept that suspension in place at a council meeting last week. Since then, the International Olympic Committee has eased its restrictions on Russia ahead of the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics - something the Kremlin hailed as an "important step" - and recommended other sports bodies do the same.

"Russian Athletics notes that World Athletics' decision affects the fundamental interests of athletics in Russia and restricts Russian athletes' right to compete, on grounds that Russian Athletics considers discriminatory," the Russian track federation said in a statement.

"Russian Athletics continues to pursue all available legal measures to protect the interests of Russian athletes."

World Athletics didn't immediately respond to a request for comment and CAS has yet to confirm it's registered a case.

World Athletics President Sebastian Coe said last week his organization discussed options for "a conditional pathway back into international competition" for Russian and Belarusian athletes, but opted against.

"We presented options for the council to consider on this matter, however, the original decision remains on the sanctions that protect the integrity and fairness of our competitions, with no tangible movement towards peace negotiations having materialized," he said.

Russia hasn't competed under its own flag at a world athletics championships since 2015, when the Russian track federation was suspended over widespread doping.

A program allowing its athletes to compete under a neutral flag was ended in 2022 after the invasion of Ukraine. World Athletics' original doping suspension was lifted in 2023.

No Russians competed in Olympic athletics at the 2024 Paris Games because the qualification system is overseen by World Athletics, even though the IOC allowed neutral athletes in other sports.

The Kremlin has welcomed as an "important step" the International

Olympic Committee's decision to remove many of its restrictions on Russia, a big step closer to letting it field a full team when Los Angeles hosts the 2028 Games.

The IOC provisionally lifted a suspension of the Russian Olympic Committee and advised Olympic sports bodies they no longer need to be vetting its athletes for permission to compete as neutrals.

"It is an important step toward reinstating our athletes' legitimate rights to participate in international competitions," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters Wednesday. "Work will continue through our sports authorities. They are conducting this work constantly and consistently, this work will continue."

Peskov added that "now, it's very important that all our athletes have the opportunity to compete in major international events."

Ukraine has strongly objected to the IOC's move to lift restrictions imposed shortly after Russia invaded in 2022.

Ukraine's latest tennis star, Marta Kostyuk, condemned the IOC's "terrible" decision as being "very, very far from fair play" as she reached the Wimbledon semifinals on Wednesday.

The IOC's guidance to reintegrate Russians in international events is not binding for the governing bodies of individual sports.

Track and field has already said it will not follow suit and there is no sign yet of changes which could let Russia return to major soccer events like Euro 2028 or a future World Cup.

"FIFA has been made aware of the decision taken by the IOC to provisionally lift the suspension of the Russian Olympic Committee," soccer's governing body said. "FIFA will analyze the decision before deciding on next steps in coordination with the relevant stakeholders."



A man walks from the Russian National Olympic Committee building in Moscow. (AP)

Cheryl sets WNBA wins record, Lynx beats Sun

Sparks stun Fever in Clark's comeback

UNCASVILLE, Conn., July 9, (AP): Kayla McBride scored 23 points, and Minnesota beat the Connecticut Sun 86-80 on Wednesday night to give Lynx coach Cheryl Reeve the WNBA record for career wins.

Reeve has 380 regular-season wins, one more than Mike Thibault, whose son Eric Thibault is Minnesota's associate head coach.

"I am so glad this is over," Reeve said.

A four-time WNBA coach of the year, Reeve was hired by the Lynx in 2010 and has led the franchise to each of its four championships - tied with the Houston Comets and Seattle Storm for the most in history.

"(I) learned a lot from Mike through the years," Reeve added. "I know he's happy for me. And somebody's going to pass me and I'll be happy for them, too."

After Reeve tied Thibault with an 85-77 win at Dallas on June 28, the Lynx (16-6) lost back-to-back games for the first time this season. Minnesota - which moved a half-game in front of Las Vegas, the defending WNBA champion, atop the standings - lost Friday at New York in her first chance to set the record, then fell 90-89 to the Sun at home on Monday.

Natasha Howard had 12 points and 10 rebounds for Minnesota.

