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Opinion

In difficult times ... governments show compassion for their people

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

DURING crises, the state strives to maintain social stability by taking measures that assuage the suffering of the people, because amplified hardship leads to further instability, thus, increasing the cost for national security. War is one of the most difficult times, as the enemy lies in wait to exploit any vulnerability to undermine internal security.

When any country faces difficulty in meeting its food needs, it strengthens food security by supporting agricultural production and motivating related industries, which encompass several sectors. The Gulf states are in dire need of this move, more than any other country for a number of reasons, such as the fact that their exports and imports are dependent on a single waterway -- the Strait of Hormuz.

In addition, the Gulf states lack the infrastructure related to railways and various shipping methods that connect them to other countries like the European countries and overland transport is difficult.

Throughout its history, Kuwait has been facing numerous crises, both before the discovery of oil and in recent years. Kuwait has always been keen on strengthening security and social solidarity, especially during difficult times. This helped the people withstand disasters, such as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

For example, the COVID-19 pandemic was a crucial lesson that everyone should learn, particularly in strengthening food security, industry and the services sector.

First and foremost, this requires increasing the cash in the hands of citizens, perhaps, through the Central Bank of Kuwait instructing local banks to suspend monthly loan payments and halt interest accrual. This could positively impact the revitalization of the local economy and alleviate the burdens borne by the private sector, which is the engine of the economy and a source of social security.

No matter how short is the duration of a crisis, its effects can extend for years, as was the case following the Iraqi invasion, the 2008 global financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, whose effects are still being felt.

The recent war only exacerbated the situation.

Launching vital new projects helps reduce the unemployment rate and create job opportunities. According to crisis economics, maintaining social stability prevents economic collapse. Creating jobs contributes to securing food and medicine and curbing inflation to protect the most vulnerable groups.

In times of crisis, countries need to implement emergency cash transfer programs and provide subsidies to support affected families and businesses.

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Brotherhood beyond borders

UAE President's visit sends powerful message of 'unity'

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to Kuwait Dr. Matar Al Neyadi said the visit of UAE President His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is within the framework of solidarity and support for the sisterly State of Kuwait and its steadfastness in facing the brutal Iranian aggression.

In a statement to reporters, Al Neyadi affirmed that the visit reflects the depth of the fraternal relations between the two countries -- leaders and people, as well as the commitment to continue their consultations and coordination.

He stressed that Kuwait has a special place in the hearts of the leaders and people of the UAE, pointing out that such visit at this time underscores the shared destiny, exchange of vision and advice on various issues, and the continuous coordination between the two nations. He added that the visit is within the brotherhood context and the commitment to strengthen po-



Dr. Matar Al Neyadi, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Kuwait.

litical coordination between the two leaders.

He revealed that consultations and coordination between the UAE and Kuwait are ongoing at various levels, while pointing out that Bahrain, in its capacity as the Arab representative to the Security Council, submitted draft resolutions against the Iranian aggression. He confirmed that consultations and coordination regarding draft resolutions are ongoing with all countries in the region, adding that the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states issued joint statements denouncing the Iranian aggression and its hostile practices towards the region.

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Major co-op reform to reward shoppers

Loyalty points, higher dividends

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: The new cooperative action regulations, which the Ministry of Social Affairs is preparing to launch soon, will include a bonus system based on granting purchase credits in the form of "points" added annually to consumers' accounts.

According to informed sources at the ministry, citizens will receive points equivalent to ten percent of their total purchases, while residents will receive three percent. These points can be redeemed for future purchases through a dedicated mobile application for each cooperative society. The initiative aims to encourage repeat purchases and strengthen customer loyalty.

The regulations will also maintain annual dividend payments to shareholders, while increasing the maximum distribution limit from 12 percent to 15 percent of their total purchases.

Furthermore, the regulations will include a guide for cooperative sector departments to clarify responsibilities and prevent overlapping duties, along with the launch of an electronic platform to showcase the activities of cooperative societies.

The regulations also aim to expand automation in invoicing, inventory management, and sales and purchasing processes to enhance transparency and oversight, while encouraging the use of surveillance cameras.

The regulations stipulate that investment contracts will have a five-year term, renewable for an additional similar period. They will also establish controls for free offers, subsidies, tenders, and auctions. The new framework will regulate relationships with supplier companies, payment procedures, and investment in cooperative branches and stores, while prohibiting subcontracting.

Education Minister meets Kuwait's UNESCO envoy

Kuwait education mission takes shape in Paris

PARIS, July 11, (KUNA): Minister of Education Eng. Jalal Al-Tabtabaei met Kuwait's Permanent Delegate to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Dr. Ali Al-Mudhaf, during his participation in the Transforming Education Summit +4.

The Ministry of Education said in a statement on Saturday that the meeting aimed to support educational development by benefiting from international expertise and best practices, in line with Kuwait's strategy to advance its education sector.

The two sides discussed key education and culture issues, alongside ways to strengthen cooperation and coordination between Kuwait and UNESCO, while enhancing the country's presence in the organization's educational and cultural initiatives.

Al-Tabtabaei was also briefed on managing Kuwait's files within UNESCO and the Permanent Delegation's role in representing the country, supporting national interests, and expanding opportunities for international cooperation.

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Kuwait's Minister of Education Eng. Jalal Al-Tabtabaei with Kuwait's Permanent Delegate to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Dr. Ali Al-Mudhaf.

Farewell ceremony honors Turkish envoy's legacy

Kuwait is my second family: Ambassador Sönmez

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: The Indonesian Embassy in Kuwait on Saturday organized a farewell reception for outgoing Turkish Ambassador Tuba Nur Sönmez, in the presence of a number of ambassadors, heads of diplomatic missions and other dignitaries.

Indonesian Ambassador to Kuwait Lena Maryana pointed out that the Turkish Ambassador is not only a successful diplomat, but also a dear friend to many. She highlighted the friendly nature of the latter, as well as her refined presence and ability to build bridges of communication with everyone.

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Indonesian Ambassador Lena Maryana and Turkish Ambassador Tuba Nur Sonmez with members of the Diplomatic Corps during the ceremony.



Egyptian Ambassador honors Yasmine Yasser Salem, who received a 100% score.

Egyptian envoy hails students' outstanding success in Kuwait

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Ambassador of Egypt to Kuwait Mohamed Abu El-Wafa affirmed that the outstanding performance of Egyptian students in the Kuwaiti high school exams in the 2025/2026 academic year is a source of pride for Egypt and it proves the ability of the Egyptians to excel and innovate wherever they may be.

Abu El-Wafa made the statement at a ceremony in honor of the top-performing Egyptian high school students, with Director of the Private Education Department at the Ministry of Education Mariam Al-Anzi,

Director of Academic Programs at the Arab Open University Dr. Mohamed El-Sayed, parents and members of the Egyptian community in attendance.

He asserted that the Egyptian students in Kuwait presented a commendable model, reflecting the authentic values upon which they were raised. He emphasized that their success brought joy to their families, raised the name of Egypt high, and proved the ability of the Egyptian community to compete and achieve top results.

He also extended his appreciation to the parents for their support and encouragement of their children.

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Three-day live-fire drill begins

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: The Ministry of Interior, represented by the General Department of the Police Air Wing, announced that a live-fire exercise will be conducted at the BRAVO maritime site, located between Awah Island and Kubbar Island, at an altitude of 3,000 feet above sea level. The exercise will take place from July 12 to July 14 between 6:00 am and 10:00 am, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ministry stated that the exercise is part of its approved training programs designed to raise the level of operational readiness, improve efficiency, and strengthen the capabilities of aircrews in carrying out their duties according to the highest standards of safety and security.

The Ministry of Interior urged all seafarers, fishermen, and boat owners to avoid the designated exercise area during the specified times and to follow all issued instructions to ensure public safety.



Gulf Bank names AIAdsani Deputy CEO, AlGharabally GM



ABK collaborates with the Public Authority for Manpower to organize an open recruitment day for its Direct Sales Academy



Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:23	Asr	15:28
Sunrise ..	04:57	Maghrib ..	18:50
Zohr	11:53	Isha	20:21



HH the Amir HH the Crown Prince HH the Prime Minister

Amir congratulates Mongolia President on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, July 11, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Saturday to President Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh of Mongolia on his country's National Day.

His Highness wished the President continued good health and well-being, and further progress and prosperity for Mongolia and its people.

Crown Prince congratulates

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations

on Saturday to President Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh of Mongolia on his country's National Day.

His Highness conveyed his sincere congratulations and wished the President continued good health and well-being.

PM congratulates

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations on Saturday to President Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh of Mongolia on the occasion of his country's National Day.

Pledge to maintain food supply

'India supports Kuwait in current regional turmoil'

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Paramita Tripathi said the visit of Indian External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar to Kuwait was an expression of the solidarity of India with Kuwait in light of the current developments in the region.



Tripathi

In a statement to reporters, Tripathi indicated that the minister conveyed a message to the Kuwaiti leaders, affirming the depth of bilateral relations and the readiness of New Delhi to fully support Kuwait during this period.

She disclosed that during his meetings with Kuwaiti officials, the minister confirmed the readiness of India to cooperate with Kuwait in various priority areas, particularly those related to food security and addressing supply chain and logistical challenges. She said India already provided specialized foam materials for extinguishing large fires as part of its efforts to support Kuwait.

She revealed that more bilateral visits are expected in the coming period, during which agreements will be discussed and cooperation between the two countries will be strengthened, without giving details.

She said Jaishankar had a series of high-level meetings with His

Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and the ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defense. She added that discussions focused on bilateral relations, regional security developments, and impact of regional conditions on regional and global security and stability.

She confirmed that the Kuwaiti side warmly welcomed Jaishankar, reflecting the strength of the historical ties between the two countries.

On the meeting of Jaishankar with members of the Indian community in Kuwait, she explained that the purpose of the meeting is to listen to the community members and learn about their situation under the current circumstances. She indicated that the Indian Embassy maintains continuous contact with the Indian community, and that the ministry in New Delhi has been receiving daily reports on their situation.

She added that the minister affirmed during the meeting that the safety and well-being of Indian citizens abroad is the top priority for of Indian government. She also stated that the minister confirmed that members of the community expressed their happiness over his visit and the opportunity to exchange views and learn about India's efforts to serve them. She expressed hope for the continuation of mutual visits between the two countries, hinting that there are already mutual invitations in place and arrangements are underway for more official visits.

CAPT floats tender for the operation of electrical grid

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassh/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: The Board of Directors of the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) floated a tender for consultancy services related to studies and the operation of the electrical grid in the Control and Monitoring Centers Sector.

Through this tender, the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy aims to train national personnel in preparing operational and planning studies for the electrical grid, in addition to conducting the studies required by the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA), thus, enhancing Kuwait's participation.

The ministry is keen on supporting the work of the electricity transmission network and power station sectors by engaging consultants to prepare specialized studies related to protection systems in electricity transmission stations and others specific to power stations. This will contribute to the efficient and safe operation of the electrical system, particularly during the summer season.

The tender will also enable the ministry to prepare specialized studies on energy exchange operations between Kuwait and the GCCIA.

Moreover, CAPT approved the recommendation of the minister regarding the tender for upgrading data collection and analysis equipment for power generation plants and main substations.

Meanwhile, the ministry, represented by the National Campaign for Energy and Water Conservation ('Wafer') and the Renewable Energy Department, participated in the Sustainable Living and Energy Efficiency in Buildings Exhibition, organized by Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) for its employees from July 8-9.

The participation of the ministry included delivering an awareness lecture on the importance of conserving electricity and water, and highlighting best practices and modern solutions to raise efficiency in workplaces and homes.

It also participated in the accompanying awareness exhibition, showcasing the initiatives of 'Wafer', along with a number of energy and water saving technologies and innovations.

13 caught in security campaigns

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Officers from the General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry apprehended 13 wanted individuals and traffic violators within a 24-hour period, as part of the ongoing security campaigns in the governorates.

A security source said the traffic officers arrested 13 people, including those wanted by law on outstanding arrest warrants, others who violated the Residency and Labor laws, and some who appeared to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. He added that all those arrested were referred to the relevant authorities for legal action.

'Time now to implement education policy, plans'

Kuwait did exceptionally well in crisis: minister

PARIS, July 11, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaei underlined the importance Friday on moving forward from commitments to implementation with regard to education, and discussions during the Transforming Education Summit +4.

The remarks by the minister were made during a working session on the sidelines of Transforming Education summit, hosted by UNESCO, and under the auspices of President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammad, and UNESCO Director-General Khaled El-Enany.

Al-Tabtabaei added, "we highly value this Summit as an important opportunity to move beyond commitments towards implementation; to review the progress achieved; to exchange experiences and lessons learned; and to identify priorities for the period leading to 2030 and beyond."

The minister said, "this reflects the very essence of the Transforming Education Summit and the ongoing pursuit of Sustainable Development Goal 4."

Al-Tabtabaei began his speech with conveying greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, 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, together with the greetings of the Government and the people of the State of Kuwait.

He later said, "I would also like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for hosting and organizing this high-level gathering, and for its continuous efforts in leading the international dialogue on the future of education, strengthening cooperation among Member States, and following up on the commitments arising from the Transforming Education Summit."

Al-Tabtabaei added, "what brings us together today extends far beyond the traditional discussion of improving education."

"The world is witnessing rapid transformations, overlapping crises, and unprecedented technological advancement, all of which compel us to reassess the ability of our education systems to remain resilient, adapt, and continue to evolve."

"Against this backdrop, the State of Kuwait has translated its commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 4 into clear implementa-



Al-Tabtabaei



Khaled El-Enany

tion pathways and practical measures aimed at enhancing the quality of education, ensuring equitable access, and strengthening the resilience of the education system in responding to emerging challenges."

The minister noted, "the 2025-2026 academic year marked an exceptional chapter in the educational journey of the State of Kuwait."

"Amid the extraordinary regional circumstances resulting from the unprovoked Iranian aggression, we were required to take swift decisions that placed the safety of our students at the forefront of our priorities while, at the same time, safeguarding their fundamental right to uninterrupted learning."

"Accordingly, our education system transitioned to distance learning across all educational stages, enabling more than half a million students to continue their educational journey through our digital learning platform, while maintaining attendance rates exceeding 85 percent."

Digital Platform

Al-Tabtabaei also said, "we recognized from the outset that ensuring the continuity of education could not be achieved merely by making a digital platform available."

"Sustainable Development Goal 4 places upon us the responsibility of guaranteeing inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all. Consequently, our response evolved beyond a purely digital solution into a comprehensive educational and operational response."

"We therefore reorganized the school day, developed new mechanisms for monitoring and assessment, strengthened technical and psychological support services, and made textbooks and educational resources available electronically to all learners."

The minister added, "in parallel, the Ministry of Education of the State of Kuwait established a phased mechanism for delivering printed textbooks directly to the homes of students in government primary and intermediate schools."

"This initiative was supported by an integrated electronic system that continuously

updated records of students who had not yet received their textbooks and monitored the delivery process until completion.

These efforts resulted in the successful delivery of textbooks to approximately 175,000 students, with the distribution of nearly 700,000 textbooks."

The minister noted, "we did not regard this initiative merely as a logistical operation. Rather, we viewed it as a practical embodiment of our commitment to the principle of equity, ensuring that exceptional circumstances would never become a barrier preventing any student from accessing the essential tools of learning."

"As part of the Ministry of Education's strategic vision to advance digital transformation across educational, instructional, and administrative functions, the Ministry has worked to establish an integrated digital ecosystem that goes beyond the digitization of procedures to provide a more efficient, accessible, and seamless educational and service experience."

Al-Tabtabaei said, "to this end, the Ministry has developed and launched more than twenty-seven digital platforms and electronic services, encompassing AI-enabled digital learning resources, online educational services for students and parents, as well as professional and administrative services designed to support both teaching and administrative personnel."

"Among these initiatives is the Electronic Teacher Transfer Platform, which now serves more than 106,000 teachers."

"The Ministry has also introduced an AI-powered educational chatbot linked directly to the national curriculum and made available to students in both public and private education. This service enables learners to access educational resources and interact with curriculum content more easily, efficiently, and flexibly."

"Digital transformation has therefore become a fundamental pillar in the modernization of Kuwait's education system."

"It has enhanced access to knowledge and public services improved institutional efficiency, and elevated the quality of services delivered to students, parents, educators, and the wider educational community."

The minister added, "at the same time, the State of Kuwait has placed teachers at the heart of educational transformation."

"We remained committed to ensuring the continuity of professional development despite the exceptional circumstances we faced."

"Accordingly, teacher training programs were successfully transitioned to digital platforms, enabling remote professional development courses that benefited approximately 2,350 teachers, department heads, and educational supervisors."

Other Voices

Dreams ... but achievable

By Ahmad alsarraf

PRIOR to 1992, Olympic basketball was limited to amateur players, and the United States often won the gold medal. Towards the end of the 1980s, other teams emerged, and the United States began to decline.

At the 1988 Seoul Olympics, the Soviet Union defeated the United States, prompting it to assemble an unbeatable team, dubbed the "Dream Team."

After FIBA changed the rules in 1989 to allow professional players to participate, the United States entered the 1992 Barcelona Olympics with the Dream Team, featuring basketball legends of the era such as Jordan and Johnson, and easily won the gold medal.

However, the Dream Team's greatest achievement was spreading basketball around the world, creating future rivals whom they later defeated.

The Dream Team was so dominant and inspiring that it taught the world how to play basketball with skill and showed that any nation can achieve the impossible when it sets its mind to it. The dream created the greatest team not only in basketball but in all of sports. It was the result of a carefully planned vision, supported by the U.S. administration.

Ninety percent of the people around the world became aware of the country of Cape Verde after its football team participated in the Olympics for the first time in history and nearly eliminated Argentina, the multiple world champions, just days ago.

Cape Verde is the smallest country participating in the Olympics. The total size of the country is just 4,033 square kilometers and it has a population roughly one-third that of Kuwait. It achieved remarkable results by drawing with Spain, the European champions, as well as Uruguay and Saudi Arabia. This brought widespread recognition to the country and indescribable joy to its small population.

Cape Verde's qualification for the Round of 32 is an unprecedented achievement for the smallest country to reach this stage in World Cup history.

Its match against Argentina, the world champions, was described as one of the greatest World Cup matches ever.

Kuwait achieved many sporting victories over the past forty years. By 1986, it had become the most successful team in the history of the Gulf Cup, having won ten titles.

Kuwait's sporting fortunes were severely impacted by the Iraqi invasion of 1990. The national team later returned to win the Gulf Cup in 1996 and reached the semi-finals of the Asian Cup that same year.

World-renowned shooter Fehaid Al-Deehani played a pivotal role in raising Kuwait's profile, achieving the greatest individual accomplishment in Kuwaiti sporting history by winning bronze medals in shooting at the 2000 Sydney and 2012 London Olympics. He then went on to win gold medals at the 2016 Rio Olympics and the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Kuwait also made its mark in powerboat racing when Yousef Al-Abdali won the F2 World Championship title in 2015.

In an unprecedented achievement in equestrian sports, at the 1982 Asian Games in New Delhi, Nadia Mohammad Al-Mutawa became the first Kuwaiti and the first woman to win a gold medal in show jumping at the Asian Games. Her sister, Jamila, won the silver medal, and Sheikh Bara'a Al-Sabah secured the bronze, marking a historic achievement in a sport traditionally dominated by men.

In Kuwait, we dream of returning to regional and international sporting success. Achieving this dream requires a political decision, followed by a clear vision, a well-designed plan, and effective execution with the support of international experts. No party should be allowed to interfere in the work of these teams.

What enabled the Egyptian, Moroccan, and Cape Verdean teams to reach unprecedented levels in the World Cup despite the enormous obstacles they faced? The technical director is the leader of the battle, the one who sets the plans, and decides who plays, and when. The technical director is the CEO of the team, the one who receives the highest rewards for success, and the first to be dismissed when the team fails.



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Kuwait and Egypt FMs discuss regional scene

KUWAIT CITY, July 11, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received a phone call from his Egyptian counterpart Badr Abdelaty on Thursday.

During the phone conversation, they addressed the latest regional developments, particularly the current escalation and its impacts as well as ongoing efforts aiming at de-escalating tensions and shoring up diplomatic solutions in a way that maintains regional security and stability.

Kuwait committed to promoting trade law

NEW YORK, July 11, (KUNA): The Fatwa and Legislation Department has reaffirmed the State of Kuwait's commitment to advancing international legal frameworks to enhance legal certainty, stimulate global trade and investment, and streamline dispute resolution mechanisms.

Heading the Kuwaiti delegation at the conclusion of the 59th session of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) late Friday, Department Advisor Alia Al-Sabah told KUNA that Kuwait remains dedicated to updating multilateral legal structures to align with rapid global economic transformations.

Al-Sabah revealed that the commission successfully finalized the Statute of the Advisory Centre on International Dispute Settlement, officially recommending its adoption by the UN General Assembly.

She noted that the committee has been authorized to evaluate potential host locations for the center's headquarters, with a final recommendation slated for submission to the General Assembly in 2027.

Furthermore, the head of the delegation announced that the commission adopted the final draft of supplementary provisions governing international advisory dispute settlement procedures, signaling a major step forward in global cross-border mediation.

During its review, the UNCITRAL Secretariat also highlighted upcoming milestones, including the United Nations Convention on Negotiable Cargo Documents (NCD), which is scheduled to open for state signature in October 2026.

The legal advisor concluded by noting that the session wrapped up with the formal adoption of comprehensive working group reports spanning all agenda items. The State of Kuwait's participating delegation also included Senior Prosecutor Alaa Al-Enezi and Senior Attorney Abdullah Al-Otaibi.