Leila Laca had 15 points, six assists and six rebounds for Connecticut (5-17) and Olivia Nelson-Ododa scored 14.

The Sun's Saniya Rivers was taken off the court in a wheelchair and did not return due to a left ankle sprain.

Minnesota rookie Olivia Miles, the No. 2 overall draft pick who



Golden State Valkyries guard Veronica Burton (22) drives past Toronto Tempo's Tima Pouye during the second half of a WNBA basketball game in Toronto. (AP)

was named an All-Star last week, missed her second consecutive game with a calf strain.

Brittney Griner (left quad strain) and Aneeshah Morrow (personal reasons) did not play for Connecticut.

Sparks 106, Fever 92

In Los Angeles, Nneka Ogwu-mike had 24 points, eight rebounds and five assists and the Los Angeles Sparks spoiled Caitlin Clark's return, beating the Indiana Fever to snap a three-game losing streak.

Clark returned after missing two games because of a back injury. She had nine points in 16 minutes for Indiana (12-9).

Kelsey Mitchell led the Fever with 29 points. Lexie Hull added

14, Damiris Dantas had 12 and Tyasha Harris 10. Indiana star Aliyah Boston sat out because of right leg injury.

Rae Burrell added 22 points for Los Angeles (9-11). Dearica Hamby added 21 points and nine rebounds, and Erica Wheeler and Ariel Atkins each scored 12 for Los Angeles. Kelsey Plum (lower left leg) and Cameron Brink (left ankle) did not play.

Atkins' steal and fast-break layup capped Los Angeles' 7-2 to begin the second half for a 55-43 lead. The Sparks led 82-71 entering the fourth.

Valkyries 83, Tempo 75

In Toronto, Janelle Salaun scored 26 points and the Golden

State Valkyries held off the expansion Toronto Tempo for their sixth straight victory.

Fellow reserve Kaitlyn Chen added 16 points for Golden State (16-7). Kayla Thornton had 15 points and nine rebounds.

Isabelle Harrison had 24 points and eight rebounds for Toronto (9-12). The Tempo have lost three straight.

Marina Mabrey scored 11 points a day after being named the Tempo's first WNBA All-Star. She also had six rebounds and four assists.

Toronto players Brittney Sykes (left plantar fascia), Kiki Rice (ankle sprain), and Temi Fagbenle (concussion) all missed the game.

Wallabies call on rookie Meredith for France test

BRISBANE, Australia, July 9, (AP): An injury crisis in Australia's flyhalf ranks has resulted in Declan Meredith being selected to make his test debut for the Wallabies in the Nations Championship test against Six Nations titlist France on Saturday.

Meredith, a 27-year-old playmaker from Cairns in far north Australia who linked up with the Canberra-based Brumbies in 2023, will be the sixth different player to start a rugby test at No. 10 for Australia since July of last year.

Later Thursday, France overhauled its lineup with eight changes after a tournament-opening 34-32 loss to New Zealand. One change was enforced after winger Damian Penaud sustained a calf injury after scoring a national record-extending 41st try early against the All Blacks.

Romain Ntamack returned at flyhalf and Matthieu Jalibert switched to fullback, and three Australia-raised players were included in the squad: prop Moses Alo-Emile and lock Emmanuel Meafou will start, with lock Tom Staniforth drop-



Australia's Ben Donaldson takes a shot at goal during the Nations Championship rugby international between Australia and Ireland in Sydney. (AP)

ping to the bench after making his France debut last week.

Jalibert, who has a calf injury, will need to pass a fitness test on Friday.

Injuries to Wallabies Carter Gordon, who started in last week's 33-31 loss to Ireland, and Ben Donaldson, who went on

as a replacement and missed a late penalty goal that could have won the game, meant Meredith will join Brumbies teammate Ryan Lonergan in yet another new halves pairing for the Wallabies.

In the last 12 months, Noah Lolesio, Tom Lynagh, James O'Connor, Tane Edmed and Gordon have been the starting playmaker for Australia.

Jock Campbell, who started at fullback last week in his first test in four years, will move to the bench as cover for Nos. 10 and 15, with Tom Wright returning at fullback in the only other change to the Wallabies' starting XV.