Kuwait, GCC must unite, shun sectarian divisions

"WE in Kuwait have suffered, and continue to suffer, from the repercussions of social conflicts that, at critical moments, came close to striking the depth of our national fabric," columnist **Khaled Ahmad Al-Tarrah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"This is not a passing incident, nor an emotional debate on social media platforms, but rather an accumulated danger - the transformation of sectarian differences into a tool for mobilization and conflict.

"The Iranian regime, by its very theocratic nature, has exploited sectarianism in the region under the banner of supporting the oppressed to extend its political and social influence beyond the boundaries of the nation-state.

"The real danger lies not only in external rhetoric but also in the ability of some voices within society to adopt and promote such narratives within the local environment. This opens the door to creating a deep social rift.

"Recently, a comment by a former Kuwaiti MP regarding the appointment of a Shiite minister in Saudi Arabia sparked controversy on the X platform. The event was portrayed from a narrow sectarian perspective as a historic first for Saudi Arabia.

"However, nations are measured by competence and achievement, not by the religious affiliations of their officials. Nations are built by all their citizens, not by sectarian classifications. Whenever sectarianism is introduced into arenas of political, professional, or academic competition, the result is a long-term drain on social cohesion, religious harmony, and political stability.

"Some GCC countries have paid a heavy price when sectarian considerations were prioritized over the principles of the nation-state, as seen in Iraq, Lebanon, and Yemen. The only winners in such conflicts are chaos and demagoguery, while the greatest loser is the citizen, regardless of sect or affiliation.

"The most dangerous outcome would be the transformation of sovereign decisions in the Gulf states into tools for transnational sectarian and religious polarization. Freedom of opinion, a firmly established constitutional, social, and political value in Kuwait, does not mean abandoning responsibility, nor does it justify actions that could threaten the security and stability of the unified Gulf family.

"History has taught us that discrimination among citizens plants the seeds of division and societal conflict. Incendiary rhetoric can fuel social and sectarian crises that become difficult to resolve. Those who believe they can benefit from provoking sectarian tensions fail to recognize that once the flames of discord are ignited, they do not distinguish between Sunnis and Shiites, between nations, or between different ethnic groups.

"In Kuwait, we aspire to a national unity that goes beyond mere slogans, one reflected in responsible discourse, a clear vision, and an awareness that refuses to be drawn into the arenas of social carnage. We hope that the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states will continue to maintain a unified stance against any project that seeks to divide societies.

"What is needed today is a comprehensive review and a wise approach. Everyone must understand that classifying society along sectarian lines does not build a strong state or a cohesive nation. True victory does not lie in taking positions or expressing sectarian and religious reservations, but in protecting internal stability, strengthening national unity, preserving national dignity, and upholding the values of tolerance and coexistence.

"The nation is greater than sects and ethnicities and rises above all disputes. It is the umbrella that embraces everyone and the fortress in which all citizens seek security and protection."

Also:

"The media has recently undergone a radical transformation, completely different from the past, shifting from limited-circulation print newspapers to widespread digital platforms that reach millions of people with the click of a button," Kuwaiti writer and lawyer **Abdullah Falah Al-Hajri** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"This rapid transition highlights the striking contrast between the past and the present in the way news is disseminated and its impact on society. In the past, it took considerable time for information to reach the public because news had to pass through several stages, including editing, printing, and distribution, before reaching readers the following morning.

"Readers were accustomed to waiting for the newspaper each morning to learn about current events. Today, news is published the moment it happens and reaches phones and screens instantly, without delay or effort.

"Print newspapers were subject

to strict editorial oversight, and their sources were more limited, giving news a higher level of verification and credibility.

"On the other hand, digital media is characterized by speed and diversity, but it is also more vulnerable to rumors and unreliable information. Anyone can publish content that reaches thousands of followers within seconds. It is also a paradox that readers in the past dedicated more time to reading and analyzing articles, while today's audience is often satisfied with a quick glance at headlines and scrolling through short videos.

"This, of course, affects the depth of understanding and the ability to maintain focus. Digital media relies on immediate engagement, while print media emphasized detail and explanation.

"Despite these differences, it is undeniable that digital platforms have expanded access to knowledge, facilitated the availability of information, and enabled direct interaction with events and content creators. The audience has become an active participant in the creation of news rather than merely a passive recipient.

"Clearly, the transition from print to digital media was not simply a technological advancement, but a comprehensive shift in thinking and communication styles. Between the slower pace of yesterday and the speed of today, it is essential to use media consciously and responsibly, ensuring that the "click of a button" becomes a tool for knowledge rather than a means of spreading misinformation."

□ □ □

"All parties emerged from the recent war believing that the cost of continuing it would be far higher than the cost of negotiation," Saudi writer **Saleh bin Abdullah Al-Muslim** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The United States demonstrated its military capabilities but discovered that toppling the Iranian regime or imposing complete surrender was neither an easily achievable objective nor one that came at an acceptable cost.

"On the other hand, Iran managed to persevere and demonstrate its ability to withstand military and economic pressure. However, Iran also realized that prolonging the confrontation would exacerbate its economic crises and threaten its internal stability.

"Since the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the United States and Iran, the Middle East has entered a new phase, distinct from the phase of direct military confrontation, yet still far from achieving lasting peace. The MoU, in essence, is not a final peace agreement, but rather a political framework for a ceasefire and the beginning of negotiations on the most complex issues, foremost among them being Iran's nuclear program, U.S. sanctions, and the future of regional security.

"Reports indicate that the agreement laid the groundwork for a cessation of hostilities, the reopening of maritime navigation, and the resumption of negotiations, while leaving the major points of disagreement to be addressed in future rounds. Israel now faces a new reality - any agreement that does not decisively address Iran's nuclear program, missile capabilities, and network of regional allies will not fully achieve its security objectives.

"This explains Israel's continued reservations about the MoU. The war proved that military force alone is no longer sufficient to resolve the war and that a return to the negotiating table has become a necessity for all parties. Regional states have also emerged as more influential mediators in crisis management, reflecting a shift in the balance of diplomatic efforts in the region.

"The war has reshaped regional security priorities, making energy security, maritime routes, and economic stability issues no less important than military considerations. If Washington and Tehran succeed in reaching a comprehensive agreement that determines the future of the nuclear program, establishes a mechanism for lifting sanctions, and provides guarantees for regional security, the region could enter a period of relative calm that may last for years.

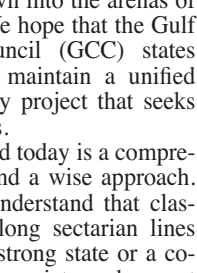
"The United States understands that any new war will affect the global economy and energy markets, as well as incur substantial military and political costs.

"At the same time, Iran knows that a return to military escalation could lead to the reimposition of even harsher sanctions and increased pressure. Iranian political experience over the past decades shows that Tehran rarely accepts concessions under direct pressure. Its approach has largely been based on long-term negotiations, where every concession is linked to a corresponding benefit."

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



Al-Tarrah



Dr. Al-Muslim

Housing projects, services top discussions

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received on Thursday the Director General of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), Engineer Rashid Hadi Al-Enezi, accompanied by the Director of the Legal Affairs Department and member of the Farwaniya Governorate Council, Dr. Aziza Al-Musallim, Director of the Fourth District Engineer Hassan Al-Failakawi, and Head of the Fourth District Projects Department Engineer Mona Rajab.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser welcomed the delegation and praised PAHW's role and efforts in implementing housing projects and providing services to citizens.

Eng. Al-Enezi briefed the governor on PAHW's most prominent projects and plans in the Farwaniya Governorate.

During the meeting, they discussed several issues of mutual interest and explored ways to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the two entities.

Governor Sheikh Athbi affirmed the governorate's commitment to supporting efforts that help accelerate project completion and enhance the quality of services provided to citizens, in line with the aspirations of the



Farwaniya Governorate photo

Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah receives the officials from various departments.

governorate's residents.

Eng. Al-Enezi expressed his appreciation to the governor for the warm reception and

his continued interest in following up on projects and services that benefit the residents of Farwaniya Governorate.

269 new officers

'Mol nurtures staff for nation security'

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: The graduation ceremony for the 28th class of non-commissioned officers (first sergeant) was held in the Martyrs Hall at the Saad Al-Abdullah Academy for Security Sciences on Thursday, under the patronage of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.



Al-Wuhaib

Present at the event were Undersecretary of the ministry Major General Abdulwahab Al-Wuhaib, acting Assistant Undersecretary for Public Security Affairs Major General Hamad Al-Munaifi, acting Assistant Undersecretary for Support Security Services Brigadier General Fawaz Al-Roumi and several other security officials.

Al-Wuhaib conveyed the congratulatory message of Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef to the graduating class, which included 269 graduates, for successfully completing a comprehensive training and qualification program.

The training course consisted of various security and specialized subjects, in addition to training in sign language, first aid and martial arts.

Al-Wuhaib emphasized that the graduation of this class is a continuation of the efforts of the ministry to fully support its security sectors with qualified national personnel who are capable of performing their duties efficiently.

He pointed out that the next phase requires the graduates to adhere to the values of discipline and dedication, to utilize their acquired knowledge and skills in fulfilling their security mission, and to shoulder their national responsibility.

He expressed his best wishes to the graduates for continuous success in their career, particularly in serving their country and maintaining its security and stability.

Kuwaiti backing terror groups gets 3-year jail

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: The State Security Court of Appeals overturned the acquittal of former National Assembly candidate Ali Nassir on charges of broadcasting false news, suspended the implementation of his sentence, and required him to pay KD3,000 bail, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The court sentenced a citizen to three years in prison for promoting and supporting Hezbollah and the Houthis group, as well as inciting sectarian strife.

The court upheld the suspension of the sentence imposed on a female journalist for supporting and sympathizing with Hezbollah.

The court upheld the acquittal of a lawyer on charges of publishing false news regarding drug prices.

The court upheld the suspension of the implementation of the sentence imposed on two citizens accused of sympathizing with a banned group and inciting sedition.

The court upheld the acquittal of a political activist on charges of broadcasting false news on X and TikTok applications.

The court upheld the acquittal of a defendant in a case of spoiling the military preparations of the Kuwait Armed Forces.

KFF probes as fire hits waste recycling plant

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Fire broke out at a waste recycling plant in Abdullah Port on Friday afternoon, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) stated in a press release that firefighters from the Abdullah Port and Umm Al-Hayman fire stations rushed to the location and extinguished the blaze, with no casualties reported. Investigations are ongoing to determine the cause of the fire.

Five juveniles arrested for driving sans license

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Traffic police apprehended five juveniles for driving without a license and referred them to the Juvenile Prosecution.

According to a security source, the arrest happened during the series of security campaigns carried out in various governorates some days ago.

The source confirmed that the arrested juveniles were referred to the concerned authorities and their vehicles were impounded.

Minister shuts 'dental facility'

'Professional misconduct'

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi issued directives on Thursday to implement the Medical Liability Authority's decision to close a dental center for three months, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The decision follows legal procedures initiated by the ministry after specialized inspection committees identified serious violations.



Dr. Al-Awadhi

In a press statement, the ministry explained that, after completing its investigation and review, the Medical Liability Authority notified the ministry of the findings of the specialized technical committee, which confirmed professional misconduct by a Kuwaiti doctor who is the center's license holder and medical director. As a result, a three-month closure penalty was imposed.

The ministry clarified that the Minister of Health had previously issued a temporary closure order for the center and referred the case to the Medical Liability Authority in accordance with the provisions of the law governing the practice of medicine and related professions, as well as regulations concerning the rights of patients and healthcare facilities.

It stated that implementing this decision reflects its commitment to enforcing the law and applying decisions issued by competent authorities. This aims to strengthen professional accountability, protect patients' rights, and enhance the quality of healthcare services.


□ □ □

Two caught with drugs: Patrol officers from the Capital Security Command referred a wanted individual in connection with a drug case and another man with a previous prison sentence to the Drug Control General Department, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The two men were arrested on Sulaibikhat Road while under the influence of drugs and in possession of narcotics.

According to security sources, an Operations Support patrol became suspicious of a vehicle and stopped it. The driver was found to be under the influence of drugs, and further checks revealed that he was wanted. His companion was also found to be wanted due to an outstanding court order.

A search of the vehicle uncovered cigarettes containing hashish, a bag containing synthetic cannabinoids, and drug-related paraphernalia.




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Debt, lack of funds hamper education

Developing world gap widens: UNESCO

PARIS, July 11, (KUNA): UNESCO Director-General Khaled El-Enany said Friday that “education is the most powerful investment countries can make, yet it is being systematically underfunded.”

UNESCO chief made his remarks in a speech during the Transforming Education Summit +4, with Kuwait participation represented by Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaei.

Al-Enany said, “our projections show that global aid to education will decline by up to 30 percent between 2023 and 2027, perpetuating a cycle of underinvestment, inequality, and stalled development. Innovative financing mechanisms such as debt-for-education swaps already exist -- they only need political will to be scaled up.”

Four years after the landmark Transforming Education Summit convened by the UN Secretary-General, UNESCO is bringing together education leaders from around the world to identify solutions to the global education financing crisis.

As new figures show that international aid to education could fall by up to 30 percent between 2023 and 2027, and that 113 countries spend more on debt servicing than on education, UNESCO is publishing concrete recommendations to help countries break the debt trap and invest in education.

In a similar speech, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed said, “today’s Summit builds on the landmark launch in 2022, and its task is twofold.

“The first is acceleration: five years remain to deliver on Sustainable Development Goal 4 -- inclusive, equitable, quality education for all, and the pace of the next five years will decide how much of that promise is kept.

“The second is direction: today’s discussions will

help define the global education agenda beyond 2030.

Because 2030 is a milestone, not a finish line, and education will remain the foundation for every one of the Sustainable Development Goals.”

In total, UNESCO’s new projection report shows that global aid to education will decline by up to 30 percent between 2023 and 2027.

Low- and lower-middle-income countries have already lost over a fifth (21 percent) of the aid to education levels they were receiving in 2023. For some countries, including Afghanistan, Liberia, Mali and Niger, the loss is more than 40 percent.

The report also shows that education is falling down the list of priorities, with its share in development assistance falling to 7.5 percent in 2024 -- the lowest level in two decades. In 2025, the world spent in just one and a half days (37 hours) on military what it allocates to education aid in an entire year.

UNESCO estimates that low- and lower-middle-income countries face an annual education financing gap of USD 97 billion; and it is only widening.

Beyond declining aid, rising debt is placing increasing pressure on education systems across much of the developing world.

According to UNESCO’s new debt and education package published at the TES+4 Summit, 113 countries; home to 6.1 billion people - spend more on debt servicing than on education.

In low-income countries, debt payments are nearly four times higher than education spending, and in 18 of the most heavily indebted countries, they exceed government expenditure on education by a factor of five or more.

Education systems are particularly exposed to budget cuts because they are often one of the biggest parts of government spending and rely heavily on recurrent expenditures such as teachers’ salaries, that can be planned. Cutting on education investments is, however, counterproductive in the long run since education generates revenue and growth.



Al-Tabtabaei

Amir greets Bahamas on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, July 11, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Friday a congratulatory cable to Governor-General of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas Cynthia Pratt, on

occasion of the country’s Independence Day.

His Highness the Amir wished Governor Pratt long-lasting health and for the people of the Bahamas further progress and prosperity.

PAM suspends labor services in Abu Futira

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) announced that services at the Labor Relations Department in its building located in Abu Futira will be suspended on Sunday and Mon-

day in preparation for the relocation to the department’s new headquarters in Sabahiya, which will begin operations on Tuesday, July 14, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

MoJ specifies conditions, announces opening for probe secretary position

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: The Ministry of Justice announced the opening of applications for the investigation secretary position from July 11-16, according to the terms and conditions for the position.

The ministry specified 11 application conditions as follows: the applicant must be a Kuwaiti citizen, completed at least one year of service in the ministry, with ‘excellent’ rating in the latest performance evaluation, not subjected to disciplinary action unless the reason for such action was addressed, not suspended from work or referred to the Public Prosecution or criminal trial for a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude or dishonesty at the time of the announcement, unless the suspension or investigation procedures concluded or a verdict of acquittal was issued before the end of the application period, applicant

must not be on study leave, scholarship, sabbatical or any leave exceeding one year at the time of the announcement, must complete the required training course at the Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies, and must hold a university degree or diploma in law, administration, secretarial studies or secretarial and office work.

The ministry clarified that the position will be filled through secondment for a minimum of one year, with an annual performance evaluation. The employee will be appointed to the position permanently once his competence and suitability are proven.

It added that applications are limited to employees at the Criminal Records Department and the Public Prosecutors Office.

Those interested are encouraged to submit their applications electronically through the website of the ministry www.moj.gov.kw, ‘employment services’ link, to review the requirements and complete the application form.

Khairan park attracts hordes of people

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Families and individuals thronged to Khairan Tourist Park during the weekend, as the park offers diverse entertainment activities organized by the Touristic Enterprises Company (TEC), which transformed the facilities of the park, including the beach, into a vibrant hub of activities and shows, creating an atmosphere of joy and entertainment for all family members, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Visitors enjoyed a special beach evening that combined dining in a seaside setting with live entertainment, including professional fire shows performed by talented artists.

The events also featured laser displays that illum-

nated the beach, drawing enthusiastic responses from the audience.

The indoor and outdoor play areas attained significant popularity, as well as the Kubbar and Rawdatain swimming pools, which attracted swimmers and those seeking relaxation. The bicycle paths provided a safe recreational experience for families, adding to the lively and energetic atmosphere.

The park management affirmed that Khairan continues to solidify its position as a comprehensive family destination by offering a safe and private environment, along with expansive green spaces and integrated service facilities.



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Jahra Governorate photo
Jahra Governor Hamad Jassim Al-Habashi with his guests.

‘Love for Amir’ ... great concept, noble national message: Gov.

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Jahra Governor Hamad Jassim Al-Habashi had a meeting with the representatives of the ‘HH the Amir in Our Hearts’ initiative, with Kuwaiti Ambassador for Peace Eng. Sarah Faisal Abdullah Al-Kharji and President of the Political Science Club Dalal Abdullah Khalid Al-Saif in attendance.

This meeting is part of the national efforts being exerted by those behind the initiative to collect and document messages of love and loyalty from national figures to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may Allah bless him.

The Governor welcomed the officials behind this initiative, praising its con-

cept and the noble national message it conveys, reflecting the sincere feelings of the people of Kuwait for their political leadership.

He pointed out that such initiatives showcase the bright image of Kuwaiti society, which is based on the unity between the leadership and the people, and instill in future generations the true meaning of belonging to the homeland and pride in its leadership and national icons.

He affirmed that Jahra Governorate is proud to participate in every national endeavor, which documents feelings of loyalty and devotion, and supports everything that contributes to consolidating national values and preserving the unity of Kuwaiti society.

Syrian man, father get 7 yrs in forgery of citizenship case

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: The Kuwaiti Nationality Investigation Committee reviewed a forgery case involving a 50-year-old Syrian man who was sentenced to seven years in prison, along with his father, who was also charged in the same case, reports Al-Rai daily.

The father had conspired with a now-deceased Kuwaiti citizen to fraudulently add his son to the Kuwaiti citizenship file.

According to informed sources, the Syrian father confessed to the committee that he had entered Kuwait illegally in the 1960s. He later concealed his Syrian documents after entering the country by bus from Syria through Iraq and into Al-Abdali, without presenting any official identification documents.

The father had pretended to be an illegal resident (Bedoun), hoping to obtain Kuwaiti citizenship. However, after years of unsuccessful attempts, he resorted to adding his son to the Kuwaiti citizenship file belonging to his Kuwaiti friend.

The father stated he remained a Bedoun resident until 1996, when he lost hope of ever being granted citizenship. He then requested permission to travel back to his home country to rectify his status and was granted a passport under Article 17. The father traveled to Syria, where he

legalized his status, and later returned to Kuwait holding a Syrian passport. He has remained a resident of Kuwait as a Syrian expatriate ever since.

The son, who obtained Kuwaiti citizenship fraudulently, studied in Kuwait as a Kuwaiti citizen and was employed by a government agency, where he worked until shortly before his retirement. However, his fraud was eventually uncovered, and he was convicted and is currently serving a prison sentence in the Central Jail.

17,434 appeals tackled: The Supreme Judicial Council announced that the Court of Cassation adjudicated 17,434 appeals in the 2025/2026 judicial year -- an increase of 17.7 percent compared to the 2024/2025 judicial year, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, the council revealed that the number of appeals adjudicated by the court in the 2024/2025 judicial year reached 14,816 according to statistics issued by the court.

It added that the number of cases registered in the 2025/2026 judicial year reached 9,482, compared to 13,991 cases in the previous judicial year.

Kuwait brings order to online shopping

KUWAIT CITY, July 11, (KUNA): Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Boodai said on Friday that the new regulations governing electronic platforms and intermediary applications for displaying, ordering, and delivering products represent a major step forward in organizing Kuwait's e-commerce sector.

Minister Boodai told KUNA the regulations aim to balance the interests of consumers, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and digital platforms, creating a clear and stable investment environment amid rapid growth in the sector.

He stressed that the rules are not intended to restrict the growth of electronic platforms, but to establish fair guidelines that clarify the rights and responsibilities of all parties. He noted that such platforms play an important role in supporting the digital economy, creating job opportunities, and improving consumers' access to products and services.

The minister explained that the regulations set clear standards for platform commissions and delivery fees, while requiring transparency regarding paid advertisements and promotions to help consumers make informed purchasing decisions.