"The group has reset this week in Brisbane after what was a tough ending to the first game of the Nations Championship," Wallabies coach Joe Schmidt said in announcing the squad Thursday. "We have worked hard on continuing to improve after missing some vital opportunities last weekend."

No. 8-ranked Australia will also be without loose forward Tom Hooper, who injured his shoulder against Ireland, as

it bids to avoid a sixth consecutive loss. His place on the bench was filled by Nick Champion de Crespigny.

Lineups:

Australia: Tom Wright, Max Jorgensen, Joseph-Aukuso Sua'ali, Len Ikitau, Dylan Pietsch, Declan Meredith, Ryan Lonergan; Harry Wilson (captain), Fraser McReight, Rob Valetini, Jeremy Williams, Josh Canham, Allan Ala'alatoa, Josh Nasser, Angus Bell. Reserves: Brandon Paenga-Amosa, James Slipper, Taniel Tupou, Lachlan Shaw, Nick Champion de Crespigny, Tate McDermott, Jock Campbell, Filipino Daugunu.

France: Matthieu Jalibert, Theo Attis-sogbe, Fabien Brau-Boirie, Yoram Moefana, Aaron Grandidier-Nkanang, Romain Ntamack, Maxime Lucu (captain); Marko Gazzotti, Oscar Jegou, Lenni Nouchi, Emmanuel Meafou, Florian Verhaeghe, Demba Bamba, Peato Mauvaka, Moses Alo-Emile. Reserves: Maxime Lamothe, Jefferson Poirot, Tevita Tatafu, Hugo Auradou, Tom Staniforth, Killian Tixeront, Nolann Le Garrec, Calvin Gourgues.



Embassy of India
Kuwait

TENDER No. - KUW / ADM / 872 / 02 / 2026 DATED - 06th July 2026

TENDER NOTICE- OPERATION & MAINTENANCE OF HVAC, FIREFIGHTING SYSTEM, GENERATOR AND PLUMBING SERVICES

Embassy of India, Kuwait invites bids from interested companies for the Operation & Maintenance of HVAC, Firefighting System, Generator and Plumbing Services

Prospective / Interested companies are advised to inspect the area and present their offers in a sealed cover marked "Offer for Operation & Maintenance of HVAC, Firefighting System, Generator and Plumbing Services - to be opened by addressee only" and addressed to the "Head of Chancery, Embassy of India, Diplomatic Enclave, Arabian Gulf Street, Safat 13015, Kuwait." The bid must be submitted at the Embassy on or before 29th July, 2026.

The detailed tender document along with its annexure may be downloaded from Central Procurement Portal <https://eprocure.gov.in/cppp/> and also the official website of the Embassy of India, Kuwait from <https://indembkuwt.gov.in>. The tender document may also be accessed by scanning the QR code.

For any other clarification please contact Mr. Santosh Kumar, Attache on any working day (Sunday - Thursday) between 0800 hrs 1630 hrs on +965 97229912 or email to: admkuwait@mea.gov.in.



'Belgium growing in confidence ahead of Spain clash'

No more dancing

CARSON, Calif., July 9, (AP): No more playful dances. No more taunting social media posts. Belgium is done celebrating its victory over the host United States and hard at work on extending its World Cup run on American soil.

The Red Devils trained in the Los Angeles area on Wednesday with the memory still fresh of their 4-1 thrashing of the Americans in Seattle on Monday. After surviving a test from Senegal with a thrilling comeback and then thoroughly dominating the U.S. in its first two knockout games, Belgium faces its toughest challenge yet against unbeaten Spain in the quarterfinals on Friday.

But this tumultuous World Cup run has sparked something in this Belgian team, goalkeeper Thibaut



Belgium goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois (1) saves a shot from United States' Folarin Balogun (20) during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between the United States and Belgium in Seattle. (AP)

Courtois believes.

"We gained a lot of confidence, because we knew it was going to be a hard game against America," Courtois said at the LA Galaxy's suburban stadium. "They're obviously the home team with a full stadium (that's) with them, so it's nice to perform in a good way defensive, offensively, and just play our game."