Continued from Page 1

In difficult

Since the beginning of the crisis, the Gulf states have been working hard to create conditions that boost social resilience, guided by a clear vision of a socially responsible economic model.

Moreover, the Gulf states capitalized on the COVID-19 pandemic by taking measures to ease the financial burden of their citizens, including debt payment. Some Gulf states facilitated the establishment of private businesses for their citizens, while others established investment systems that helped absorb the impact of the recent war and attracted foreign capital.

While the war is not yet over and may escalate, this situation compels the Kuwaiti government to act by utilizing its considerable resources to bolster all aspects of national security. This includes maintaining agricultural security for 4,000 farms and developing infrastructure to improve land transport, thereby, reducing reliance on the Strait of Hormuz. It is crucial to secure the essential daily needs of the people at the lowest possible cost.

It is vital to learn from past experiences, so that the country can overcome this phase with minimal losses. The enemy is very cunning. It prolonged the crisis to exploit the unstable situation and achieve its goals.

We have witnessed many painful scenes caused by the Iranian enemy, either directly or through its proxies. The best way to thwart the Iranian enemy is to fortify the internal front and bolster Gulf unity.

This goal is achieved by closing the gaps through which the enemy can infiltrate. We can defeat the enemy if we prepare the ground for it. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have been working as a unified front up to this day, but that does not mean we should leave things to chance.

Egyptian envoy

He then expressed his sincere thanks and appreciation to the State of Kuwait, its leadership, government and people, and to the Ministry of Education and all those working in the educational sector, for providing the best educational environment and care for the children of expatriates.

He stressed that the Egyptian-Kuwaiti relations will always be a model of distinguished Arab relations, indicating that education has always been one of the most important bridges of communication between Egypt and Kuwait.

He called on the outstanding students to continue their hard work, considering their achievements as the beginning of a greater responsibility, and urged them to combine academic excellence with moral distinction, while preserving their Egyptian identity.

He added that the Egyptian Embassy in Kuwait remains committed to supporting members of the Egyptian community and celebrating success stories and excellence, as they are the source of pride for Egypt abroad and the bridge that strengthens the bonds of love and cooperation between the two brotherly nations.

Kuwait is my

Maryana stated that this is a celebration of friendship, fond memories, and the positive impact that the Turkish Ambassador made during her tenure in Kuwait. She said Sönmez represented her country with utmost elegance, dedication and professionalism, and that her diplomatic achievements were complemented by noble human qualities.

She added that Sönmez is always admired for her wisdom, strength, and cheerful and kind personality, wishing her continuous success in her next diplomatic posting.

On the other hand, Sönmez shared her deep emotions at the farewell ceremony, emphasizing that the four years she spent in Kuwait are among the most beautiful chapters of her professional and personal life. She said "I leave Kuwait with unforgettable memories. You are my second family."

She revealed that her posting in Kuwait is her first as an ambassador, following years of service at the Turkish Presidency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She indicated that her experience in Kuwait gave her the opportunity to build deep human connections with the Kuwaiti society and members of the diplomatic corps, making this period different from any of her previous postings.

She praised the generosity of Kuwait, its government, people and diplomatic community, citing the humanitarian gesture when earthquake hit Türkiye. She affirmed that cooperation extended to the implementation of projects to support refugees and those affected in Türkiye and Syria, in partnership with Kuwaiti humanitarian organizations, international organizations and the United Nations.

She emphasized that diplomacy is not limited to political work, as it includes serving the community. She then mentioned her participation in several environmental initiatives and tree-planting campaigns in Kuwait.

She also talked about the developments that the region witnessed during her tenure, while praising the resilience of the Kuwaiti society and their capability to maintain normalcy despite the regional circumstances and security challenges. She is hoping that peace and stability will prevail in the region and the whole world.

She disclosed that the mission of diplomats is to build bridges of friendship and strengthen brotherhood and cooperation among peoples, stressing that Kuwait is a model of diplomatic work.

She announced that she will return to Ankara to work at the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs before embarking on a new diplomatic assignment. She affirmed that she will continue to support Turkish-Kuwaiti relations in her new position and will always be in touch with her friends in Kuwait.

UAE President's

He expressed his appreciation for the reception of His Highness the Amir, emphasizing that this gesture reflects the special place that His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed holds in the heart of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad and the Kuwaiti political leadership, as the case in the UAE. He said the Kuwaiti political leadership, and Kuwait itself, its government and people, enjoy a special status among the leaders and people of the UAE, stressing that bilateral relations are based on mutual affection, respect and history.

He indicated that the idea of establishing the GCC originated in Kuwait with Emirati support, followed by the endorsement of the other GCC member states.

He added that the UAE President is the first leader to visit Kuwait since the beginning of the Iranian aggression against the region.

He said the security cooperation among the GCC states is ongoing, stemming from their shared security and destiny. He explained that any threat against Kuwait or any other Gulf state is a threat to the UAE, and vice versa.

He added that the GCC countries strengthened their coordination in security, military, economic, health and other fields, contributing to the consolidation and unification of visions and the exchange of expertise.

He expressed his sincere wish for security, peace and stability to prevail in the Gulf region and the world, indicating that communication between the leaders of Kuwait and the UAE will always be the cornerstone for maintaining Gulf solidarity and overcoming common challenges.

Kuwait education

Both sides stressed the importance of maintaining close coordination between the Ministry of Education and UNESCO and further strengthening their partnership to support Kuwait's educational development goals.

The meeting was held at UNESCO headquarters in Paris and attended by members of the accompanying official delegation.

Al-Malik wins new mandate, unveils 2030 vision

ICESCO chief hails Kuwait as 'trusted partner' in innovation

By Mustafa Al-Marini

RABAT, July 11, (KUNA): Director-General of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) Dr. Salem Al-Malik praised Kuwait's long-standing contributions to education, science, culture, arts, media and knowledge dissemination, while commending KUNA's continued coverage of the organization's transformation since 2020.

In a special interview with KUNA following his re-election as ICESCO Director-General, Al-Malik said the renewed mandate reflected the confidence of member states expressed during the 15th General Conference recently held in Kazan, Tatarstan, recognizing the organization's comprehensive institutional transformation.

He described the re-election as collective success affirming ICESCO's reforms, highlighting achievements in empowering youth and women, promoting innovation and creativity, and modernizing governance mechanisms, operational priorities and institutional performance throughout the organization over the past six years.

Al-Malik said ICESCO's strategic vision through 2030 is driven by youth, guided by knowledge, careful planning and sustained partnerships, expressing confidence that the Islamic world can restore its international leadership amid rapid technological advances across member states.

He explained the strategy aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 and related international frameworks,



KUNA photo

Dr. Salem Al-Malik, Director-General of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO)

identifying five major priorities encompassing educational development, stronger participation in global economies, sustainable societies, knowledge production, innovation, strategic foresight and environmental protection.

Addressing digital transformation, Al-Malik described artificial intelligence as a key driver of development, noting international estimates project its contribution to the global economy at approximately USD 20 trillion by 2030 despite the persistence of significant digital disparities.

He noted that the digital economy already represents more than 15 percent of global gross domestic product, while nearly 2.6 billion people remain without internet access, un-

derscoring the continuing challenge of narrowing the worldwide digital divide.

Al-Malik highlighted several flagship initiatives, including the Riyadh Charter for Artificial Intelligence in the Islamic World, the Islamic World Artificial Intelligence Index, cooperation with Saudi Arabia's SDAIA authority, and an AI ethics chair established in Oman.

He added that ICESCO is developing strategic initiatives addressing future professions, including a comprehensive Future Skills Reference project and extensive training programs designed to build the capabilities of more than 10,000 beneficiaries in artificial intelligence and emerging technologies.

Al-Malik described Kuwait as a

genuine ICESCO partner sharing the organization's belief that investing in people yields the most enduring returns, recalling visits to leading Kuwaiti institutions, including Kuwait University, the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences and other distinguished cultural organizations.

He also praised the joint training program organized with KUNA in Kuwait during February 2026 on artificial intelligence applications in news writing and purposeful content creation, saying it reflected Kuwait's standing as a trusted regional partner in specialized initiatives.

Al-Malik further commended cooperation with the Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain Cultural Foundation on comprehensive media training in Cairo, welcomed ICESCO's recognition through the foundation's Arabic language award, and praised continued coordination with Kuwait's Embassy in Morocco, the organization's host country.

On combating hate speech and Islamophobia, Al-Malik rejected the notion that rising hostility was inevitable, arguing it stemmed from misunderstanding rather than any unavoidable clash of civilizations, emphasizing dialogue, confident engagement and civilizational diplomacy rooted in shared human values.

He said ICESCO has promoted the concept of civilizational diplomacy since 2023, culminating in the 2025 publication of a collective work introducing the approach, while expanding international outreach through influential networks and its "Read It to Understand It" initiative.

Kuwait heads key GCC talks on electricity grid expansion

Gulf States boost grid reliability to meet demand

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Kuwait, represented by the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, chaired the 67th meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Interconnection Advisory and Regulatory Committee on Thursday.

This is the first committee meeting chaired by Kuwait, with the participation of the representa-

tives of the member states, GCC Secretariat and GCC Interconnection Authority.

Assistant Undersecretary for Electricity Transmission Networks Eng. Faisal Al-Sumait, who presided over the meeting, underscored the importance of continuing to strengthen joint Gulf cooperation to raise the efficiency of the electrical interconnection system, as well as boost its reliability and readiness to meet the increasing demand and secure supplies in the region.

During the meeting, the committee reviewed the performance and activities report of the GCC Interconnection Authority, and the vital role of the system in supporting and stabilizing the national

grids of member states.

The committee also discussed the major operational events and proactive measures taken to ensure service continuity and maintain operational efficiency.

It was briefed on the progress of the GCC interconnection network expansion projects and the latest developments regarding bilateral interconnection projects among the member states.

It then recommended the continuous development of the system and raising its readiness level in order to guarantee the sustainability of electricity supplies and keep pace with the plan to expand the regional energy trade.



Part of the launching of the 'Um Mohammed Al-Hajri Residential Village' project in Al-Khokha district.

Al-Najat initiative targets vulnerable families in Hodeidah

Kuwait backs new relief project in Yemen

ADEN, July 11, (KUNA): Kuwaiti charitable organizations continue to expand their humanitarian footprint worldwide, with Al-Najat Charitable Society launching the "Um Mohammed Al-Hajri Residential Village" project in Al-Khokha district, the temporary capital of Yemen's coastal Hodeidah governorate along the Red Sea. The initiative falls under the "Kuwait By Your Side" campaign, now in its 12th consecutive year.

Abdulraouf Al-Yousefi, head of the Spirit of Giving for Development Foundation – the implementing body of the project – said in a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Saturday that the first phase includes the construction of six fully integrated housing units alongside an artesian well. The project aims



KUNA photos

Al-Najat launches housing and water project in Yemen's Hodeidah under 'Kuwait By Your Side.'

to provide beneficiary families with safe, stable housing and access to essential water resources.

Al-Yousefi noted that the initiative aligns with Kuwait's broader humanitarian strategy, led by its charitable and relief institutions, to support vulnerable communities, enhance living conditions, and improve basic services in underserved areas. He emphasized that such efforts are particularly vital given the harsh economic and living conditions facing affected families in Yemen.

He also commended Kuwait's sustained humanitarian commitment to Yemen, highlighting its role in supporting development and relief projects that help ease hardship and improve the quality of life for thousands of families.

Platner formally withdraws from Maine Senate race

Trump ousts election commission members in push to reshape voting process

WASHINGTON, July 11, (AP): US President Donald Trump has ousted members of a bipartisan federal election commission that resisted his efforts to require would-be voters to document their US citizenship before registering.

Though the move likely won't have major effects on the November midterms, it's the latest instance of the Republican president trying to exert White House influence over how US elections are conducted, and it's the first test of his newly expanded presidential power after the Supreme Court ruled recently that the president can fire members of independent agency boards without cause.

"The President, and head of the Executive Branch, reserves the right to remove individuals that may not be totally aligned with the important task of securing America's elections and ensuring every legal vote is counted. The Slaughter decision gives the President precedence to do so," said a White House statement to AP.

The president removed the four-seat commission's two Democratic members, Thomas Hicks and Benjamin Hovland. The panel's Republican member, Christy McCormick

resigned. Former Republican commissioner Donald Palmer already had left his post voluntarily earlier this year. The changes were first reported by VoteBeat, a news outlet that covers elections and voting across the US.

Trump has repeatedly tried to reshape voting regulations, even though the US Constitution grants control of elections to the states and not the president. Citing that separation of powers, courts have blocked most of Trump's two executive orders that sought to reshape voting. Trump has also launched an investigation of his 2020 loss, which he continues to falsely insist was due to fraud, and this week his administration threatened states if they did not try to purge what federal officials believe are noncitizens from their voter rolls.

Still, Trump has largely been powerless to change election processes through executive fiat and David Becker, a former Department of Justice attorney who runs the Center for Election Innovation & Research, said his purge of the EAC wouldn't alter that.

"This doesn't really change anything about how our elections will



US President Donald Trump speaks with reporters in flight on Air Force One after landing at U.S. Air Force Base at RAF Mildenhall, in Suffolk, Eastern England on July 8. (AP)

be run, and how states are successfully ensuring secure, convenient, safe elections," Becker wrote on the social media site BlueSky Friday morning.

On Capitol Hill, the leading Democrats with election oversight responsibility said Trump, rather than bolstering US election integrity, is further politicizing the voting pro-

cess.

"President Trump is trying to dismantle yet another independent guardrail of our democracy designed to keep elections fair and secure," said Sen. Alex Padilla, D-California, and Rep. Joe Morelle, D-New York. "Purging commissioners just months before the midterm elections and further gutting support for our state and local elections

officials is a blatant part of his plan to politicize our elections and enable more unlawful and dangerous election interference."

Also:

PORTLAND, Maine: Graham Platner on Friday submitted his paperwork to formally withdraw from Maine's US Senate race, officially ending an upstart yet troubled campaign whose dissolution threatens Democrats' pursuit of chamber control.

The Maine Democratic Party announced later Friday that it will hold a nominating convention on July 25 to choose Platner's replacement for the November ballot.

Platner's paperwork was received by the Maine secretary of state's office Friday afternoon.

In a letter to the secretary of state's office, which Platner also posted on social media, he wrote that the Mainers who had nominated him "voted for a new kind of politics" that is "representative of people down here in the real world - not billionaires, oligarchs, or the political establishment." It was the same outsider chord that had been a trademark of his tumultuous campaign, in which Platner drew backing from progres-

sive leaders including Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and US Rep Ro Khanna of California.

"I seek to further the movement we have built together and the future we believe in," he went on, without detailing what that meant.

Maine is considered a key state for control of the narrowly divided Senate, and Democrats were desperate for a candidate capable of defeating Republican Sen. Susan Collins.

The formal withdrawal comes two days after Platner said he would quit the race, facing an allegation of assault that he has denied. Maine Democrats are seeking a new nominee, and several hopefuls have already begun jockeying for position.

Maine Democratic Party Chairman Charlie Dingman said delegates representing all of Maine's 16 counties will choose someone "who has the energy, ideas and popular support" to defeat Collins. The party said 601 delegates will participate.

"Our message to Mainers is this: While these circumstances are unprecedented and the challenge is enormous, your state party is ready and capable of rising to this challenge," Dingman said.



The Gordie Howe Bridge is shown under construction between Windsor, Ontario and Detroit, May 22, 2026. (AP)

Detroit-Canada bridge to open by late July

A completed bridge linking Detroit and Canada is expected to open by the end of the month after U.S. and Canadian officials reached an agreement to resolve the dispute that delayed its debut, according to two people directly involved in the negotiations.

The sources were not authorized to publicly disclose the deal before

a formal announcement.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony scheduled for early June was postponed after the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority said the two countries needed more time to resolve "outstanding issues." The delay followed President Donald Trump's earlier threats to block the bridge's opening.

Commercial traffic is now expected to begin before Aug. 1, according to two officials, though a date for the official ribbon-cutting ceremony has not yet been set.

Republican US Senate candidate Mike Rogers referenced the deal during an interview Friday. (AP)

More than 200 campers rescued from Missouri widespread flooding

MISSOURI, July 11, (AP): Heavy rainfall and widespread flooding battered parts of Missouri on Friday, forcing the helicopter evacuations of more than 200 children and staff from a summer camp and the rescues of about 20 people who had moved to safety on a campground building that collapsed.

With nearby roads washed away and more rain in the forecast, the children were trapped at Camp Taum Sauk in the small southeastern community of Lesterville, according to Sgt. Eddie Young, with the state's highway patrol. The Army National Guard used Black Hawk helicopters to fly them to a nearby elementary school and reunite them with their families, he said.

The camp thanked emergency crews late Friday in a post on Instagram, saying, "We are beyond thankful for your help keeping our camp community safe."

Meanwhile, the campers at the Bearcat Getaway campground near the Black River, about 85 miles (136 kilometers) south of St. Louis, had climbed onto a building to get away from the raging waters when it collapsed, Young said.

"Between the weight and the constant waters underneath it, it just gave away on them," he said.

Three other people were trapped



Firefighters watch as a helicopter drops water on the Summit Fire in Llano, CA on July 10. (AP)

on trees on the Black River in Reynolds County and were rescued Friday evening, Young said.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: A fast-spreading blaze prompted evacuation orders Friday afternoon in a sparsely populated area of Los Angeles County.

The brush fire sparked around 1 p.m. under dry and scorching hot conditions in a remote high desert region about 45 miles (72 kilometers)

northeast of LA, according to the LA County Fire Department. Temperatures in the area soared to nearly 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius).

The fire reached about 2,700 acres (1,092 hectares) by evening, Angeles National Forest officials said on the social media platform X. It's unclear how many buildings are threatened by the blaze.

The American Red Cross opened a shelter at a YMCA in Los Angeles County.

Russian attacks kill 2, wound 12 as Ukrainian forces target oil tankers

KYIV, Ukraine, July 11, (Agencies): Russia launched missile and drone attacks on Ukraine, killing two people and wounding 12, officials said Saturday, as Ukrainian forces damaged more than two dozens Russian tankers and other vessels in the Sea of Azov.

Russian officials said one person was killed in the Ukrainian drone strikes and that only four ships came under attack. Ukraine's General Staff said 21 tankers used to transport oil and petroleum products were damaged overnight, in addition to four tugboats, two cargo ships and a dredging vessel.

In Ukraine, 11 people, including one child, were wounded in attacks overnight on Kyiv, the State Emergency Service reported. In the southern region of Odesa, two people were killed after a Russian missile struck a building, said regional head Oleh Kiper. Another man was wounded by shrapnel.

Explosions and fires were reported across Kyiv's Solomianskyi, Darnytskyi and Dniprovskyi districts, the emergency service said.

Russia launched 12 missiles, includ-



In this photo provided by Ukraine's 93rd Kholodnyi Yar Separate Mechanized Brigade press service, Ukrainian servicemen patrol a street in the frontline town of Druzhkivka, Donetsk region, Ukraine on July 10. (AP)

ing six ballistic missiles, along with 121 drones against Ukraine overnight, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said. He said most of the drones and some of the missiles were shot

down, but the ballistic missiles reached their targets, reiterating Ukraine's dire air defense gaps.

Ukrainian air defenses said they shot down or electronically suppressed two missiles and 111 drones. The air force said direct hits were recorded at 11 locations.

Also:

MOSCOW: Fifteen people were injured in an overnight bus crash in Russia's Republic of Tatarstan, with three of them in serious condition, the regional branch of the Russian Emergencies Ministry reported Saturday via its Max channel.

There were 46 people on the bus, including two drivers and two children. No fatalities were reported, and no children are among the injured, the ministry said.

The crash occurred on Saturday at 1:25 a.m. local time (2225 GMT) on the Kuzaykino-Nurlat highway.

According to preliminary information, the driver lost control of the intercity bus, causing the vehicle to veer into a ditch and overturn.

dead and four injured, authorities said.

The predawn bombings in the northern city of Thessaloniki on July 1 targeted the homes of members of Greece's governing conservative New Democracy party. The 72-year-old mother of parliamentary candidate Afroditi Nestora was killed after a crude bomb made with camping gas canisters exploded under Nestora's car, which was parked at the entrance of her apartment building. (AP)

Irish citizen gets 14 years for murder: A court in Hungary sentenced an Irish citizen to 14 years in prison for strangling an American tourist to death in the country's capital in 2024.

The victim, 31-year-old Mackenzie Michalski from Portland, Oregon, was in Hungary on vacation and reported missing on Nov. 5, 2024, after she was last seen at a nightclub in central Budapest.

Police launched a missing person investigation and reviewed security footage from local nightclubs where they observed Michalski, who went by "Kenzie," with a man later identified as the suspect in several of the clubs the night of her disappearance.

The man, whom police identified by the initials L.T.M. and was 37 at the time, was detained on Nov. 7 and questioned, and later confessed to the killing. (AP)



A view of a burnt area affected by wildfires in Bedar, near Almeria, Spain on July 11. (AP)

Authorities proactively evacuate 1,448

12 dead and 23 missing in Spain's wildfire

BEJAR, SPAIN, July 11, (AP): Hundreds of firefighters backed by helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft struggled Saturday to contain one of Spain's deadliest wildfires that killed at least 12 people. Eight people were injured and 23 missing, Andalusia's regional leader Juan Manuel Moreno said.

A combination of light winds and high humidity are helping crews but the sheer size of the fire still poses challenges, Antonio Sanz, head of Andalusia's emergency services, said. The fire has scorched some 66 square kilometers (25 square miles) of forest and farmland, about the size of Manhattan.

Sanz said fire crews carried out controlled burns overnight around the perimeter of the fire, which broke out late Thursday in a semi-arid area near the Sierra de Los Filabres mountains in in Almeria province, just as Spain was sizzling.

Most of the victims, who are believed to be foreign nationals, died after ignoring shelter-in-place instructions, authorities said. Seven people died while on foot after abandon-

ing their cars.

Four of the dead were believed to be British because the steering wheel of their burned-out car was on the right side, as with British vehicles, regional authorities said.

Sanz said Saturday that authorities had completed autopsies and DNA samples were collected to identify them.

Authorities proactively evacuated 1,448 people from some 11 areas.

Jeffrey and Christine Kember were watching a favorite TV show in their Los Pinos farmhouse when the blare of a siren alerted them to the fire.

Jeffrey Kember said at the sight of the advancing flames, both he and his wife jumped into their respective cars while also trying to help a neighbor with two toddlers.

He described how the couple got separated and how he was unable to speak to his wife because she didn't have a phone on her.

"I'm driving through the flames. It was actually flames. I thought, 'I can't stop, I just gotta go,'" Jeffrey

Kember told The Associated Press, with his wife next to him outside an evacuation center.

"It was eerie because all of a sudden I came out of the flames and it was all bright sunshine. It was like surreal. Ridiculous!"

Meanwhile, Spanish authorities arrested two people for ignoring evacuation orders and returning to a high-risk area, according to Spain's official EFE news agency. Authorities are still combing through the Bédar area in search for any victims.

Spain has battled frequent and severe heat waves in recent years, with temperatures often exceeding 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit). Wind, high temperatures and little rainfall help small wildfires grow into unchecked blazes.

Justice Minister Félix Bolaños on Saturday attributed the ferocity of the Almeria wildfire to a "climate emergency." He said the fire, at its most intense, advanced as fast as 100 meters per minute (328 feet per minute.)

Europe

Man held over Widcombe killing freed: British police on Saturday released a 26-year-old man they arrested as a suspect in the killing of Ann Widcombe, a former British member of Parliament and reality TV contestant.

Devon and Cornwall Police said the man was no longer under investigation. The force said detectives are working at "a significant pace" to find the killer, and they don't believe there is a risk to the public.

Widcombe, 78, was found dead Thursday in her isolated rural home in the village of Haytor on the edge of Dartmoor National Park in southwest England. Police did not disclose a cause of death, saying only that she had sustained "serious injuries." (AP)

□ □ □

Greek police arrest 3 for deadly bombings: Greek anti-terrorist police arrested three people Friday in connection with a series of firebomb attacks against conservative party politicians that left one person



Widcombe

Boat accident in Vietnam kills 15 Indian tourists

HANOI, Vietnam, July 11. (Agencies): A tourist boat returning from an island trip in southern Vietnam capsized on Saturday, killing 15 Indian visitors, state media reported.

The speedboat was carrying 32 Indian tourists and four crew members when it overturned about 400 meters (1,310 feet) from Hon May Rut Ngoai Island, which is near Phu Quoc, Vietnam's largest island, authorities were quoted as saying.



Modi

Eyewitnesses told VN Express that nearby boats rushed to the scene and began pulling passengers from the water, before border guards, the navy, coast guard and other rescue agencies arrived. The rescue was difficult because many were trapped inside, VN Express reported.

Twenty-one people were rescued, and all the dead were recovered, authorities said. The injured were taken to hospitals.

Footage on Vietnamese TV showed rough seas and strong winds as rescue teams threw life buoys to people in the water. Jet skis ferried survivors back to shore while people on the beach provided first aid to victims.

Vietnamese Prime Minister Le Minh Hung ordered an investigation into the cause of the accident and directed authorities to hold those responsible accountable. He also asked authorities to review waterway and maritime safety in the area where the accident happened and other similar areas.

Indian Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** said the tourists were employees of a private mobile phone company taking part in an annual meeting. He wrote on social media that Indian Embassy personnel were at the scene.

Phu Quoc in the Gulf of Thailand is one of Vietnam's most popular beach destinations. Hon May Rut island is about 10 kilometers (6 miles) south of Phu Quoc. They're known for their white-sand beaches and clear waters and draw millions of domestic and foreign tourists each year.

The cause of the accident wasn't immediately clear and an investigation was underway.

Meanwhile, three people were killed after a truck lost control, crashed into a roadside guardrail and overturned on National Highway 9 in Vietnam's central province of Quang Tri local media Tuoi Tre reported, citing local police.

The accident occurred at 12:30 pm in Dakrong commune, leaving the front of the truck severely damaged, according to the report.



General Secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with Pak Thae Song, premier of the Cabinet of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, on July 10. (Xinhua)

China's Xi meets premier of DPRK cabinet

General Secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and Chinese President Xi Jinping met with Pak Thae Song, premier of the Cabinet of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), in Beijing on Friday.

Pak is also a member of the Presidium of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea and vice president of the State Affairs Commission of the DPRK.

China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) should ensure that the development of bilateral relations always helps consolidate

their respective socialist causes and promote their modernization drives, Xi said on Friday.

Xi made the remarks when meeting with Pak. While the current international situation is volatile and intertwined, Xi said, China and the DPRK should maintain strategic resolve, enhance strategic confidence, and accelerate the implementation of the consensus reached by him and General Secretary Kim Jong Un, ensuring that the relations between the two parties and the two countries keep pace with the times. (Xinhua)

Philippine landslides kill 17

China evacuates over 1m as Typhoon Bavi brings winds and rain to Taiwan, Japan

TAIPEI, Taiwan, July 11, (AP): Chinese authorities evacuated more than 1 million people on Saturday and issued high alerts as eastern China braced for Typhoon Bavi, which has brought strong winds and rain to Japan's southern islands and Taiwan.

Earlier, at least 17 people were killed in the southern Philippines, mostly due to landslides that were set off by seasonal monsoon rains that Bavi intensified before the typhoon blew away toward Taiwan, Philippine officials said Saturday.

With maximum sustained winds of 144 kph (89 mph) near its center, Bavi is passing north of Taiwan on Saturday, according to Taiwan's Central Weather Administration. It is expected to move toward Zhejiang in eastern China and, according to China's National Meteorological Center, make landfall before midnight or in the early hours of Sunday and then move inland.

Authorities in the Zhejiang province have evacuated more than 1.7 million people as of Saturday morning, the official Xinhua News Agency said. Shanghai, also on China's eastern coast, relocated around 34,000 residents from high-risk areas by Saturday noon, according to Xinhua.

In southeastern China, cities near the coast are preparing for the impacts of Bavi. In the city of Ningde in Fujian province, more than 3,700 people were relocated from high-risk onshore areas as of Friday evening, Xinhua said. Authorities in Fujian province have placed over 17,000 emergency rescue workers on standby.

China's National Meteorological Center issued an orange typhoon alert, the second-highest on a four-tier level, with many schools and ferry services suspended. Hundreds of flights have been canceled, and some high-speed railway services halted.

The center on Saturday also issued the first red alert for rainstorms of the



This drone photo taken on July 10, 2026 shows a fishing boat returning to port to seek shelter in Ningde, southeast China's Fujian Province. China's Ministry of Emergency Management (MEM) on Friday activated a Level III geological disaster emergency response for the country's eastern provinces of Zhejiang and Fujian. (Xinhua)

year, according to state broadcaster CCTV.

Chinese authorities said Saturday they have allocated 40 million yuan (\$5.9 million) in central natural disaster relief funds to support Zhejiang and Fujian provinces' typhoon prevention and emergency rescue and relief efforts.

In the Philippines, a landslide set off by monsoon rains that Bavi intensified hit a village before dawn Friday in the coastal town of Malapatan in southern Sarangani province, killing at least 10 villagers and leaving three others missing, Office of Civil Defense spokesperson Diego Mariano said.

A separate landslide in Calanog town in southern Lanao del Sur province before dawn on Friday killed five people, with six others missing, he said.

Two people drowned in floodwaters Wednesday in the southern province of Bukidnon, Mariano said without providing other details.

Office of Civil Defense deputy administrator Bernardo Rafaelito Alejandro IV said about 11,000 villagers moved to 77 emergency shelters mostly in southern Philippine provinces in recent days due to the stormy weather.

As of Saturday at 7 p.m., Taiwanese authorities registered at least 113 injuries from Typhoon Bavi, some sustained while riding motorcycles in rain and winds on slippery roads.

More than 14,200 people had also been evacuated around the island, including from the eastern county of Hualien and the central city of Taichung. Schools and offices in most parts of Taiwan were suspended Saturday.

Across Japan's southern islands in the prefecture of Okinawa, local authorities have warned of high waves, strong winds and storm surges, with more than 200 flights canceled across the region, according to Japan's public broadcaster NHK. Strong winds and rain have hit islands including Ishigaki.

75 insurgents killed after attacks in Balochistan: Pakistani forces

ISLAMABAD, July 11, (AP): Pakistani security forces backed by military helicopters have killed 75 insurgents in dayslong operations against an outlawed separatist group blamed for a wave of attacks on troops, police and civilians in restive Balochistan province, officials said Friday.

The announcement came a day after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif visited Balochistan's capital, Quetta, and told the families of 42 people killed in the attacks that their sacrifices were not in vain and those responsible would be brought to justice.

This week's violence has raised concerns that separatist groups once considered relatively small are expanding their reach.

According to the Balochistan government, the operations involving the army, the Frontier Corps and police began late Monday after dozens of fighters from the Baloch Liberation Army, or BLA, attacked a police post near Mangi Dam, which supplies water to million of people in Quetta and surrounding areas.

Nine police officers and 15 attackers were killed in the initial assault. The attackers abducted 18 police officers, who were later found blindfolded and shot dead after fleeing into nearby mountains.

Pakistan says both the BLA and the Pakistani Taliban have sanctuaries in Afghanistan and receive support from India. Kabul and New Delhi deny those allegations.

The government also approved compensation of 11.1 million rupees (\$39,000) for the family of each police officer killed in the attacks.

Balochistan, Pakistan's largest but least populous province, has long faced a separatist insurgency led by ethnic Baloch groups seeking greater autonomy or independence. It has also seen attacks by the TTP, which is separate from but allied with the Afghan Taliban.

Also:

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan navy's search teams recovered additional debris from a cargo plane that crashed into the Arabian Sea earlier this week, and investigators will analyze the wreckage as the search for the aircraft's five missing crew members entered its third day Friday.

The Pakistan Airports Authority said in a post on X that search-and-rescue operations by the Pakistan navy and the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency remained underway in deep waters, with aircraft and other



Mourners gather around the ambulances carrying the coffins of police officers, who were abducted earlier this week and subsequently killed by insurgents, as they hold a sit-in protest against their killing at a roadside in Quetta, Pakistan on July 9. (AP)



In this photo released by Pakistan Navy, Pakistan Navy personnel shift the wreckage of a cargo plane of the private carrier K2 Airways into a naval ship after recovering them from deep sea near Omara, a town some 360 kms. (220 miles) west of Karachi, Pakistan on July 8. (AP)

assets deployed in a coordinated effort to locate the missing crew.

The authority did not provide additional details, saying further updates would be shared later. The cause of the crash remains under investigation.

The cargo plane, operated by Karachi-based private carrier K2 Airways, disappeared from radar late Tuesday while flying from Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates to Karachi, Pakistan, after reporting a malfunction in its navigation system.

The Navy recovered the first pieces of wreckage Wednesday about 100 kilometers (60 miles) off the

coastal town of Ormara on Pakistan's southwestern Makran coast in Balochistan province. Officials have said the aircraft's main fuselage and all five crew members remain missing.

As the search entered a third day, relatives of the crew waited anxiously for news, clinging to hope that their loved ones might somehow be found alive despite the odds.

Nazim Jatoi, the father of co-pilot Faisal Jatoi, urged the government to enlist companies with expertise in locating aircraft black boxes in deep water, saying the flight data and cockpit voice recorders would be crucial to determining what caused the crash.

Africa

'Abducted Nigerian students rescued': Students abducted in May by Islamic militants in Nigeria's southwestern Oyo state have been rescued, the government said Friday.

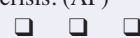
Government spokesman Bayo Onanuga did not specify the total number of students rescued, but authorities said at the time of the abductions on May 15 that more than 40 people had been abducted. One of the teachers abducted alongside the students was killed shortly afterward.

Eight militants were arrested as part of the operation, while an unspecified number of the militants were killed, Onanuga said.

The abductions in a southern state had represented an escalation of the country's security crisis because most such abductions previously had taken place in the north.

"This successful military operation has ended the siege and standoff of over 50 days and has brought relief to the entire nation and the affected families in particular," Nigerian President Bola Tinubu said in a statement.

In the same week as the Oyo abduction, dozens of children were kidnapped in Borno, the epicenter of Nigeria's security crisis. (AP)



Mali's military breaks rebel blockade: Mali's military announced on Friday that it has broken a rebel blockade around a strategic army base in the north as the West African country's junta battles a renewed of-



Mali's junta leader Gen. Assimi Goita attends the funeral of former defense minister Sadio Camara at the Military Engineering Parade Ground in Bamako, Mali on April 30. (AP)

fensive by separatists and al-Qaida-linked militants.

Anéfis is located between the separatist-controlled town of Kidal and the town of Gao, which is under the military government. Late on Thursday, separatists from the Azawad Liberation Front, or FLA, said they attacked a large convoy of reinforcements from the Malian army, their Russian Africa Corps allies and local militias, cutting off the base.

But on Friday, they acknowledged that they withdrew from the area after heavy fighting. (AP)

The army said that in the last 24 hours, "12 combat vehicles were destroyed and nearly 100 terrorists were neutralized." It did not provide a latest casualty toll for the military, including at Anéfis. (AP)

Islandwide blackout strikes Cuba for 2nd time this week as grid crumbles

HAVANA, July 11, (AP): An island-wide blackout struck Cuba on Friday for the second time this week as the nation of nearly 10 million people grapples with a crumbling power grid and fuel shortages stemming from a US energy blockade.

While total blackouts have become increasingly common in the Caribbean country, it's unusual for back-to-back ones to hit just days apart. Cuba's Electric Grid firm confirmed the outage on X.

Authorities in Cuba said the cause of the blackout was a "fluctuation in the parameters" following a failure in a line connecting the provinces of Santa Clara and Sancti Spiritus.

The electrical grid in Cuba is particularly fragile, both due to the lack of maintenance of its aging infrastructure - some power plants are over 30 years old - and the scarcity of the fuels on which it depends.

"It has been another very difficult week under the impact of the energy blockade: two disconnections of the National Electric System (SEN), almost no fuel to power the plants, and several units out of service," Prime Minister Manuel Marrero said on his social media account.



People catch the cool air from the street at their home's window during a blackout in Havana, Cuba on July 10. (AP)

Authorities reported that they have already begun restoring power to some areas.

On Monday, another massive blackout affected nearly 10 million people nationwide. Authorities reported during the week that service was gradually being restored from that outage.

Friday's national collapse of the electricity system is the fourth so

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

Fuel has been running out across Cuba since January, when US President Donald Trump threatened tariffs on any country that sells or provides oil to the island, deepening the island's ongoing economic and financial crisis.

Kuwait oil price down to \$74.65 pb

KUWAIT CITY, July 11, (KUNA): Price of Kuwaiti oil fell by 95 cents to USD 74.65 per barrel (pb) in Friday's trading, compared with USD 75.60 pb on Thursday, according to Kuwait Petro-

leum Corporation (KPC) on Saturday. In global markets, Brent crude declined by 29 cents to settle at USD 76.01 pb, while US West Texas Intermediate fell by 67 cents to USD 71.41 pb.

Other Voices

Oil volatility between \$55 & \$60 a barrel in 2027-'28

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

It is very difficult to forecast oil prices for the next two years. However, this does not mean that analysts cannot estimate future price trends under certain conditions, such as weak oil demand, slow economic growth, or prolonged stagnation in global demand under different scenarios.

There is, of course, no exact price that can be predicted with certainty.

Any forecast is based on assumptions, including weak demand, limited economic growth, and sluggish global activity.

Today, Brent crude oil from the North Sea is trading at around \$76 per barrel. The question is whether oil prices could decline further. The current price is significantly lower than four months ago, when Brent crude exceeded \$123 per barrel.

Russia has benefited by increasing crude oil sales to various parts of the world after the U.S. administration allowed India to import more than 2.7 million barrels per day of Russian crude, making India the largest buyer of Russian oil. Russia supplied most of India's oil imports following the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, which halted crude exports from the Arabian Gulf oil producers.

It seems almost like history to

imagine and believe that a complete closure or zero exports of crude oil, refined products, and gas from major oil-producing countries, totaling more than 15 million barrels per day, could occur. However, no severe oil shortage took place, and no country dependent on imported energy faced a complete shutdown of gas stations.

Certainly, strategic oil reserves, short-term supplies, long-term reserves, and storage capacity played a major role in preventing panic and shortages. This experience has taught oil-importing nations how to better prepare for future disruptions, either by expanding their long-term storage capacity or by taking advantage of lower oil prices to increase their reserves.

The United States has followed this approach for many years. It has also managed to support Europe by exporting U.S. crude oil to the continent.

Today, oil prices are at a comfortable level for global consumers, standing at around \$76 per barrel. The challenge is whether we will see the same or lower prices by the end of the year and throughout 2027. We certainly hope so, but the sharp and unpredictable price fluctuations seen so far are unrealistic.

Certainly, OPEC+ has done a remarkable job in maintaining order and stability in the oil markets despite the withdrawal of some important members. OPEC+ is definitely committed to its goal of stabilizing oil prices for years to come. Well done, OPEC and its partners.



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Al-Harami

Elevating national talent in senior management shake-up

Gulf Bank names AlAdsani Deputy CEO, AlGharabally GM

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Gulf Bank, one of Kuwait's leading financial institutions, announced the appointment of two Kuwaiti banking leaders to senior executive positions, further reinforcing its commitment to empowering national talent, strengthening its leadership structure, and supporting the Bank's long-term strategic direction in line with its 2030 strategy.

The Bank announced the appointment of Mr. Faisal Abdulwahab Yousef AlAdsani as Deputy Chief Executive Officer. It also announced the appointment of Mr. Faisal Mohammed Sayed Ahmed AlGharabally as General Manager of Corporate Banking and International Banking. Both appointments are effective as of Thursday, 9 July 2026, following the submission of the respective nomination applications to the Central Bank of Kuwait.

The appointments represent an important step in Gulf Bank's broader leadership development agenda, reflecting its continued focus on building strong institutional capabilities, advancing Kuwaiti talent, and ensuring that experienced national banking professionals continue to play a central role in supporting the Bank's future growth.

Mr. AlAdsani has been serving as Acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer at Gulf Bank since 2023. Prior to assuming this role, he served as General Manager of the Corporate Banking Group from 2021 to 2023, where he played a key role in overseeing one of the Bank's core business segments and supporting relationships with major corporate clients.

With nearly 22 years of banking experience, Mr. AlAdsani has held a number of senior positions at Gulf Bank since joining the institution in 2004. Over the course of his ca-



AlAdsani on the right and AlGharabally on the left.

reer, he progressed through various leadership roles, including Deputy General Manager of the Corporate Banking Group in 2019, where he was responsible for overseeing relationships with multinational corporations, as well as companies operating in the oil and gas sector.

Mr. AlAdsani holds a Bachelor's

degree in Finance from the University of Denver in the United States. He has also completed several executive and management development programs at leading international institutions, including Harvard Business School, INSEAD, and the University of California, Berkeley.

Mr. AlGharabally brings more

than 25 years of banking experience, all within Gulf Bank, including nearly 18 years dedicated to corporate banking. He joined the Bank in January 2001 in the Internal Audit Department, before moving to the Corporate Banking Department in 2007.

Since then, Mr. AlGharabally has advanced through a series of increasingly senior roles within the Corporate Banking function, ultimately reaching the position of Deputy General Manager of Corporate Banking. His appointment as General Manager of Corporate Banking and International Banking reflects his extensive sector knowledge, long-standing institutional experience, and strong understanding of the needs of corporate clients in Kuwait and across regional and international markets.

Mr. AlGharabally holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Finance from Kuwait University, as well as an Executive MBA from INSEAD in France. He has also completed several specialized credit and leadership training programs delivered by leading international institutions, including Harvard Business School and the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

Through these appointments, Gulf Bank continues to reinforce its commitment to developing national leadership capabilities and supporting the advancement of Kuwaiti executives across key strategic functions within the banking sector. The Bank said the appointments are aligned with its efforts to invest in experienced Kuwaiti professionals, strengthen corporate banking and international banking operations, and support sustainable growth under its 2030 strategy.

US drivers keep buying more gas

Global oil demand is dropping

NEW YORK, July 11, (AP): Global oil demand is set to decline this year for the first time since the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, according to a report from the International Energy Agency.

The drop, which the agency expects to amount to about 1 million barrels per day in 2026, is due to higher oil prices and disruptions to physical supply that weighed heavily, but unevenly, on various parts of the world, the report said.

The supply disruptions were caused by the war between the U.S. and Iran, which left ships loaded with crude oil stranded in the Persian Gulf for more than three months, unable to safely travel through the Strait of Hormuz, a major route for oil and gas shipments.

"The future of Hormuz is probably more uncertain today than it was at the beginning of the war," said Jim Burkhard, vice president and head of crude oil research at S&P Global Energy.