Belgium went into the U.S. match-up with a world of indignant motivation after star American forward Folarin Balogun's one-game red-card suspension was curiously lifted by FIFA. The Red Devils took it out on an outclassed American team and then celebrated gleefully, both on the pitch and in the dressing room.

In the most viral moment, many players did the simplistic dance associated with U.S. President Donald Trump and performed by numerous athletes across the sports world in recent months, including American star Christian Pulisic.

Belgium left back Diego Moreira smiled slightly when asked about the meaning of doing the dance after Trump called FIFA President Gianni Infantino to ask for a review of Balogun's red card.

"There are different ways to celebrate different goals," Moreira said through an interpreter. "You can do different dances, and that's what we've done. We just celebrated the win after the game."

Courtois said he wasn't in the dressing room because he was at doping control, so he couldn't comment on the dance.

The Red Devils say they've put that cathartic evening behind them after landing for their second game of the tournament to be played at SoFi Stadium in the Los Angeles area.



Belgium's Jérémy Doku (11) controls the ball against United States' Alex Freeman (16) during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between the United States and Belgium in Seattle. (AP)

Belgium was still in a mood to argue with Americans, however: The team moved its training base on Wednesday with FIFA approval after deciding that its assigned fields at Los Angeles' Loyola Marymount University "did not meet the minimum standards required for our training session," according to a statement from the Royal Belgian

Football Association.

Belgium will be an underdog against Spain, which has yet to concede a goal in this World Cup. That's fine with the Red Devils, who have played their best soccer of the tournament since their stirring rally from a 2-0 deficit to beat Senegal 3-2.

When asked about facing pow-

erhouse Spain, Courtois' mind immediately went to Belgium's 2-1 victory over Brazil in the World Cup eight years ago in Russia. That upset sent the Red Devils to the semifinals for the first time in 32 years.

"They were favored against us, and maybe they were more individually with more quality in the team," Courtois said. "But I feel we are a

great team all together now, and we are fighting. Especially (the match) against Senegal showed our ability to keep believing until the end, and that's also a strength at the World Cup. The important thing is to win games. It's a nice thing to also play well, but the most important thing is to win and to compete, and that's what we did."

FIFA's Infantino targeted by complaint to Olympic ethics body after Trump lobbying on Balogun ban

GENEVA, July 9, (AP): FIFA's president Gianni Infantino is being referred to Olympic ethics investigators for a possible breach of political neutrality, a human rights group said, after U.S. President Donald Trump helped block a World Cup player's ban.

Trump took credit Monday for FIFA's decision - unprecedented in modern World Cup history - to let United States forward Folarin Balogun play Monday against Belgium despite getting a red card in the team's previous game. A Belgium team clearly fired up by the furor won 4-1 in Seattle.

The IOC cites neutrality among "fundamental principles of Olympism" for sports bodies like FIFA, and has jurisdiction over Infantino since he joined its exclusive group of 100-plus invited members in 2020.

"FairSquare will file a complaint to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) regarding FIFA President Gianni Infantino's repeated breach of political neutrality rules," the London-based sports and human rights NGO said in a statement Wednesday.

The pledge to file a formal complaint to the IOC Ethics Commission came one day after the Olympic body's president Kirsty Coventry told reporters none had yet been received.

"Obviously if they do they would look into it,"



In this file photo, President Donald Trump holds up a red card during a meeting with FIFA president Gianni Infantino in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington. (AP)

Coventry said Tuesday in an online news conference when asked about the Balogun controversy fueled by the Trump administration lobbying FIFA

and Infantino.

"Yes, we have been obviously watching everything play out," the IOC president had said earlier when asked about interference in field-of-play issues by the World Cup co-host nation, which also will stage the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

FIFA was asked for comment about the complaint to the IOC about its president.

Infantino has built close ties to Trump since 2018 when the U.S., Canada and Mexico won a vote to host soccer's World Cup this year.

The FIFA leader has been a regular White House visitor since attending the second Trump inauguration in January 2025 and said in November "we should all support" the president's work as it was "pretty good."

Infantino famously created the FIFA Peace Prize given to Trump at the World Cup tournament draw in Washington D.C. last December. Senior soccer officials said privately creating the peace award was an executive decision by Infantino.

FairSquare also formally filed a complaint to FIFA's ethics committee in December about Infantino and political neutrality. That is being supported by the Norway soccer federation and about 50 members of the European Parliament.

FIFA has provided no update in the seven months since on that case.

Hard to perform when pressure is truly on

WCup's bold penalty technique carries high risk & high reward



Switzerland goalkeeper Gregor Kobel (1) blocks a penalty shot by Colombia's Cucho Hernandez in a shootout during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match in Vancouver, British Columbia. (AP)

ATLANTA, July 9, (AP): It's theatrical. It can be maddening. It makes the world's top soccer players look very cool - or very silly.

The stutter-step penalty has been a feature of this World Cup, with the leading adopters of the technique being superstars Lionel Messi, Kylian Mbappé, Cristiano Ronaldo, Harry Kane and Neymar.

Let's say it's had varying levels of success.

It has sent France through to the quarterfinals and contributed to Brazil's exit. Messi didn't even hit the target when he tried one in group play.

As for Neymar, a converted stutter-step penalty proved to be his parting gift to international soccer.

And that feels poignant.

The stutter-step penalty - where a player feints, sometimes repeatedly and almost to the point of stopping, keeping his eyes on the goalkeeper during their run-up to the ball - is widely believed to have been spawned in Brazil in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Nicknamed the "paradinha," Portuguese for "little stop," it was made famous by Pelé and continued by a young Neymar when he was hailed as an heir to the three-time World Cup winner.

In 2010, at the age of 18, Neymar took the stutter to extremes when he scored a penalty for club team Santos by dancing up to the ball, coming to a standstill after placing his standing foot next to the ball, and then stroking it home, having made the goalkeeper commit a dive already.

It forced soccer's lawmaking officials to change the regulations ahead of the World Cup in South Africa that year, instructing referees to show a yellow card to penalty-takers who feint as they are about to strike the ball and to disallow those goals.

The law has been refined again since then, with players allowed to feint during their run-up but not after completing it before shooting.

The main idea of the stutter-step penalty is to befuddle goalkeepers so much in this battle of wits over 12 yards (11 meters) that they commit early and offer an easy path for a shot into the net.

This "goalkeeper-dependent technique" - as it's called by experts - is not for the faint-hearted.

"It is very sophisticated and hard to perform when the pressure is truly on," explains Geir Jordet, professor at the Norwegian School of Sport Sciences and author of the book "Pressure: Lessons from the Psychology of the Penalty Shootout." "If you're competent at executing this technique, this will effectively delete the risk factor of the goalkeeper going in the right direction and your odds suddenly going down."

However, Jordet added: "You need to have a very high clarity in your head to be able to do that."

When it comes to penalties, there will always be traditionalists in the head-down-and-hit-it-hard camp. There was also fleetingly a hop-skip routine, used notably by Portugal midfielder Bruno Fernandes and former Italy international Jorginho, that enjoyed some success around six or seven years ago.

Nowadays, most penalty-takers have the stutter-step technique in their armory, even if they don't use it all the time.

Messi used it - and failed - for his spot kick that drifted wide against Austria in the group stage. He changed course by doing a normal run-up for a penalty against Egypt in the last 16 on Wednesday and this time saw his kick saved.

England monitoring fitness of key trio

Henderson returns to England camp after wrist surgery

KANSAS CITY, Mo., July 9, (AP): England midfielder Jordan Henderson rejoined the Three Lions at their World Cup training base after undergoing surgery on his left wrist following a freak injury that he sustained while celebrating their Round of 16 triumph over Mexico last weekend.

The 36-year-old Henderson posted a photo on social media of his left arm wrapped after the procedure at the Kansas City Orthopaedic Institute, which is about a 10-minute drive from their team hotel in the suburb of Prairie Village, Kansas.

"Surgery done!" Henderson said. "Now let's get ready for the big one Saturday."