Burkhard said Iran is still trying to control the strait, while the U.S. has not been able to fully restore normal operations, making a return to prewar conditions unlikely.

Global oil demand averaged just 97.9 million barrels per day in May, down 5.3 million barrels per day from a year earlier. Much of the decline was in Asia, which relies heavily on oil from the Middle East.

China's decrease of 1.5 million barrels per day, representing a 9% decline, was by far the largest globally, the report said.

But the main exception to the global slump in oil usage was in the U.S., where gasoline use increased in the second quarter of 2026, despite the fact that pump prices were about 50% above their prewar levels in May, the report said.

China decided to massively cut down on purchasing oil from the global market as the price rose during the spring, reducing its consumption by almost 6 million barrels per day, Burkhard said.

"What China said is, 'You know what, prices are high, there's a crisis. We have this huge inventory stock, we can sustain demand. We're just going to cut by 50% the amount of crude oil we buy,'" Burkhard said.

One way China cut back its consumption was to temporarily stop filling up its strategic petroleum reserve, which it had been adding to at a rate of nearly 1 million barrels per day, said Daniel Sternoff, senior fellow at the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University.

The crisis also accelerated China's saving of road transportation fuels as its use of electric vehicles grew, he said. "What we're tracking so far, at least since the crisis began, is China is probably on track to see somewhere between 500,000 and 600,000 barrels per day worth of demand losses for gasoline and diesel. So that's pretty significant," Sternoff said.

A fragile ceasefire enabled some ships to exit through the Strait of Hormuz in June, which allowed more oil on the market. That led to lower oil prices.

But even after tensions escalated between the U.S. and Iran earlier this month, prices didn't spike.

"This gray zone conflict that the U.S. and Iran are in, it's not really a shock to the oil market," Burkhard said. "It can push prices up and down a few dollars like it did the other day, but it's not the same shock that it was in early March when Iran did what many thought was unthinkable."

Another reason oil prices didn't spike very high after recent military strikes is that there were fewer buyers available to scoop up the supply that had become available, experts said.

On top of China dramatically reducing consumption, several refineries in Russia were unable to process crude after being damaged in drone hits from Ukraine, and refineries in the Middle East remained damaged from the war, Burkhard said. As a result, prices for gasoline, diesel and other refined products have stayed inflated longer than oil prices, he said.

"There's this gush of supply of crude oil being made available to the market, and there's simply less demand for that crude oil," Burkhard said.

Gasoline prices surpassed \$4.50 on average for a gallon of regular in the U.S. in May, rising more than 50% since the start of the war, according to AAA data. But that didn't stop drivers from hitting the road; in fact, gasoline consumption rose in the U.S. during the second quarter of the year.

One reason may be because the percentage of household income spent on gasoline in the U.S. has been declining for years, Sternoff said. Plus, many people have been transitioning from remote work to in-office jobs, he added.

"Even though it's a really political price that people pay a lot of attention to, if you are in the higher quintiles of income in the U.S., you might grumble about it, but you're not really driving less just because of that increase in prices," Sternoff said.

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Kamco Invest, a regional non-banking financial powerhouse with one of the largest AUMs in the region, announced that its Chief Executive Officer, Faisal Mansour Sarkhou, has been named among the Middle East's Top 10 Asset Managers for 2026 by Forbes Middle East.

The annual ranking, published in July, recognizes fifty of the region's leading asset management executives based on their leadership, business performance, innovation, and contribution to the industry. Sarkhou ranked 10th this year, marking another consecutive year in the top 10 and reinforcing the position of Kamco Invest as one of the region's leading investment managers and financial service providers.

In its profile, Forbes Middle East highlighted Sarkhou's leadership since assuming the role of Chief Executive Officer in 2014 and the company's continued expansion across asset management and alternative investments. The publication also noted Kamco Invest's strategic partnerships signed in early 2026, including a EUR300 million European real estate private credit partnership with Santander Alternative Investments, PGIM, and the strategic collaboration with Flexam Invest to further expand the company's leasing platform.

The recognition reflects the collective efforts of Kamco Invest's professionals, whose expertise and disciplined investment approach continue to deliver long-term value for clients across diverse market conditions. Under Sarkhou's leadership, the Company has strengthened its position through continuous product innovation, strategic partnerships, and a diversified investment platform spanning listed equities, fixed income, private equity, real estate, private credit, and other alternative



Faisal Sarkhou

investments.

Kamco Invest's assets under management reached USD16.5 billion at the end of 2025, representing a 3.9% increase over the previous year. The Company continues to manage investments across multiple jurisdictions and asset classes on behalf of institutional investors, family offices, high-net-worth individuals, and corporate clients.

Further demonstrating the strength of its investment capabilities, Kamco Invest was recognized at the 2026 LSEG Lipper Fund Awards, receiving six awards for the outstanding performance of the Kamco Investment Fund. The awards recognize consistently strong risk-adjusted returns relative to peers using Lipper's globally recognized quantitative methodology, underscoring the Company's commitment to delivering superior investment outcomes for its clients.

The Company has also been strategically strengthening its collaboration with Borgan Bank

following the Bank's acquisition of United Gulf Bank, Kamco Invest's major shareholder, in 2025. This closer alignment is expected to enhance collaboration across wealth management, investment banking, and asset management, while expanding distribution capabilities and creating new opportunities to deliver greater value to clients across the region.

Commenting on the recognition, Sarkhou said: "Being recognized among the Middle East's Top 10 Asset Managers for another consecutive year is an honor that reflects the dedication, professionalism, and unwavering commitment of the entire Kamco Invest team. This recognition belongs to every colleague whose expertise and passion continue to drive our success. I would also like to thank our Board of Directors for their continued guidance and support, as well as our clients and business partners for the trust they place in us. Their confidence inspires us to continue evolving our investment platform, strengthening our strategic partnerships, and delivering innovative solutions that create long-term value."

He added: "As we continue to deepen our collaboration with Borgan Bank and expand our international partnerships, we remain focused on building sustainable growth and reinforcing our position as a leading regional investment manager."

Kamco Invest remains committed to expanding its regional and international investment platform, strengthening strategic partnerships, and delivering innovative investment solutions that meet the evolving needs of its clients. The Company continues to invest in its capabilities while maintaining a disciplined, long-term approach to creating sustainable value for investors.

Warsh taps top economists, executives

Fed unveils expert task forces to review policy framework

WASHINGTON, July 11, (AP): Venture capitalist Marc Andreessen, economist Raj Chetty and former Bank of England governor Mervyn King are among a slate of names released by the Federal Reserve Thursday that will help develop recommended changes to the central bank's operations.

They are among the co-leaders of five different task forces announced by Fed Chair Kevin Warsh last month. The other leaders are a mix of public officials and business leaders.

Warsh called for "regime change" at the Fed last year while he was under consideration by the Trump administration to replace former chair Jerome Powell. Warsh has sought to communicate less about the Fed's thinking on interest rates and has said he wants to reduce the central bank's roughly \$6.7 trillion in holdings of government bonds.

Yet it's not yet clear how transformative the task forces will be. Most of the directors announced Thursday are leading figures in economics and business, rather than longtime Fed critics. Warsh's use of task forces, Fed-watchers say, suggest he wants to persuade his fellow Fed officials of any changes rather than impose them.

"The U.S. economy has changed



Federal Reserve Chairman Kevin Warsh speaks during a news conference following the Federal Open Market Committee meeting, Wednesday, June 17, 2025, in Washington. (AP)

significantly over the last generation, and never more so than right now," Warsh said in a written statement. "Each task force will carefully consider whether policymakers' means and methods, analytical tools and policy approaches can be improved upon."

The five task forces will each have three co-leaders and will be supported by Fed staff, the central bank said.

One of the task forces will focus on how artificial intelligence and other new technolo-

gies will affect productivity and jobs. Warsh has repeatedly said he expects AI to bring about fundamental changes to the U.S. economy.

To oversee that task force, Warsh has turned to executives from firms developing AI, including Marc Andreessen, a major investor in crypto firms and AI technology. Asha Sharma, an executive vice president at Microsoft and CEO of its Xbox unit will also co-lead that task force. Charles Jones, an economist at Stanford

currently on leave with Anthropic, will act as the third co-chair.

Chetty, a Harvard economist, will co-lead a task force on evaluating the data sources used by the Fed. Chetty has broken ground by using huge data sets to track families' economic fortunes over decades and evaluate which areas of the country have seen the most economic mobility.

Doug McMillon, the former president and CEO of Walmart, and Kevin Murphy, an economics professor at the University of Chicago, will co-lead the data task force.

A third task force will examine the Fed's balance sheet, which has ballooned in size since the Great Recession in 2008-2009. Raghuram Rajan, a former leader of the Reserve Bank of India, and Harvard economist and former Treasury official Karen Dynan will co-lead the task force, along with Jeremy Stein, a former Fed governor.

Greg Mankiw, a top economist in the George W. Bush administration and Thomas Sargent, a Nobel laureate at New York University, will co-lead a task force on inflation frameworks. King, the former Bank of England governor, will be one of the leaders of the task force on communications.

As part of the Bank's ongoing efforts to support young Kuwaiti talent

ABK collaborates with the Public Authority for Manpower to organize an open recruitment day for its Direct Sales Academy

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced its collaboration with the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) to organize an open recruitment day for its Direct Sales Academy, as part of the Bank's ongoing efforts to support young Kuwaiti talent and attract outstanding professionals to join its team.

During the event, ABK welcomed recent graduates and job seekers interested in pursuing careers in sales. The Bank's Human Resources team provided attendees with a comprehensive overview of ABK's work environment, as well as the training and career development opportunities available. The team also conducted on-the-spot interviews with qualified candidates and offered valuable guidance on career opportunities within the Bank and the banking sector in general.

On this occasion, **Afrah Alarbash**, General Manager of Human Resources at ABK, said, "Our collaboration with PAM reflects our ongoing commitment to working closely with key government entities in Kuwait to create rewarding career opportunities for young Kuwaiti professionals in the banking sector. This forms an integral part of our responsibility and long-term strategy to invest in human capital and attract exceptional talent to our organization."

She added, "Organizing this recruitment day reflects our strong belief that the younger generation is the driving force behind innovation and sustain-



A group photo taken during the event with bank representatives in attendance.



ABK welcomes graduates and job seekers.



Interview during the job day.



Receiving job applications.

able growth in the banking industry. At ABK, we offer more than just employment opportunities. We provide well-defined career paths and advanced

training programs designed to develop our employees' skills and support their long-term professional growth."

Alarbash further ex-

plained that this collaboration with PAM aims to attract a new generation of talented young professionals to the Bank while fostering a dynamic,

motivating, and inclusive work environment that nurtures national talent, which ABK considers its greatest asset and the cornerstone of its continued

success. She also welcomed all participants attending the open recruitment day.

She continued, "We are not only looking for strong academic qualifications, but also for passion and ambition. We strive to provide a competitive and engaging workplace that adheres to the highest professional standards, while offering comprehensive training and development programs in partnership with leading training institutions to ensure our new graduates acquire the skills needed to excel. Our partnership with PAM is a key pillar in supporting our Kuwaitization efforts, strengthening ABK's position as an employer of choice for job seekers interested in the banking sector."

Alarbash emphasized that the Bank's success is driven by its ability to attract and develop the best talent. She noted that initiatives such as this provide valuable insights into the aspirations of young Kuwaitis and reaffirm ABK's commitment to continuously enhancing its employee value proposition to increase staff satisfaction and meet the evolving needs of its workforce.

She also stressed that ABK is committed to participating in numerous career fairs and recruitment events held throughout the year. The Bank continues to invest in keeping pace with the latest developments in the banking industry to enhance productivity and further improve the banking experience offered to all customer segments in the local market.

Concluding her remarks, Alarbash praised the efforts of PAM and reaffirmed ABK's commitment to collaborating with various government entities in Kuwait to create more employment opportunities for Kuwaiti nationals in the private sector, in line with the objectives of Kuwait Vision 2035.

Middle East War: GCC sensitivity & sector vulnerabilities aren't homogenous

By S&P Global Ratings

Geopolitical volatility will dictate the pace of the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) economic recovery through the rest of 2026 and into 2027, while ongoing pressures threaten to widen gaps in credit quality between some sovereigns and to test the financial resilience of regional banks. Robust net asset positions and liquidity buffers currently support sovereign creditworthiness, yet persistent tensions threaten to strain public finances and weigh on confidence in cyclical industries.

The recent U.S.-Iran memorandum of understanding (MoU) has eased fears. S&P Global Ratings' base case assumes a gradual but incomplete recovery in energy flows in the second half of the year and continued volatility in shipping and insurance markets due to logistical bottlenecks (including ongoing constraints on passage through the Strait of Hormuz) and the potential for localized clashes. We expect oil shipments in the second half of 2026 to be roughly 75% of prewar volumes.

Credit conditions remain exposed to renewed volatility but a Middle East war resolution—even a partial one—should help cap the severity of credit pressures and support a recovery from 2027. However, regional capacity to absorb protracted stress varies significantly. Sovereigns such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Qatar display greater capacity for resilience than Bahrain and Oman, though Oman stands to benefit further from its geography outside the Strait Of Hormuz.

This divergence extends to the banking and corporate sectors. Qatari and Bahraini banks have greater external funding risk than other systems due to their higher net external debt position. Among corporates, defensive sectors, including utilities and telecommunications, remain resilient, while cyclical industries—including energy, hospitality, aviation, discretionary consumer and luxury real estate—will bear the brunt of any escalation of the conflict.

Our Base Case And Downside Scenarios

Our analysis considers two primary trajectories for GCC (and global) economies and credit markets:

Base case: Short term volatility followed by a strong recovery

Our base case assumes that supply disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz will ease in the second half of 2026. We expect oil shipments during that period will average about 75% of the pre-war volumes and that Brent crude will average \$110 per barrel (bbl) for the remainder of 2026 and \$80/bbl for 2027. This reflects a supply disruption that is longer and more severe than our earlier base case, alongside rapidly depleting inventory buffers and a sluggish recovery in global flows. (see "Oil Price Assumptions Raised As Hormuz Disruption Deepens And Inventory Buffers Erode; Near-Term Henry Hub Price Assumptions Lowered," June 5, 2026).

Economic Impact: Although many entities have reserves (inventory, liquidity, and rating headroom) and hedges that provide buffers against disruption, the likely duration of the oil supply shock will pressure credit quality. We expect the GCC region's real GDP to fall 3% on average in 2026, with Saudi Arabia (2.6%) and Oman (1.6%) and UAE (1.5%) projected to grow.

Monetary Policy: We expect the Federal Reserve (Fed) to hold rates throughout 2026.

Downside scenario: Persistent conflict and structural erosion

Our downside scenario includes multi-year intermittent clashes or renewed war that prevent trade normalization, leading to a permanent erosion of supply and confidence.

Energy and prices: Brent prices could significantly exceed our base case assumption, particularly during periods of acute disruption. By 2027, global oil demand could fall about 10% from 2025 levels amid supply shortages and a global economic downturn.

Growth and inflation: The risk of recession increases due to an asymmetric and

Key Takeaways

■ Our stable outlook on Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) sovereigns' credit quality is supported by an expected strong, hydrocarbon-driven economic recovery in 2027 and robust fiscal buffers. Prolonged geopolitical uncertainty could strain public finances, rattle confidence-sensitive investment and consumption, and expose variances in sovereigns' fiscal ability to absorb lengthy disruptions.

■ We expect GCC banks will continue to deliver solid earnings, maintain capital buffers, and demonstrate stable funding profiles, though the Middle East war and ongoing uncertainty will likely slow their growth. In a downside scenario their ability to weather fund outflows and asset quality deterioration will be key.

■ The conflict will weigh heaviest on sectors reliant on tourism, consumer spending, transportation and logistics and energy. For corporates, we also expect profitability effects given higher logistics costs, reassessment of discretionary capital expenditure, and lower volumes of capital market debt issuance in 2026. A further confidence shock would exacerbate risk for companies exposed to consumer and service demand.

materially larger drag on economic activity, compared to our base case, which results in broader output losses across energy-intensive and trade-exposed sectors. Sustained shortages and higher risk premiums keep inflation elevated, likely necessitating "tighter-for-longer" monetary policy.

Financing Conditions: Financing conditions likely materially worsen. As recession risks rise, high-yield credit spreads could widen toward 1,000 basis points (bps) from the current level of about 250 bps, with the lending appetite dropping, particularly for speculative-grade issuers.

We described these two scenarios, and the implications of a prolonged closure (or significant disruption) of the Strait of Hormuz, in our earlier research (see "Special Update: Prolonged Hormuz Disruptions Hurling Towards Lasting Credit Implications," May 21, 2026).

GCC Sovereigns' Prospects Are Uneven

Our outlooks on GCC sovereign ratings are stable supported by our expectation that large, liquid government assets will absorb fiscal shocks and that hydrocarbon exports will resume amid supportive prices (see table 1). We anticipate a pronounced dip in GDP growth in 2026 followed by a strong recovery, with average real GDP growth of about 5.3% in 2027 (see chart 1).

Four of the six GCC sovereigns' net assets exceed annual GDP. Fiscal revenues for Oman, Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi are likely to increase over 2026, as these nations maintained oil exports amid high prices. However, GCC sovereigns' ability to recover differs due to factors including fiscal flexibility, export capacity, and geography.

The conflict has likely prompted structural macroeconomic changes. The full extent of damage to oil production facilities and non-oil sector confidence will only become clear gradually. For hydrocarbons, this is partly for geotechnical reasons related to the impact of oil 'shut-ins' and because repairs to production facilities take time. But we expect regional pre-war production levels will be exceeded as the UAE's ramp up towards 5mbpd following its departure from OPEC, Qatar's North Field East expansion starts producing (with the first train expected to come on stream in early 2027), and given Saudia Arabia's potential to use its 2mbpd of spare capacity to surpass its pre-war 10mbpd output.

While easing maritime restrictions will gradually enable logistical and supply-chain recovery across all sectors, higher costs may weigh on profitability. Non-oil sector recovery will likely prove more heterogeneous and could be more impacted by longer-term weaker confidence.

Additionally, renewed conflict—amid volatile MoU negotiations—could undermine growth by affecting regional expatriate populations, weighing on consumption, and permanently deterring some inward investment—including private investment to help offset fiscal pressure arising from expensive diversification projects. These elements could also hamper longer-term potential growth.

Oman's and Saudi Arabia's geographic advantages will likely continue to offer benefits extending beyond hydrocarbons, with maritime and logistical disruption weighing more on other GCC countries' trade, manufacturing, real estate, and hospitality.

We expect investment patterns will experience a structural realignment. Investors will likely prioritize defense, energy export security (notably by diversifying routes to reduce reliance on the Strait of Hormuz), operational resilience in midstream and downstream infrastructure (storage and ports), and supply chain stability through enhanced domestic industrial and food capacity.

GCC Sovereign Risks Diverge In A Downside Scenario

In our downside scenario, weakening expectations of a permanent peace deal could give way to expectations that Iran will retain permanent leverage over the Strait of Hormuz. Potential reconstruction funding could discourage Iranian retaliation across the Gulf, but this scenario could trigger permanent population erosion, strain public finances due to weaker fiscal revenues-through lower consumption related revenues and if alternatives to the Strait are unavailable-and increase spending to support the private sector.

Fiscal buffers will be the primary determinant of a sovereign's capacity to absorb such stress, though the accretive disruption could still increase downside rating pressure. While GCC net general government asset positions may show resilience to a hypothetical extreme-stress event, fiscal flows would diverge significantly due to their relative sensitivity to production and price volatility (see chart 2). Such a hypothetical event highlights the greater relative vulnerability of some nations—towards the lower left of chart 2—where asset stocks are lower and fiscal flows more sensitive. Furthermore, a lower than expected oil price could prompt larger and more protracted fiscal imbalances, though that is perhaps a more medium-term consideration. If public sector spending remains high to support recovery and diversification in a sharp downturn, interest expense would increase as a proportion of revenue and could add pressure, absent significant spending cuts.

GCC Banks: Resilience Amid Lingering Risks

Despite uneven external risks across the region, we consider GCC banks' credit quality to be stable, supported by deposit growth that offers funding stability and solid capital buffers that mitigate risks from potentially weaker asset quality.

In the first quarter of 2026, total domestic deposits rose by about 4.2% in the GCC region (16.9% annualized), slightly accelerating to 6.2% year-to-date to April-end, and compensating for the decline in interbank funding as observed across the 50 largest banks in the region. Domestic private sector deposit growth remained on par with 2025, at about 11.6% annualized at the end of April 2026, supported by a strong pick-up in Saudi Arabia. By contrast, government and public sector deposits accelerated to an annualized rate of about 36%, led by the UAE and Kuwait, which offset decelerating private sector deposit growth in those countries.

We have not observed any significant outflows of external funding. While anecdotal evidence suggests some depositors briefly moved funds out of the region at the start of the war, they returned in the following weeks, reflecting confidence that the war would prove short-lived.