Henderson, who has been ruled out for the remainder of the World Cup, had been an unused substitute for Sunday's match against Mexico at Azteca Stadium in Mexico City. The Three Lions had just survived a 3-2 thriller to advance to a quarterfinal against Norway when Henderson hurt his wrist while climbing over an advertising billboard.

Henderson was taken from the field on a stretcher and remained in Mexico City while the rest of England's players returned to their base camp in Kansas City, Missouri. He later returned to the United States and underwent surgery on the wrist.

"I think you'll see him on the side there in one way, shape or form," England midfielder Morgan Rogers said after Wednesday's practice

at Swope Soccer Village. "He'll be there and contribute to us playing and being involved. That's the kind of person he is, and the kind of player he is. He always puts his ego to the side and puts us first and tries to help us in the best way possible."

Midfielder Declan Rice and defenders Marc Guéhi and Reece James also were not with the rest of the team for its training session ahead of the quarterfinal round. The Football Association said the trio was working on "individual pro-

grammes elsewhere."

Rice and Guéhi played the entire match against Mexico, but James has been out since hurting his hamstring against Ghana in the group stage. It's an injury that looms even larger with Jarell Quansah serving a red-card suspension against Erling Haaland and Norway.

"A few players have played a lot of minutes and are just resting their legs," Rogers said, "but I'm sure they'll be raring to go."

Henderson's only World Cup



England's Harry Kane, right, and Jordan Henderson, left, celebrate at the end of the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between Mexico and England in Mexico City. (AP)

appearance this year came in the group stage, when he came off the bench against Panama. It was his 91st career cap and made Henderson the first player from England to have appeared in four different tournaments.

"Time goes very quickly," Henderson said that day in East Rutherford, New Jersey. "It's very special to represent my country in four World Cups, so, yeah, I'm just delighted to be a part of this team. It's still as special now as when I made my debut in 2010."

"Time goes quickly," Henderson said, "but I'm just delighted that I can help the team as much as possible, both on and off the field, and just try and give everything I can to help us achieve our dreams, really."

England failed to make it out of the group stage at the 2014 tournament in Brazil, and it lost to Belgium in the third-place match four years later in Russia. At the 2022 tournament in Qatar, The Three Lions reached the quarterfinals before losing to France.

Their only World Cup title remains their 1966 triumph over West Germany.

"We're human. You can't help but think every win is a step closer to the end-goal," Rogers said. "At the same time, you take your eye off the ball for a second, there's really fine margins. ... We're all on the same page in attacking every game as best as possible."



England's Harry Kane, front center, walks to training for the World Cup soccer tournament in Kansas City, Mo. (AP)

Sports

Collina defends Attia decision

'Cannot remain silent': Egypt hits back over World Cup refereeing

ATLANTA, July 9, (AP)—The Egyptian Football Association (EFA) said it "cannot remain silent" after what it believes was unfair and biased officiating in Egypt's 3-2 round of 16 loss against Argentina.

Egypt coach Hossam Hassan and several players criticized the officiating after being left in disbelief as Argentina scored three unanswered goals in 13 minutes to pull off one of the biggest comebacks in World Cup history.

"Defending the rights and interests of the Egyptian national team is not a matter that can be ignored, minimized, or treated as secondary," the EFA said in a statement. "It is a responsibility that we carry with full conviction and determination."

FIFA's chief of refereeing Pierluigi Collina, in a statement issued, said while constructive discussion about decisions would always be part of football, "unfounded allegations have no place in our sport."

"Nobody can question the integrity of the FIFA World Cup match officials," he said. "When this happens, it may provoke reactions that lead to threats against them and their families. This is not right."

The EFA said that the referee failed to use the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system appropriately, leading to the loss to Argentina.

Egypt appeared to have netted its sec-

ond goal in the 58th minute, but a VAR review determined that Marwan Attia had fouled Argentina defender Lisandro Martínez early in the buildup up to the goal.

"Several key incidents raised serious concerns and left profound questions about the consistency and fairness of decisions that directly influenced the course of the game," the EFA statement read.

Collina said "during a competition, we prefer not to focus on specific incidents," but he defended the Attia decision.

"If a foul is identified in the buildup and is deemed to have had an impact on the goal, the VAR will recommend an on-field review," Collina said. "There is no defined limit regarding either the distance from goal or the amount of time between the incident and the goal."

He said in the disputed case, Attia "clearly treads on the foot of Argentina No. 6 Lisandro Martínez."

"We believe that a foul is a foul," Collina added. "Regardless of whether the foul appears 'obvious,' if the referee did not see it on the field of play, the VAR can intervene."

Mostafa Ziko netted later to give Egypt a 2-0 lead, but all momentum shifted onto Argentina's side when Lionel Messi assisted Cristian Romero in the 79th minute - the first of three consecutive goals.



Palestinians watch a live broadcast of the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between Argentina and Egypt in the West Bank city of Nablus. (AP)

World Cup Fixtures

Spain vs Belgium 22:00

Sunday

England vs Norway

00:00

Argentina vs Switzerland 04:00

Muchova ends Gauff's run at Wimbledon to reach the final



Arthur Fery of Britain plays a volley against Flavio Cobolli of Italy in their quarter-final men's singles match at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London. (AP)

Surprise semifinalist Fery developed game at Stanford University

LONDON, July 9, (AP)—Karolina Muchova ended Coco Gauff's run at Wimbledon in a drama-filled tie breaker to reach the final on Thursday.

Muchova won 6-2, 1-6, 7-6 (10) to become the fourth Czech woman in the last six years to reach the championship match of the grass-court Grand Slam.

"It was such a big fight," Muchova said. "It was a roller coaster."

Gauff wasted a match point in the tiebreaker when she dinked an attackable forehand into the net to follow a powerful first serve.

Muchova then produced a lob winner to set up her first match point, which she lost when she slipped to the grass and a passing shot from Gauff sailed by her.

But Muchova quickly set up another match point and produced a shot to the corner. Gauff reached the ball but her forehand response landed in the net and Muchova covered her hands in disbelief.

"You're up and down in 10 sec-



Karolina Muchova of the Czech Republic celebrates winning a point against Coco Gauff of the United States in their semifinal women's singles match at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London. (AP)

onds. You have a match point, then match point down. It's no time to think, but very nerve-wracking," Muchova said. "I'm really kind of shaking and trying to sink it in."

It will be the ninth-ranked Muchova's second Grand Slam final

after losing to Iga Swiatek in the 2023 French Open championship match.

For Gauff, it was still her most successful Wimbledon. Previously, the seventh-ranked American had gone only as far as the fourth round three times - including during her breakthrough run as a 15-year-old in 2019.

The men's semifinals on Friday feature top-ranked and defending champion Jannik Sinner against seven-time Wimbledon winner Novak Djokovic and French Open champion Alexander Zverev against British wild card Arthur Fery.

It was another hot day in London with the temperature soaring to 91 degrees Fahrenheit (33 Celsius), prompting spectators to fan themselves in the stands in an attempt to keep cool.

Muchova appeared to be struggling physically as the match wore on, bending over in exhaustion after one long rally and holding her abdomen in apparent pain during the final game.

"I'm OK," Muchova said. "I just was trying to catch a breath."

'This is an incredible victory'

Pogacar crushes rivals to regain overall lead

GAVARNIE-GEDRE, France, July 9, (AP)—Tadej Pogacar produced a tremendous solo ride on the iconic Col du Tourmalet to earn a 23rd Tour de France stage victory, reclaim control of the race and sap his rivals' morale after just six days of racing.

Pogacar, who first wore the yellow jersey after winning at Les Angles earlier this week, made the most of the first big mountain trek of this year's Tour in the Pyrenees to stamp his authority, sending a clear message to his rivals that he remains in a class of his own.

The two-time world champion covered the final 43 kilometers (around 27 miles) alone, crossed the Stage 6 finish line 2 minutes, 38 seconds ahead of his main challenger, Jonas Vingegaard, and reclaimed the coveted jersey.

"I would say this one goes in the top five of my Tour de France victories," Pogacar said. "This is an incredible victory, and one of the sweetest for sure. I was not calculating seconds or minutes, I just wanted to go full gas all the way to the finish."