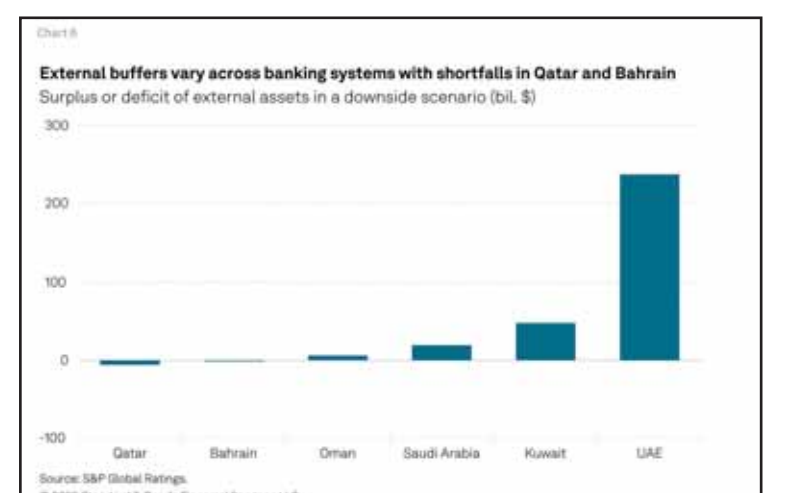
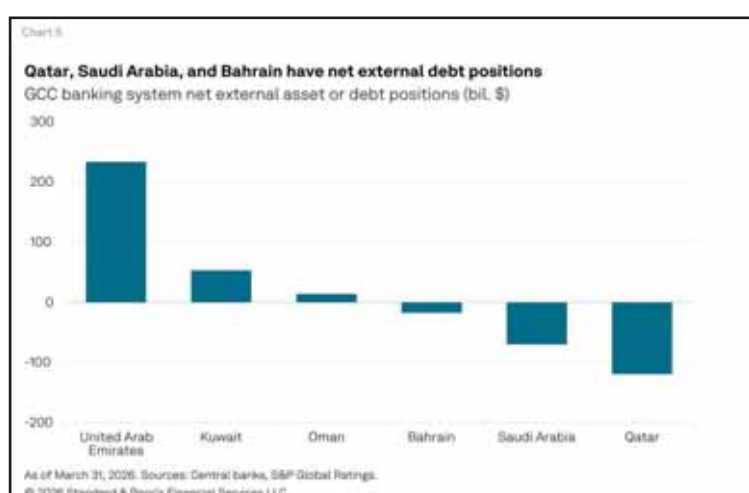
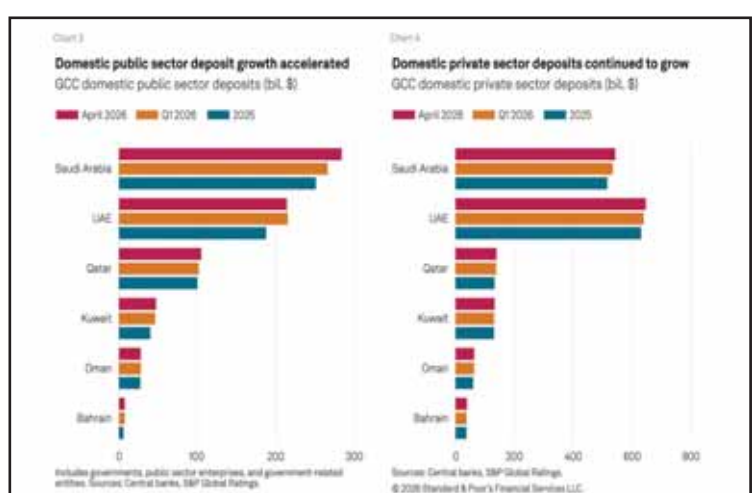
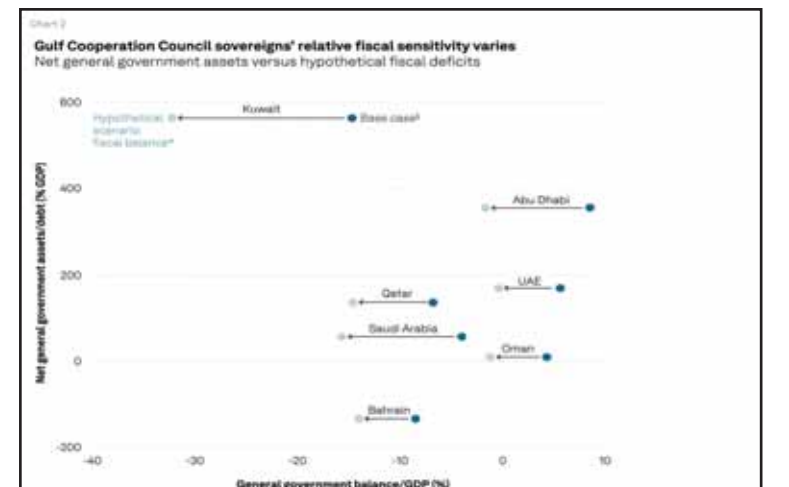
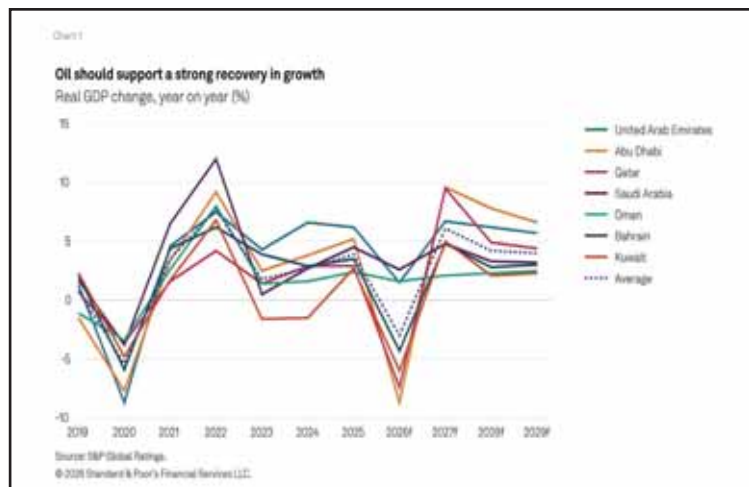
Table 1

Forecast oil production generally exceeds pre-war levels

Annual average daily oil production assumptions (mbpd)

	2025	2026f	Avg. 2027f-2029f
Saudi Arabia	9.5	9.6	10.6
UAE	3.1	3.3	4.5
Iraq	3.9	2.9	4.0
Kuwait	2.5	1.8	2.6
Oman	0.8	1.1	1.2
Bahrain	0.2	0.1	0.2
Total	20	18.8	23.1
Qatar LNG (Bcf/d)	10.8	3.9	13.7

Mbpd—Million barrels per day. f—Forecast. LNG—Liquefied natural gas. Bcf/d—Billion cubic feet per day. Source: S&P Global Ratings.



Enhancing its leadership in digital transformation & innovation

NBK launches the 'NBK Grow' program to foster the development of promising technical talents



Group photo during the 'NBK Grow' program.

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: As part of its strategy to invest in human capital and reinforce its leadership in digital transformation and innovation, National Bank of Kuwait announced the launch of "NBK Grow"; a structured corporate mentorship program aiming to prepare a new generation of leaders in technology and data, as well as accelerate the development of promising technical talent within the Bank by equipping them with the necessary expertise.

The launch of the program demonstrates NBK's commitment to building a knowledge-based work environment that promotes continuous learning, reflecting its dedication to developing a qualified technical workforce capable of meeting the demands of digital transformation and accelerating its pace within the Bank.

The "NBK Grow" program employs a comprehensive mentorship approach that pairs participants with experienced mentors, leaders and experts from the Bank's technology, data, and digital transformation sectors.

This fosters effective professional relationships that facilitate knowledge transfer and skill development, while enhancing participants' readiness for growth and career advancement.

The program is a comprehensive 18-month development journey. Participants are selected from among high-performing employees with significant potential in technical fields, based on specific criteria, such as competence, professional readiness, and capacity for growth. The aim is to ensure the recruitment of top talents capable of leveraging the mentorship experience and delivering tangible impact.

Participants will attend a series of introductory and developmental sessions bringing together mentors and mentees in preparation for the mentorship phase, which will continue through periodic meetings and comprehensive development activities throughout the

Al-Nasrallah:

"NBK Grow" is an 18-month corporate mentorship program offering a comprehensive development journey.

■ We aim to build a new generation of leaders in the fields of technology and data, capable of keeping pace with rapid digital transformations.

■ Enhancing technical competencies and developing young leaders lies at the heart of our strategy aiming to achieve leadership in the banking sector.

program's duration.

The program focuses on strengthening the relationship between the mentors and participants through a comprehensive framework of guidance, direction, and practical training. Participants receive continuous support, including career guidance and knowledge transfer, alongside opportunities for knowledge exchange. This should ensure they derive maximum benefit from their development journey and emerge as qualified technical professionals capable of assuming future leadership roles within the Bank.

The program also provides participants with an AI-powered digital tool, specifically developed to support their experience throughout the program. This tool offers quick access to information and answers inquiries regarding the program and the mentorship journey, further enhancing the participants' experience across the various stages.

On this occasion, Maryam Al-Nasrallah, AVP – Talent Management, Group Human Resources at NBK, said, "The launch of the NBK Grow program embodies our unwavering commitment to investing in our human capital and developing their technical and leadership capabilities.

"This aligns with NBK's drive to accel-

erate digital transformation and cultivate a culture of innovation. We believe that empowering promising talent and providing them with the appropriate guidance and support is a fundamental pillar for achieving institutional excellence and ensuring sustainable success".

"This program," Al-Nasrallah added, "aims to support the development of future technology leaders within the Bank, enhance collaboration and knowledge sharing across different units, increase employee engagement and career development, strengthen the talent pool in the technology and data fields, and promote a culture of institutional mentorship as a cornerstone of continuous learning".

Al-Nasrallah also emphasized that such initiatives contribute to establishing a collaborative work environment based on the exchange of expertise across different generations, thereby enhancing knowledge transfer and supporting the development of future capabilities that can keep pace with the rapid advancements in the banking and technology sectors.

By launching these impactful initiatives, NBK continues to reaffirm its unwavering commitment to investing in human capital and developing national talent, particularly among young people who possess promising potential that requires guidance and development. The Bank is also committed to building an integrated system to empower its employees, enhance their skills and ability to keep pace with rapid digital transformations.

Due to its strong belief in the foundational role that competencies, innovation, and collaboration play in achieving its core strategic objectives, NBK is moving forward with initiatives that enhance its readiness for the future of banking, strengthen its leading and effective role in the financial sector, support sustainable development, and enhance Kuwait's position in the field of innovation and knowledge.

Ex-staff accused in trade secret case

Apple sues OpenAI over alleged trade secret theft

WASHINGTON, July 11, (AP): Apple on Friday accused OpenAI of stealing trade secrets as it seeks to build its own hardware for ChatGPT, a major rupture in a partnership between the iPhone maker and the artificial intelligence company.

Apple said in the lawsuit filed in a California federal court that OpenAI encouraged Apple employees it was recruiting to share confidential information, even guiding how to avoid scrutiny when taking jobs at the other company.

"This case is about Apple's former employees stealing Apple's trade secrets for the benefit of OpenAI," the filing says. "Apple brings this suit to put a stop to it."

Two former Apple employees who now work for OpenAI are also named as defendants. One is Tang Tan, who helped design the iPhone, Apple Watch and iPod and is now OpenAI's chief hardware officer. The other is Chang Liu, a former electrical engineer Apple says it entrusted with some of its most sensitive product development efforts before Liu left Apple to join OpenAI earlier this year.

OpenAI said it is still reviewing the filing, but spokesperson Drew Pusteri said in a statement Friday that OpenAI has "no interest in other companies' trade secrets. We remain focused on building innovative technology that empowers people everywhere."

OpenAI has never said exactly what type of device it is building, but has described it as an effort to find a new way to interact with AI that goes beyond "traditional products and interfaces." It's part of a broader push to create a physical embodiment of the latest AI advances, a decade after Amazon and Google introduced screen-free talking speakers into homes.

The lawsuit claims the effort was built partly on knowledge stolen from Apple.

"OpenAI's nascent hardware business now rests on the shakiest of foundations, rotten to its core by its illegal reliance on misappropriated trade secrets," the lawsuit says.

Apple said it began investigating whether some of its confidential information was compromised and "uncovered a pattern of theft" of Apple's trade secrets by former employees who moved on to positions at OpenAI.

The lawsuit alleges both Liu and Tan accessed Apple's confidential company information and files while working at OpenAI. Among the allegations, Apple claims Liu accessed and downloaded several confidential hardware-related files on an Apple-issued device he kept after departing. It also alleges

Tan directed job candidates who were still working for Apple to bring "Actual parts" from Apple to their interviews at OpenAI.

Apple said in the lawsuit that it reached out to OpenAI in February to raise its concerns early in its investigation, but said that OpenAI did not respond.

An Apple spokesperson said in a statement Friday that the company will "always defend our teams' hard work and innovations, and we are taking all appropriate steps to do so."

Apple sought help from OpenAI several years ago as it was behind in the AI race sparked by ChatGPT's arrival. The two companies partnered in 2024 to use ChatGPT as an AI-powered "answer engine" on the iPhone when the built-in Siri technology couldn't satisfy user needs. More recently, the partnership has veered toward rivalry.

As part of its expansion efforts, OpenAI recruited former Apple designer Jony Ive to oversee a project to build an AI-powered device that many analysts believe could eventually challenge Apple's products.

Last year, OpenAI announced it was working on a secret hardware collaboration with Ive to pioneer a new way of communicating with artificial intelligence. As part of the collaboration, OpenAI acquired iO Products, a product and engineering company co-founded by Ive, Tan and two others, in a deal valued at nearly \$6.5 billion.

That led a little-known tech startup iO Inc. to sue Ive and OpenAI CEO Sam Altman for trademark infringement due to the similar-sounding name and the firms' past interactions. The startup also sued one of its own former employees for allegedly leaking a confidential drawing of iO's unreleased product, and it later added trade secret theft claims against Tan to the lawsuit.

Apple's lawsuit also names iO Products as a defendant. Lawyers who previously represented the firm and Tan referred The Associated Press to OpenAI for comment.

Apple's lawsuit comes as OpenAI has been exploring whether to go public on Wall Street and faces heightened competition from rivals including Anthropic and Google.

OpenAI winnowed down some of its business ventures earlier this year to focus on its core product, ChatGPT, but has continued to pursue a device, the company's chief financial officer told The Associated Press this spring.

"We have consumer hardware that will come towards the end of this year," CFO Sarah Friar told the AP in April.

To support students in shaping their academic paths

Weyay becomes strategic partner of 'Create Your Future' campaign with Private Universities Council



Weyay strengthens youth engagement with new education initiative.

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: As part of its ongoing commitment to empowering young people and helping them make informed decisions about their future, Weyay, Kuwait's first digital bank, has announced its strategic partnership with the Secretariat General of the Private Universities Council under the "Create Your Future" campaign.

The initiative aims to help students explore their educational and career options, while guiding them toward academic pathways that align with their ambitions, interests, and the evolving demands of the job market.

The partnership was discussed during a meeting attended by Dr. Jassim Al Ali, Secretary-General of Council of Private Universities; Fahad Al Khalifa, Director at General Secretariat Of Private Universities Council; Amal Al-Duwaisan, Head of Weyay; Mohammad Al-Wazzan, Assistant Vice President – Sales Force at the National Bank of Kuwait; and Salem Al-Rasheedi, Sales Senior Officer.

During the meeting, both parties explored opportunities to collaborate on awareness initiatives, educational programs, and inter-

active activities designed for students and parents.

These efforts aim to enhance awareness of the academic opportunities available to students, introduce them to different fields of study and their requirements, and support them in making well-informed decisions about their educational and professional futures.

Commenting on the partnership, Amal Al-Duwaisan, Head of Weyay, emphasized that investing in young people is a key pillar of the bank's vision.

She noted that the collaboration reflects Weyay's commitment to supporting students at pivotal stages of their educational journey and helping them prepare for future success.

For his part, Dr. Jassim Al Ali, Secretary-General of Council of Private Universities, highlighted the importance of initiatives that equip young people with the knowledge and guidance they need to make impactful decisions about their future.

He noted that the collaboration with Weyay will help deliver enriching experiences and initiatives that broaden students' understanding of available academic and

career opportunities, enabling them to shape their future paths with greater confidence and clarity.

The meeting also explored plans to organize events, workshops, and joint activities across various locations as part of the "Create Your Future" campaign.

These initiatives will provide students with engaging and informative content that helps them identify their interests, explore suitable academic disciplines, and better understand the educational pathways that match their skills and aspirations.

This partnership reflects Weyay's continued commitment to building meaningful strategic collaborations that create a positive impact on society and deliver innovative initiatives tailored to the needs of young people while enhancing their readiness for the future.

At the conclusion of the meeting, both parties reaffirmed their commitment to expanding their collaboration through future initiatives under the "Create Your Future" campaign, further supporting students throughout their academic journey and empowering them to build their futures with confidence and informed decision-making.

China curbs helium supply to support domestic chipmaking

HONG KONG, July 11, (AP): China on Friday said it is temporarily blocking the export of helium, a key element for chipmaking, as the Iran war's escalation adds to global supply disruptions.

China's commerce ministry and its customs agency said in a brief statement that they are imposing a temporary export ban on helium, effective immediately, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Foreign Trade Law of the People's Republic of China.

They did not elaborate further on the reasons.

Helium is crucial for semiconductor manufacturing, and is also used in the medical sector such as in the cooling of MRI machines. Since the Iran war began in late February, global helium supply has been disrupted and prices have gone up substantially.

China only produces about 15% or less of its own helium, importing much of it from Qatar, which generates roughly one-third of the world's supply, according to estimates cited in a research note by the consultancy Trivium China.

China is looking to protect its industries as global supply

of helium has become "very tight," said Gary Ng, a senior economist at the French bank Natixis.

"Such an export control measure is intended to protect the local industry, especially as it is critical to chipmaking," he said. It is imposing the measure likely more to secure supply for local usage than for political reasons, Ng said.

The move comes at a time when China is stepping up its self-sufficiency capabilities in chipmaking and artificial intelligence as its technology race with the U.S heats up.

It is not known when global helium supply will return to normal, said Cameron Johnson, a senior partner at Shanghai-based consultancy Tidalwave Solutions.

"The fact that they (China) are now banning exports basically tells me that they know there's simply not enough helium to do what they need to do," Johnson said.

However, as China is a relatively small exporter of helium, "the move may not have a significant global impact," Ng added, although there may still be some pressure on global supply due to the current supply shock.

Who is Telemachus, again? Circe?



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Matt Damon as Odysseus, left, and Zendaya as Athena, in a scene from 'The Odyssey.'



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Tom Holland as Telemachus, in a scene from 'The Odyssey.' (AP)



This image released by Universal Pictures shows, from left, Mia Goth as Melanthis, and Anne Hathaway as Penelope, in a scene from 'The Odyssey.' (AP)



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Robert Pattinson as Antinous, in a scene from 'The Odyssey.' (AP)

A guide to the characters of Nolan's 'The Odyssey'

NEW YORK, July 11, (AP): Haven't cracked "The Odyssey" since high school? Don't worry, you don't need a classics degree to understand Christopher Nolan's adaptation. One of his primary goals was to make it accessible and relatable to a modern audience.

"It's something that we all know a little bit about, some of us know a lot about it, some of us know nothing about it," Nolan told The Associated Press. "We're making the film for that whole range of people's relationship with this foundational text of this incredible story."

But, just in case, here's a little primer on who is playing who in "The Odyssey." The film hits theaters on July 17.

The King of Ithaca and the mastermind behind the Trojan Horse trick that ended the war, Odysseus's long journey home to reclaim his kingdom and reunite with his wife, Penelope, and son, Telemachus, whom he left as a baby, is central to the poem.

"He's a very complicated protagonist, which I love, and Chris reveals how and why in his way, and a lot becomes clear by the end of the movie, which explains a lot of how he's behaving at the beginning," Damon said. "I think for a story that's this big, it's wonderful to have a character that's very human at the center. He's certainly not perfect. And he's living with the consequences of his actions. And that's dictating his behavior."

The Queen of Ithaca, Penelope has been waiting for the return of her husband Odysseus for 20 years while over 100 men (the suitors) take up residency in the palace, eating their food and drinking their wine, hoping that she'll marry one of them. She's also been the subject of debate for thousands of years, an enigmatic character whom every generation projects their own views on.

"She's probably the most well-known character that I've ever played. But we only know her as far as we can see," Hathaway said. "I didn't want to negate anything that anyone had ever felt about Penelope, that

she was, you know, the picture of modesty, she's a paragon of patience, all of those things. But a paragon isn't a person. And so I thought, OK, so let's allow that that's the way the world sees her. Who is she when no one's looking?"

Odysseus's only child, Telemachus, hasn't seen his father since he was a baby. Now grown and with the threat of the suitors intensifying, he goes on his own journey to find more information about his missing father. The two quests provide parallel narratives in the film, which Nolan said is part "homecoming" and part "coming-of-age" story.

"There are times where it feels like you're on this kind of action-adventure roller coaster, but he doesn't sacrifice any of the heart and the intimacy between our characters," Holland said.

Although Telemachus has yet to meet his father as a grown man, Holland added: "Throughout the film, there's this real sense of connection between the two of us."

In the poem, there are 108 suitors vying for Penelope's hand (and the Ithacan throne), including Antinous who in the film is the main antagonist on the homefront. Nolan said Pattinson unleashed "his inner Alan Rickman" to play the part.

"The thing he really focused on was this idea of his relationship to Telemachus. He's continually saying to Telemachus, 'I'm going to be your stepdad, I'll be your daddy.' It was such a fascinatingly creepy and amusing basis for villainy," Nolan said. "I just love how Rob based it on real world things, real truths about his character and who he is, and the cowardly nature of that. I think cowardice is one of the hardest things for actors, particularly movie stars, to play."

The goddess of "craft, warfare and wisdom" and the daughter of Zeus, Athena appears to Odysseus from time to time throughout the story.

"I was like how do I bring to life what is a, you know, a goddess," Zendaya laughed. "But I think so much of it was in the story and the way he's telling it. I think the humanity of it and bringing that more human element to this idea of a goddess but what they kind of represent to Odysseus in this story. The lessons that they're teaching him and why she presents the way she does and in the moments that she does, I think, ultimately, are teaching him a lesson and guiding him through something that's very difficult."

The Oscar-winner plays both Helen, the Queen of Sparta and occupant of the "face that launched a thousand ships," who is married to Menelaus, and her sister Clytemnestra, who is married to Agamemnon.

"He (Nolan) mentioned his interest in telling this story and really not shying away from the cost of war, actually investigating and exploring it, and so as such with Helen's character, it's like she's known to be the reason for this war. Is that even really true?" Nyong'o said. "What is her life after the war? I love that we get a glimpse of that, and we really get to see the cost of everything. The rage, resentment, guilt, shame, disappointment, endurance of it all."

A nymph in Greek mythology, Odysseus spends a long period of his journey home with her on the island of Ogygia. Her motivations have been the source of much debate over the years.

An Ithacan swineherd who is loyal to Odysseus even after many have given up on his return.

"He (Nolan) told me it was the most loyal character in Western literature," Leguizamo said. "I was like, oh, OK, that's a lot of responsibility."

In the film, Eumaeus is nearly blind, which, Leguizamo said, is a nod to Homer, who some historians believe was blind.

The King of Sparta and husband of Helen, who tells

Telemachus what he remembers about Odysseus while they fought together in the Trojan War.

The King of Mycenae, husband of Clytemnestra, and commander of the Greek army during the Trojan War

A powerful sorceress who encounters Odysseus and his men on their journey home.

Odysseus's second-in-command who is there for many of the obstacles on their journey to Ithaca, from the cave of the Cyclops to Hades.

"On 'Tenet,' I popped in and, you now, flew, or drove, a plane to a building and then left ... Whereas on this, I was there by Matt's side, you know almost the entire shoot," Patel said. "It's kind of the most physically challenging role I've ever played."

Sinon, a character in Greek mythology who appears in the "Aeneid," is a veteran of the Trojan War.

Poseidon's son also encounters Odysseus and his men on their journey home. Nolan and production designer Ruth De Jong used Francisco Goya's painting "Saturn Devouring His Son" as inspiration for the design, but it was the actor (also behind the "Interstellar" robots) who helped give the character its soul.

"We didn't know how we were gonna achieve it. We knew we were going to need every trick in the book, from animatronics to puppetry to computer graphics. But I knew I needed a performer to really look at it and help us find the design of it and find how this character would live and move and so forth," Nolan said. "He doesn't treat the Cyclops as just a monster. And that's something I've very much picked up from the work of my friend Guillermo del Toro over the years. You know, Guillermo is someone who's chief lesson, I think, in his work is a monster is never just a monster."

A servant of Queen Penelope.

One of Penelope's suitors.

A bard in the court of Ithaca.

Village screenings bring suppressed story back into view

As dusk settled over Gurdaspur's fields, villagers gathered in the courtyard of a Sikh temple to watch a movie that has been blocked by Indian officials.

"Satluj" tells the true tale of a human rights activist who investigated thousands of disappearances and extrajudicial killings during a government crackdown on a separatist insurgency in India's Punjab state in the 1980s and early 1990s.

At the screening in Gurdaspur, elderly survivors of the insurgency sat beside teenagers born years after it ended. When the screen flickered to life and "Satluj" movie began, the crowd fell silent.

Originally titled "Punjab 95," the movie was stalled for three years after India's censor board demanded more than 120 cuts. After failing to secure a theatrical release, it debuted on the ZEE5 streaming platform last week, but was removed in India two days later.

The takedown had an unintended consequence.

Across villages in Punjab, Sikh organizations, local activists and residents have begun organizing community screenings using copies that have circulated online. The screenings have transformed Sikh temple compounds and village halls into makeshift cinemas where audiences watch not just a film but a retelling of memories of one of India's bloodiest internal conflicts.

"Satluj" draws on the life of rights activist Jaswant Singh Khal-

ra, whose investigation into alleged extrajudicial killings exposed one of the darkest episodes of Punjab's insurgency. The conflict pitted Sikh militant groups seeking an independent Khalistan against Indian security forces and claimed thousands of civilian, militant and police lives.

During the insurgency, rights groups documented allegations of enforced disappearances, custodial killings and secret cremations. Khalra's investigation alleged that thousands of people who had disappeared were cremated anonymously by police without informing their families or maintaining official records.

Khalra was abducted in 1995 and later killed. Several police officers were convicted in connection with his murder.

Although the insurgency was crushed and support for Khalistan waned within Punjab, the Indian government continues to view separatist sentiment as a national security concern. It has not publicly explained why the film was removed, but officials told local media they ordered it taken down on security grounds.

The public screenings take shape through grassroots cooperation. Residents arrange for projectors, audio speakers and power generators, Sikh temples and village community spaces become open-air theaters for an evening, and volunteers spread the word from one household to the next.



Villagers watch a special screening of the film 'Satluj' at a Sikh temple at Tatley village, in Punjab's Gurdaspur district, India, Wednesday, July 8, 2026. (AP)

Inderjeet Singh Bains, who helps coordinate screenings in Gurdaspur district, said the initiative aimed to create spaces where people can watch together and reflect on a period of Punjab's history that continues to resonate across generations.

"When we screen the film, we see our elders and mothers, many of them 60 or 70 years old, crying because they have lost their sons. Our

people have endured immense suffering," Bains said.

Gurmukh Singh, who attended a screening, said the film gave voice to stories the young in Punjab had heard only in fragments. For families in his village, he said, the insurgency was not history but lived experience, with many losing loved ones in the violence.

"After watching the movie, there

is a feeling of the grief our earlier generations had to bear," Singh said.

The takedown of "Satluj" has reopened a debate over artistic freedom in India, where films have increasingly run into censorship battles under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government. Critics have said such cases have become more frequent and ac-

cess Modi's government of promoting films that align with its nationalist narrative.

"Everything happened right before our eyes, so what is there to oppose? The truth is coming to light, and people should be allowed to see it," said Balwinder Singh, a Sikh religious leader.

The government says movie certification decisions are made independently under the law.

In a statement, ZEE5 said the film would no longer be available for viewing in India "in light of current developments." It added that it would explore "every appropriate avenue through due process" to restore it.

Diljit Dosanjh, the lead actor who plays Khalra, said he was unconcerned about whether the film remained online because once audiences had seen it, "it cannot be erased."

That sentiment appears to be playing out in Punjab's villages.

Inside the temple compound in Gurdaspur, the audience watched scenes of police killings, crackdowns and families searching for answers. Afterwards, many lingered in conversation, comparing the film with the real-life memories they had carried for decades.

Pawan Deep Kaur described the film as a heartbreaking portrayal of the suffering endured by the older generation.

"It made us cry endlessly," she said. (AP)

Experts warn instant summaries pose privacy and security risks

AI notetakers boost meeting efficiency & simplify recaps

NEW YORK, July 11, (AP): Launching an artificial intelligence tool to take notes and summarize important information from a virtual meeting can be alluring. Seconds after one of the agents attends an hour-long video conference, it can deliver a recap of key points and outline a to-do list for all the participants.

But the way popular AI notetakers accomplish those tasks makes some people avoid using them. The technology turns everything said during meetings into data. Confidential personnel information, corporate strategies, trade secrets and remarks that could later be seen as incriminating - all of it could end up in the wrong hands.

"There are huge risks to the organization on AI notetakers," Amy Dufrane, the chief executive of human resources training and certification provider HRCI, said. "I don't think companies should use it at all."

An AI notetaker is a software application or device that uses artificial intelligence, speech recognition and large language models to record, transcribe and summarize conversa-



An illustration shows a worker using an AI-powered virtual meeting assistant. (AP)

tions. The tools are intended to save time and improve participation, but professionals in a number of fields say there are reasons to be wary.

Chief among them is uncertainty about where the collected data is stored and for how long. Privacy advocates worry the companies behind the AI notetakers are creating voiceprints without consent. Voiceprints - a type of biometric profile similar to a fingerprint but tuned to the unique intonations and characteristics of one's voice - can be used to access restricted or confidential information, including the contents of bank accounts.

Some tech companies resell data from the notetaking tools they created or use confidential meeting transcripts and recordings to train their AI models. There's also the risk that conversations between an attorney and client could become fair game in legal proceedings; a New York federal judge in February ordered a criminal defendant to provide prosecutors with documents he created for his lawyers because it already had been shared with a third party, which was Anthropic's Claude.

"People who use AI notetakers, they don't always know where the data goes," said Justin Daniels, an Atlanta-based corporate attorney at law firm Baker Donelson. "And in my context, if the data goes anywhere else, they're not aware of it, that attorney-client-privileged conversation may not be attorney-client-privileged anymore."

Here are some tips on the etiquette of kicking an AI notetaker out of a meeting, the risks of using one and how to protect yourself.

When you join a meeting, make it a habit to check whether an AI no-

tetaker is present. It might appear as a meeting attendee, often labeled as an AI notetaker, or a pop-up message on the screen informing participants the meeting is being recorded. The latter could signal the presence of an AI notetaker.

Virtual meeting platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet let users know when recording is underway, but some meeting software does not make it clear when a notetaker is present, according to Thorin Klosowski, the Electronic Frontier Foundation's senior security and privacy analyst.

Participants also may use personal notetaking devices that are separate from the meeting platform, in which case the other attendees wouldn't necessarily know a discussion was being recorded and transcribed.

"You hope the other person would tell you that they're doing that," Klosowski said. "Asking everyone for consent before doing a sensitive meeting would be the most polite approach to take."

If you're unsure whether someone has deployed an AI notetaker, you can ask. You can also state at the be-

ginning that a meeting is not authorized for recording.

A polite way to establish such a boundary is to say, "Our company policy is that this meeting cannot be recorded," Dufrane suggested. This relieves the employee, such as a salesperson who wants to make a good impression, of having to be the "bad guy," putting the onus on the company instead, she said.

Another option is to allow the notetaker for part of the gathering but turn it off at the end to dedicate time for more delicate topics.

"I won't start talking about anything substantive until it's shut off, because I just don't want to take the risk," Daniels said.

Many AI notetakers determine unique acoustic signatures, or voiceprints, for each speaker in the room, said Chris Plumbers, associate attorney at The Dillon Law Group in East Lansing, Michigan. That's how the companies distinguish one speaker from another, labeling them with monikers "Speaker 1" or "Speaker 2."

One way voiceprints are used is to verify the identities of bank account

holders over the phone. If bad actors got hold of a person's vocal signature, they could use it to access files, commit fraud or take over accounts, he said.

Laws in some states govern how voiceprints can be created and stored and provide rights that individuals can assert to object to the use of an AI notetaker during meetings they attend.

In Illinois, voiceprints are considered biometric identifiers, similar to fingerprints, and are covered under the state's Biometric Information Privacy Act, which requires written notice and informed consent before an AI notetaker or other agent collects voiceprints. The law also mandates a documented data retention schedule and destruction policy, Plumbers said. But most companies using the tools have none of those systems in place, Plumbers said.

"In the world of AI, the world of data and privacy, the world of biometric identification, I don't think you can have such a lax approach to it," Plumbers said. "I think getting out ahead of it is crucial."



People attend AI for Good Global Summit in Geneva, Switzerland, July 7, 2026. (Xinhua)

UN urges child safety

How young is too young for AI?

BERLIN, July 11, (Xinhua): As generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) reaches children through both the classroom and the internet, governments and schools are attempting to simultaneously protect young users and prepare them for a technology that will become increasingly necessary in the future.

The debate over children's use of AI has intensified recently as the United Nations (UN) has called for stricter child-safety rules for AI systems, while several European countries have moved to define when and how students should be allowed to use the technology in schools.

From global warnings to classroom rules

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has warned that AI is reaching children faster than safeguards can be put in place to protect them.

Speaking at the opening of the Global Dialogue on AI Governance in Geneva, Guterres underlined that products other than AI face strict safety checks before being marketed to children.

"We test every toy before it reaches a child... Yet AI has reached our children -- their learning, their friendships, their most private questions -- before anyone asked what it would do to them," he said.

The risks of AI are no longer theoretical, he stressed, warning that children are already being deceived by machines posing as friends, steered toward self-harm and harmed by images of abuse that can be created at the touch of a button.

"No child should be a guinea pig for unregulated AI," he stressed.

That concern is already shaping national policy. In Norway, the government announced new guidelines in June that would strictly limit the use of generative AI in schools, especially among younger children.

Under the plan, pupils in grades one to seven will generally not be given access to AI from the autumn school term. Students in grades eight to 10, meanwhile, may use AI gradually and cautiously, provided that teachers have first acquired sufficient competence before students

receive training and access. Upper secondary students are expected to learn how to use AI appropriately so they are prepared for further education and work.

France has already moved in a similar direction in 2025, when it issued an official framework, saying that students may use generative AI in class only from France's 4e onward, roughly equivalent to eighth grade, and only when its use is limited, supervised, explained and guided by the teacher.

What is behind calls for AI restriction

For schools, the concern is not only what AI may expose children to, but also what it may take away from the learning process.

Norway said it has framed the AI restrictions as part of a wider effort to restore basic learning in schools after years of heavy reliance on screens and digital materials. The government said learning outcomes and basic skills in Norwegian schools were declining, and called for less uncritical use of AI and screens, more physical books, and stronger reading, writing and numeracy skills.

"We have a major challenge that we are now addressing: many children and young people are unable to write, read and do arithmetic well enough," Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store said in a separate speech. "We know that uncritical use of AI causes students to skip important steps in learning."

This also points to a more familiar problem for schools: whether teachers can still tell what work is a student's own. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's latest report on digital education outlook, 72 percent of lower secondary teachers believe AI can harm academic integrity by allowing students to pass off AI-generated work as their own.

Stefan Duell, president of the German Teachers' Association, echoed this concern. "Anything that happens outside the classroom could theoretically have been completed with or by AI," which made authorship difficult for teachers to verify, he said.

Meta appeals addiction case

NEW YORK, July 11, (AP): Meta, the parent company of Instagram and Facebook, has appealed the verdict of a landmark social media addiction lawsuit in Los Angeles, challenging the jury's determination that the company designed its platforms to hook young users without concern for their well-being.

Lawyers representing Meta filed a notice of appeal Tuesday in Los Angeles County Superior Court. The lawyers will provide their arguments related to the appeal in subsequent court filings.

The case centered on a 20-year-old woman who said she became addicted to social media as a child and that it worsened her mental health struggles. The jury found that negligence by both Meta and Google-owned YouTube, which was also a defendant in the case, was a substantial factor in causing harm to the young woman, identified in court

only by her initials, KGM, and her first name, Kaley.

The jury awarded her \$3 million in damages and recommended an additional \$3 million in punitive damages. Her lead attorney, Mark Lanier, said in a statement Friday that the legal team is expecting the appellate court to "continue the careful application of the law to this case, affirming the verdict of the trial court."

A notice of appeal starts what can be a lengthy process. A Meta spokesperson provided a statement Friday that they also gave when the jury returned the verdict in March, saying that teen mental health is "profoundly complex and cannot be linked to a single app."

José Castañeda, a spokesperson for Google, said in a statement Friday that YouTube plans to appeal and that "these are standard motions for this case to move forward."

Music

Singer-songwriter reflects on motherhood and creative growth

Suki Waterhouse finds herself on 'Loveland'

NEW YORK, July 11, (AP): Suki Waterhouse started working on "Loveland," her third record, immediately after she finished her 2024 sophomore album, "Memento Mori."

"I was looking for, like, a personal revolution," Waterhouse said. Putting the words together for "Loveland," the album's wistful penultimate track, helped her get there. "It's always amazing to me how, you kind of write the album and you become it. You become somebody new from it."

True to that spirit, Waterhouse worked with new collaborators on the project - including songwriter Amy Allen and producer Aaron Dessner, a member of the rock band The National and a frequent collaborator of pop-crossover artists including Taylor Swift, Gracie Abrams and Noah Kahan. Mick Fleetwood of Fleetwood Mac put down a drum track for "Morals" - a fun twist after Waterhouse acted in the limited series "Daisy Jones & the Six," based on a Taylor Jenkins Reid novel widely considered to be inspired by the band's origins.

"Maybe that's what made me think to reach out," Waterhouse said. "I thought, you know, maybe he's seen the show. It might help me get in the door."

Waterhouse spoke to The Associated Press about making "Loveland" and exploring the evolution she has felt since welcoming her daughter with partner Robert Pattinson. She also teased future projects. Remarks have been edited for clarity and brevity.

Waterhouse: A revelation I've had for myself recently is that there is inherently a friction there, that I think has been really deepened by becoming a parent. I think before I had much more of a kind of wild abandon, where my whole life was my work and my artistic life. And



Suki Waterhouse poses for a portrait on Monday, June 29, 2026, in New York. (AP)

now that I have this beautiful gift that's been given to me - my daughter and this responsibility, and also how present I feel in her life, and want to be - I had a lot of insecurity and fear and doubt about how I was going to still have these two things exist at once. So it's funny, I don't think the record is like a record, really, about me, you wouldn't listen to it and be like, "Oh, this is a 'she's just become a mum' record" but it's the things I know about it that are laced deep within it. There are certain songs where I address that very rawly, I think in the song "Weirdo" especially.

Waterhouse: When I'm writing I don't really think about that much at all because I also know that not eve-

rything that I write has to go on an album and be released into the public. There's things that you can write that can just be for yourself, and kind of like help you externalize a feeling that's unexplainable.

It's interesting, it's like two different parts of my brain: The part that doesn't care what anybody thinks and is just writing so freely, and then, later on, when you're like choosing the singles, or choosing what's going to be on the record, this other voice comes in and it's not a purist. It's much more like, I want people to like this and I want to be loved. You've got the two different voices warring with each other, and it's hard to get them to speak to each other, or know which

voice should succeed.

"I'm always mining from my own past in a way, and "Notting Hill" was really about mourning a place, but also memorializing it. I sold my apartment and never really said goodbye to it because I had a baby in America. And I, you know, fell in love in that apartment, had some of the worst nights of my life, some of my best. And then suddenly you outgrow somewhere so quickly and you're having a baby in a different country, and it's a walk-up and you'd never be able to get a stroller in there, and it's like full of everything in your 20s. It's giving its flowers to this place that raised me.

Waterhouse: That was a fun way to collaborate. When we got a response from Mick Fleetwood, I was kind of amazed. We struck an agreement that he would drum on "Morals" - I got like a billion videos of him in a studio in Hawaii playing all these incredible takes and I was just blown away that the whole thing was happening. And then I recorded a song for his record, that is with Amy Allen. He's been working on a record for quite some time. I don't know how much I'm allowed to say about it, but it was a very cool thing to have happened.

Waterhouse: She knows now what I do, it's funny. I was reading to her the other night and there was a "choose, what would your world be like? and where would you live? the mountains?" and we were kind of like picking things and there were a bunch of jobs and I said, "Which one does mommy do?" and she pointed to the woman with the guitar. So it's kind of crazy. She's almost 2 1/2 now, so she's really switched on, like knows what we're doing, I can explain it to her much better. I'm just like in heaven with her, just enjoying her so much and I feel so deeply grateful that I get to bring her with me.

Event honors 70 years of Christmas spirit and tradition

Ho, ho, hot: Santas gather for a summer celebration



Santas, Mrs. Clauses and Christmas elves from around the world pose for a photo at the annual World Santa Claus Congress, a colorful midsummer tradition, in Aalborg, Denmark, Wednesday July 8, 2026. (AP)

AALBORG, Denmark, July 11, (AP): While Europe's still in the throes of summer heat, it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas in the Danish city of Aalborg.

Dozens of Santas, Mrs. Clauses and elves from around the world have descended on Denmark's fourth-largest city for the Nordic nation's annual World Santa Claus Congress, a colorful midsummer tradition for decades.

First staged at an amusement park near Copenhagen in 1957, the congress moved to Aalborg on Denmark's Jutland peninsula two years ago. This year, the Santa suits looked a little stiffer under the Danish summer sun.

The event, which marks its 70th anniversary next year, was created to entertain children, but became a pop-

ular gathering for Santas who appear in stores and shopping malls during the Yuletide season.

The gathering offers a chance for professional Santas - not the real one, of course! - to swap stories, compare beards, sharpen their craft and compete in lighthearted contests months before anyone checks naughty-or-nice lists for the Christmas rush.

The packed agenda features events like gingerbread eating, gift wrapping, balloon modeling, and several noisy parades.

"The grandmas say: 'Oh, it's too early to come here,'" said organizer Peter Gislund, himself a Santa Claus in Aalborg during the Christmas season. "The kids say: 'Hooraay! Santa's here already!'"

Over the years, the annual four-



Santas, Mrs. Clauses and Christmas elves from around the world take part in a parade through the streets of Aalborg, Denmark, Wednesday July 8, 2026 during the annual World Santa Claus Congress. (AP)

day gathering has attracted Santas and Mrs. Clauses from as far away as Australia, Hong Kong, Canada and the United States.

Most of the three dozen or so Santas and Mrs. Clauses at the congress this week hail from Scandinavia, but some flew in - like Paradise Yamamoto from Tokyo.

"This is very fun, so many children... Ho, ho, ho!" said Yamamoto with a laugh after parading through Aalborg waving a Japanese flag and dancing to the song "Feliz Navidad" - one of many Christmas classics played during the event.