Pogacar's teammate, Isaac del Toro, was third, 2:57 off the pace, ahead of Remco Evenepoel and Paul Seixas. Overall, Vingegaard lags 2:42 behind Pogacar, with del Toro in third place.

With his latest show of force, the UAE Emirates-XRG leader took a big step toward a record-equaling



Slovenia's Tadej Pogacar celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the sixth stage of the Tour de France cycling race with start in Pau and finish in Gavarnie-Gedre, France. (AP)

fifth Tour victory. Only Belgian Eddy Merckx, Spaniard Miguel Indurain and Frenchmen Jacques Anquetil and Bernard Hinault have won five Tours.

The stage started in scorching heat and was marked by several unsuccessful attempts of breakaways early on. Pogacar's teammates, along with those of Vingegaard in Visma-Lease a Bike, set a fast tempo even before

the day's biggest climbs.

The last stage in the Pyrenees took riders through two iconic ascents, the Col d'Aspin and the Tourmalet.

Once Ben O'Connor managed to get away, he was allowed some freedom because he was not a threat in the general classification. He was first at the foot of Aspin and was caught with about 5 kilometers of the climb left.

Riders then tackled the grueling 17.1 kilometer ascent up the Tourmalet, the first HC climb of the 2026 Tour - which means Hors Catégorie (beyond classification), because it is the hardest level.

Overnight leader Torstein Træen was dropped before del Toro accelerated with his leader on his wheel about 4.5 kilometers from the summit. Træen later crashed on the descent and was assisted by the race's medical team before resuming his effort.

Pogacar then went solo, with Vingegaard digging deep to limit his losses. Pogacar reached the summit first, and Vingegaard tried to claw back his 30-second deficit in the downhill. But tucked into an aerodynamic position, his rival took the same risks and was even faster.

Pogacar had a lead of more than a minute as he tackled the final climb up to the finish line in the town of Gavarnie-Gedre. He never looked back and the gap kept increasing.

Best of the Rest

Márquez named head coach of Mexico: Rafael Márquez is taking the reins of the Mexican national team. The Mexican Football Federation (FMF) announced that the former Barcelona star will succeed Javier Aguirre as head coach leading up to the 2030 World Cup.

Márquez, 47, served as Aguirre's assistant from August 2024 until Mexico's recent 3-2 Round of 16 loss to England. While a succession plan had been in place since 2024, rumors had circulated that the FMF might look elsewhere. (AP)

Newcastle signs Steur and moves for Manzambi: Newcastle sealed a deal to sign 18-year-old Ajax midfielder Sean Steur and is reportedly moving in for World Cup breakout star Johan Manzambi.

Ajax said Steur will join Newcastle for a transfer fee that could reach 27 million euros (\$31 million). Newcastle is getting younger after high-profile sales of Anthony Gordon and Sandro Tonali this off-season by the Saudi Arabia-owned club.

The 20-year-old Manzambi has impressed for World Cup quarterfinalist Switzerland, until suffering a knee injury in training, after a strong season for Europa League finalist Freiburg. (AP)

Former Romania star Muresan drowns in lake:

Former Romania soccer player Gabriel Muresan has died after drowning in a lake near the town where he was the mayor, local media reported. He was 44.

The Romanian soccer federation confirmed the death of a midfielder who played nine times for the national team, including in qualifying games for the World Cup and European Championship from 2007-11.

"The Romanian Football Federation sends its most sincere condolences to the family, friends and all those who knew Gabriel Muresan," it said. (AP)

Campbell joins promoted Elversberg:

American forward Cole Campbell is joining Bundesliga newcomer Elversberg from Borussia Dortmund.

The 20-year-old Campbell, who was born in Houston, was getting a four-year contract through June 2030, Elversberg said on its website.

"In Cole, we're signing another highly talented player who will be a tremendous asset to us with his exceptional pace and one-on-one ability," sporting director Christian Weber said. "We've been pursuing him for quite some time and are delighted that he has chosen to join us."

Kicker magazine reported Elversberg was paying 6 million euros (\$7 million) to Dortmund for the player who joined the German club's youth setup from Iceland in 2022. (AP)