Robert Hercz, a 64-year-old Norwegian Santa from Oslo, said that despite their different nationalities, all Santas on hand share "a gene" - for generosity and spreading joy.

"You have it or you don't," said Hercz, who was attending the congress for the first time. "We have the true Santa spirit. And it's all about giving, sharing, and putting a little bit of joy in people's hearts."

It's not all ho-ho-ing and belly rubs. "When Santas are together, they always mingle and talk a little bit," said Gislund. "Maybe I put a little bit of sparkle in the beard and so on. That's the good part of meeting some Santas from all over the world."

For Simon Brøms, a 33-year-old Danish Santa, the event is proof that the festive spirit isn't just for Christmas.

"Christmas is not a season. It's a feeling you have in your stomach," he said with a smile. "So if you want, you can have Christmas the whole year."

Milestone aims to bolster country's commercial space competitiveness

China achieves 1st-ever controlled rocket recovery in Long March-10B maiden flight

WENCHANG, Hainan, July 11, (Xinhua): China successfully launched the Long March-10B carrier rocket at the Hainan commercial spacecraft launch site in south China's Hainan Province on Friday, achieving its first-ever controlled recovery of a carrier rocket's first stage.

The rocket, on its maiden flight, sent the payload into the preset orbit. After the separation of the rocket's first and second stages, the first stage returned and was successfully captured on a seaborne platform via a net-capture system. Both the launch and the first-stage recovery were successfully completed.

This mission marked China's first successful controlled recovery of a carrier rocket's first stage, representing a major breakthrough in the country's reusable rocket technology.

After separating from the second stage, the Long March-10B's first stage began its six-minute extreme return journey, with coasting, attitude adjustment, powered braking, and aerodynamic deceleration. It then achieved a precise landing, captured by the world's first cross-shaped high-strength buffered arresting net system in coordination with the onboard hook mechanism.

Notably, unlike traditional methods, the Long March-10B employs a unique sea-based net recovery system, in which the rocket flies directly into a massive sea-based net and is captured.

"Net-based recovery simplifies the onboard structure, reduces weight, and boosts payload capacity. It also demonstrates strong adaptability to landing deviations, effectively 'enlarging' the capture window through coordinated net operations," said Chen Muyue of the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC).

Supporting this innovation, the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology (CALT) delivered the first sea-based platform for net-based rocket recovery in November 2025. Measuring 144 meters by 50 meters with a full-



This drone photo taken on July 10, 2026 shows the successful capture of the returned first stage of Long March-10B carrier rocket on a seaborne platform via a net-capture system. (Xinhua)

load displacement of 25,000 tonnes, the vessel serves as the crucial foundation for this system.

Xu Xuelei of CASC said in an interview that the platform's massive tower structure is anchored to the deck by four large supports. Equipped with Li-

DAR units at each corner, the system automatically tracks the rocket's position and attitude and uses specialized cables to absorb its kinetic and potential energy. This fully automated, unmanned process leaves the rocket suspended motionless at the center of the net.

The Long March-10B carrier rocket, a reusable liquid-fueled commercial launch vehicle, stands approximately 63 meters tall with a diameter of 5 meters. It has a liftoff thrust of about 890 tonnes and a liftoff mass of approximately 760 tonnes. In its reusable configuration, it has a low Earth orbit (LEO) payload capacity of 16 tonnes.

"Designed primarily for China's commercial launch market, the Long March-10B boasts stronger lifting capacity and greater mission adaptability," said Chen. He noted that the rocket can meet various mission requirements, including deploying LEO satellite internet constellations and launching large commercial satellites, while significantly reducing launch costs through reusability.

Chen stated that the Long March-10B's maiden flight marks a breakthrough in low-cost, heavy-lift reusable rocketry. The milestone aims to bolster China's commercial space competitiveness and accelerate routine reusable launches, while advancing the next-generation crewed rocket program. The vehicle is slated to support large-scale low Earth orbit satellite constellations and medium Earth orbit communications.

Meanwhile, the Long March-10C is under intensive development. Positioned by CASC as a primary commercial vehicle with enhanced payload capacity, it is designed to meet diverse market demands.

"The Long March-10A, 10B and 10C will collectively form the backbone of China's space transportation system," said Long Lehao, an expert at the Chinese Academy of Engineering. He noted that the trio will drive high-frequency reusable launches and extend humanity's reach into deep space.



The Reusable Vehicle eXperiment, known as RV-X, is seen in a test launch at the Noshiro Rocket Testing Center of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency in Noshiro, northern Japan on July 11. (AP)

Japan's space agency conducts first test flight for experimental reusable rocket

TOKYO, July 11, (AP): Japan's experimental reusable rocket took off and safely landed in a first test flight Saturday as the country seeks to achieve the technology key to cut launch costs and compete in the global space market dominated by SpaceX.

The RV-X rocket lifted off, hovered and moved horizontally before landing during its less than one-minute flight at the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency's Noshiro Testing Center in northeastern Japan, which was livestreamed by the NNS, a group of space fans.

The rocket flew as planned, rising 11 meters (36 feet) and moving horizontally 16 meters (52 feet) while keeping its upright position before landing, Takashi Ito, JAXA's reusable rocket project manager, said in

an online briefing from the test center.

Japan seeks to catch up with the technology Elon Musk's SpaceX has been using for several years to cut launch costs of delivering payloads into space.

Saturday's flight is a step forward for Japan in achieving the technology needed to develop a lower cost successor to the country's current mainstay, single-use H3 series.

The flight comes one day after state media in China reported the country achieved its first successful recovery of the first stage of a rocket after a liftoff.

Japan's H3 rocket is designed to be more cost effective than its predecessor H-2A series, which had a near-perfect success record, but still needs further cost cuts to compete in

the global space market.

The Japanese government says a stable, commercially competitive transport capability is key to the country's space program and national security.

JAXA and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries have been co-developing the RV-X, which is 1.8 meters (5.9 feet) in diameter and 7.3 meters (23.9 feet) long and equipped with an engine with enhanced durability and four shock-absorption landing gear.

The "hardworking" engine has so far withstood 165 combustion tests, Ito said.

JAXA, which is jointly developing reusable rockets with France and Germany, plans to send the RV-X rocket to a higher altitude of about 100 meters (218 feet) in future test flights.

Evolution shapes human hand into capable tool

Why are our fingers different lengths?

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

By Steven Lautzenheiser
University of Tennessee

Why are our fingers different lengths? - Betty, age 8, California

It was one of those rushed mornings when I was already running late for work. In my hurry to grab my keys and head out the door, I knocked a few things off the counter, scattering loose coins onto the floor.

As I picked up the coins, I noticed I was using different movements to gather everything, and those movements seemed to depend on the different lengths of my fingers. My thumb and index finger pinched together to grab a dime, while my middle finger reached farther to pick up coins that had rolled under the edge of a cabinet. My ring finger and pinky curled inward to hold the coins I had already collected while I reached for more.

These motions really brought home how different fingers have their own job - and how each finger's varying length plays a big part in what it can do.

Pondering such things is part of my job description: As a biological anthropologist who studies the biomechanics of how people move, I often think about how movement, forces and structure work together to shape the human body.

My morning mishap showed that each of my five fingers seemed to have its own role, and the differences in finger length helped them do different jobs.

The middle finger is usually the

longest. It acts as the hand's central axis, helping to balance and guide movements. Its length also allows it to work with the other fingers to grip objects securely.

The ring finger is typically slightly shorter than the middle finger, but the two work closely together, generating grip strength and stabilizing the hand. Whether lifting a heavy backpack, carrying grocery bags or holding a baseball bat, the middle and ring fingers help keep your grip steady and balanced.

The index finger is shorter, more flexible and can move on its own more easily than the two main gripping fingers - which makes it great for careful, controlled movements. It is the finger you use for tasks that require precision and accuracy, such as pointing, typing, pressing small buttons or writing with a pencil.

The pinky finger is usually the smallest of the five, but it doesn't need length to do its job of steadying the outer edge of the hand. It helps keep your hand stable when you hold things - especially objects that are bigger than your hand, such as a large water bottle, basketball or a heavy bag of groceries.

The thumb is unique. It's generally about three-quarters the length of the index finger. Rather than relying on length, the thumb's special joint lets it rotate and move across the palm, where it can touch the other fingers. Because it can move this way, it is called an opposable thumb. This makes the thumb one of the most versatile parts of the hand, enabling you to pinch and pick up small objects.

Without the thumb, many everyday tasks, such as holding utensils, opening containers and, yes, picking up coins, would be much harder.

Evolution shaped the human hand

into a highly capable tool. Early humans relied on their hands for survival tasks, such as climbing, building, and making and using tools.

Those with hands better suited for gripping and precision were more likely to thrive, gradually shaping the modern human hand.

For example, humans share our long middle finger with other apes, including chimpanzees and gorillas, suggesting that it has been important throughout our evolutionary history. This long history of adaptation explains why our hands are both strong and highly precise, capable of handling everything from heavy lifting to delicate tasks.

Evolution is only part of the story. Before birth, genes guide how the hands grow, acting like a biological blueprint during development.

These genes influence how quickly bones lengthen, how long each finger becomes, and how the joints and tendons are shaped. Small differences in how these genes work before birth can change how long each finger grows compared with the others.

Hormones also play an important role. Sex hormones, such as testosterone and estrogen, and other signals can influence how the bones of the fingers grow, shaping subtle differences in proportions before birth and into childhood and adolescence.

Hand development is shaped by both biology and environment. This is why families often share similar hand features, even though each person's hands and fingers are slightly different.

As we use our hands every day, we become better at tasks such as writing, throwing or playing an instrument. Over time, our hands grow stronger and more coordinated through practice. (AP)



A view of Bamy Hotel, where migrants are held, is seen in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, on April 22. (AP)

Suspected Ebola patient placed in Equatorial Guinea hotel with deportees from US: lawyers

DAKAR, Senegal, July 11, (AP): Migrants deported from the US and detained in a hotel in Equatorial Guinea say that authorities there also have used the facility to quarantine at least one suspected Ebola patient, deportees and lawyers representing them said.

The hotel on a tropical island off the country's coast, owned by the country's powerful President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, is being used to house 17 migrants from countries including Angola, Mauritania and Ethiopia under an opaque third-country deportation deal with the Trump administration.

According to a statement from a coalition of international lawyers and interviews with two of the deportees, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals, a man suspected of having Ebola was brought to the hotel last week by medical personnel in hazmat suits, and placed on a floor below the detainees.

The central African nation of Congo is currently battling a rare Ebola virus that has killed over 600 in an outbreak first announced in May. Cases have been confirmed in neighboring Uganda, but so far no cases - or even suspected cases - have been reported in Equatorial Guinea, which shares no border with Congo and is roughly 1,425 miles (1,425 km) away.

However, two deportees told The Associated Press that they were told by a doctor in English that the man was a suspected Ebola patient and that they should be careful, but that they were provided no further details.

The lawyers group said in a statement that they had received "disturbing reports from multiple detained individuals that a person with a suspected case of Ebola was recently brought under quarantine into the same hotel complex where they are being held."

One of the deportees said that a woman also was brought to the quarantine floor on Sunday and that medical staff had identified her as a suspected Ebola patient as well.

The AP saw videos showing medical personnel in full protective equipment appearing to transport patients to the hotel, which also served as an isolation center during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Things are getting worse every day," one of the detainees said in an interview. "It's very confusing, no one is coming to talk to us. No one is informing us of anything. The hygiene is unimaginable."

Apart from those present at the moment, the detainees were provided with no masks, disinfectants or other basic protective supplies, nor informed of any measures to reduce the risk of exposure, lawyers and detainees said.

Under a series of often-secret agreements, the Trump administration has deported thousands of people it has deemed to be in the country illegally to nearly two dozen countries that are not their own, advocates say, as part of a broad US crackdown to deter illegal immigration.

Immigration lawyers said the Trump administration uses deportations to third countries as a legal loophole to indirectly force asylum seekers back to their home countries. Equatorial Guinea is one of at least eight other African nations that the US has struck such agreements with.

Following an \$7.5 million deal with Equatorial Guinea, President Obiang has turned a hotel owned by his family in Malabo on Bioko island into a detention center.

There are currently 4 women and 13 men held in the hotel, according to the lawyers. All of them have received orders from US judges that should have protected them from being removed to their home countries, the lawyers said.

Earlier this month, rights lawyers filed a case against Equatorial Guinea before Africa's top human rights body, accusing the central African nation of forcing deportees from the US back to their home countries in violation of their rights.

The lawyers' coalition said that they also received "multiple reports that individuals with serious medical conditions are being denied adequate medical care while detained in government custody."

Equatorial Guinea is one of the richest countries in Africa thanks to its oil resources. It is also rife with corruption and human rights abuses, according to US officials.

There are virtually no critical voices in Equatorial Guinea, where the government has been accused by rights groups and the US State Department of detaining, torturing and even killing those that dare to speak out.

The country's largest foreign investors are US businesses, and its military receives funding for training from the US government.

WH rolls back key protection for imperiled wildlife

PHOENIX, July 11, (AP): The Trump administration finalized a rule Friday that changes how agencies enforce the Endangered Species Act and eliminates a key protection for imperiled wildlife against logging, oil drilling and other activities.

The administration narrowed the definition of "harm" under the landmark law - a change with broad implications.

For decades, the government defined harm broadly to include encroachments on places with threatened and endangered animals. The change announced Friday would allow oil and gas drilling, mining, logging and other development on critical wildlife habitats so long as the animals themselves aren't killed or injured.

Environmentalists warned the move could cause some species to go extinct by opening the door to habitat destruction. Industry representatives and their Republican allies have long argued the landmark 1973 environmental law is wielded too broadly, to the detriment of economic growth.

Administration officials said they were returning the law to its original intent, following a 2024 Supreme Court decision that limited the authority of federal agencies to interpret environmental statutes passed by Congress. They described the government's prior definition of harm as an intrusion on private property rights.



Banners of former US president George Washington and President Donald Trump hang above an entrance to the Department of the Interior on June 25, in Washington. (AP)

SPORTS

Al-Qadsia finalizes volleyball staff ahead of new season

West Asia Championship goals beyond titles: Al-Marri

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

MUSCAT, July 11: Kuwait Volleyball Association president Dr. Jaber Al-Marri said the second West Asia Men's Volleyball Championship, which begins next Tuesday in Muscat, Oman, is not only a competition for silverware but also an opportunity to strengthen regional ties and promote the exchange of experience among participating teams.

Al-Marri said the tournament embodies the values of sportsmanship, mutual respect and fair play, expressing confidence that the Oman Volleyball Association will stage a successful championship befitting its growing stature.

He called on all participating teams to deliver their best performances, saying the event offers a chance to showcase the steady progress of volleyball across West Asia. He also wished every delegation



Dr. Jaber Al-Marri, President of the Kuwait Volleyball Association.

success and expressed hope that the tournament would achieve its technical and organizational goals while contributing to the continued devel-

opment of the sport throughout the region.

The draw placed Kuwait in Group A alongside Qatar and Syria. Group

B features hosts Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Lebanon.

Elsewhere, Al-Qadsia has finalized the technical and administrative staff for its first volleyball team ahead of the 2026-27 season as part of the club's preparations for the new campaign.

The technical staff will be led by Homer Alejandro as head coach, with Diego serving as assistant coach and Luciano Jorge appointed as team statistician.

On the administrative side, club board member Dr. Hussein Al-Qabandi has been named general manager of volleyball, while Mohammad Al-Damkhi will oversee the first team as manager.

The club believes the new structure will provide the stability needed to prepare the squad for the upcoming season and strengthen its bid to challenge for domestic titles while meeting the expectations of Al-Qadsia supporters.

Kuwaiti horse racing mourns loss of Sheikh Ali Al-Humoud

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Kuwaiti equestrian sport is mourning the passing of former Equestrian Club vice president Sheikh Ali Al-Humoud Al-Salman Al-Sabah, a pioneering figure in local horse racing and the founder of the renowned Al-Nashama Stable.

Sheikh Ali Al-Humoud played a major role in the development of Kuwaiti horse racing and built a remarkable legacy through his achievements in the sport. The Equestrian Club president and board members expressed their deepest condolences to his family and the entire racing community, describing him as one of the sport's key pillars.

Founded as one of Kuwait's most historic racing stables, Al-Nashama Stable enjoyed a distinguished record filled with major victories and memorable achievements.

The stable's greatest accomplishments include winning the prestigious His Highness the Amir's Cup three times. It claimed consecutive titles in 1998 and 1999 with the horse Mabrouk, ridden by jockey Haider Yuga, before adding a third Amir's Cup triumph in 2002



Sheikh Ali Al-Humoud Al-Salman Al-Sabah, former Vice President of the Equestrian Club.

through Labeled, ridden by Ali Al-Saffar.

Renowned trainer Yousef Al-Kandari was responsible for preparing the Al-Nashama horses that delivered all three Amir's Cup victories. The stable also secured the points league championship, the Opening Cup, the Martyrs Cup, and numerous other prestigious trophies, cementing its place among the elite names in Kuwaiti horse racing history.

Top clubs rush to build title-winning squads

Handball transfers heat up ahead of new season

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 11: Kuwait's handball transfer market is shaping up to be one of the busiest in recent memory, with clubs moving aggressively to strengthen their squads ahead of the 2026-27 season.

Several teams have already stepped up efforts to secure marquee signings of players and coaches as competition intensifies for the country's top talent. While some deals have already been finalized, others are in the closing stages and await only official confirmation.

Transfer activity is expected to remain brisk in the coming weeks as clubs continue to bolster their rosters, setting the stage for what promises to be a highly competitive season in Kuwaiti handball.

Among the latest developments, Al-Arabi is on the verge of completing two high-profile additions after reaching agreements with Burgan star Hamoud Qayed Al-Adwani and Kuwait Club standout Mohammad Amer.

Sources said the club has already agreed terms



Dr. Jaber Al-Marri, President of the Kuwait Volleyball Association.

with both players, with only the formal signing of contracts and official announcement remaining. The duo is expected to strengthen Al-Arabi's title ambitions under national coach Hussain Habib.

Burgan has also been one of the busiest clubs in the market, completing a series of signings as

it prepares for the new campaign and its participation in the IHF Club World Championship in Cairo this September.

The club has secured the services of Abdullah Al-Attayah from Al-Qadsia, along with Hussain Salman, Bandar Al-Shammari, Mohammad Al-Bahar, Hassan Rajab, and Yousef Rajab from Al-Salmiya. Burgan has also signed Kuwait Club and national team goalkeeper Ali Safar, adding further depth and experience to the squad.

The recruitment drive is part of a broader plan by the club's management and coaching staff, led by national coach Yaquob Al-Mousawi, to reinforce every area of the team with experienced and proven talent.

Fresh off its Asian Club Championship triumph, Burgan has raised expectations for the coming season and is determined to remain a major contender on both the domestic and international stage.

Club officials indicated that the transfer window remains active, with further additions still under consideration as Burgan looks to assemble the strongest possible squad for another title challenge.

Burgan leads Kuwait's charge

Ten clubs set for 2026 IHF Club World Championship

CAIRO, July 11: The International Handball Federation (IHF) has confirmed the 10 clubs that will compete in the 2026 IHF Club World Championship, scheduled to take place in Cairo, Egypt, from Sept. 24 to Oct. 1.

The lineup features host Al Ahly of Egypt, Barcelona of Spain as European champions, Burgan of Kuwait as Asian champion, Montada of Morocco representing Africa, Füchse Berlin of Germany representing Europe, Esporte Clube Pinheiros of Brazil representing South and Central America, HC United of the United States representing North America and the Caribbean, Sydney Uni of Australia representing Oceania, Veszprém of Hungary as a wild-card entry, and Zamalek of Egypt, also awarded a wild card.

For Burgan, the tournament will mark a landmark moment in the club's history. The Kuwaiti side earned its place on the world stage after winning the 28th Asian Club Championship, held in Kuwait last month, in what was its first-ever appearance in the continental competition.

Burgan secured the Asian crown with a victory over Saudi Arabia's



The IHF Club World Championship trophy takes center stage ahead of Cairo 2026.

Al-Khaleej in the final, becoming the sixth Kuwaiti club to lift the continental title. The triumph saw the club join an elite list of national champions that includes Kazma, Al-Qadsia, Al-Fahaheel, Al-Sulaibikhat, and Kuwait Club, while also booking its historic debut at the Club World Championship.

France roars back with 30 points to defeat Australia

England rebounds from South Africa loss

BRISBANE, Australia, July 11, (AP): Romain Ntamack returned for France and orchestrated a huge comeback as the Six Nations titlists turned a 21-12 halftime deficit into a 42-26 victory over Australia on Saturday in the second round of the rugby Nations Championship.

Winger Aaron Grandidier-Nkanang chimed in with two tries on debut, including the first of the second half that triggered a run of 30 consecutive points that set the French on course for a fourth straight win over the Wallabies.

It was France's first win over Australia in Brisbane since 1972, and it consigned the Wallabies to a sixth consecutive test loss.

Ntamack missed the tournament-opening 34-32 loss to New Zealand but was instrumental in a dominant attacking performance from the French in the second half.

Australia also surrendered a 12-point lead against Ireland last week before losing 33-31 in Sydney.

France will travel to Tokyo to play Japan next week. The Wallabies will go to Perth, Western Australia, to take on Italy, which is coming off losses to Japan and New Zealand.

The French led twice in the first half but trailed at the break against a Wallabies lineup that used a one-man advantage to score two tries.

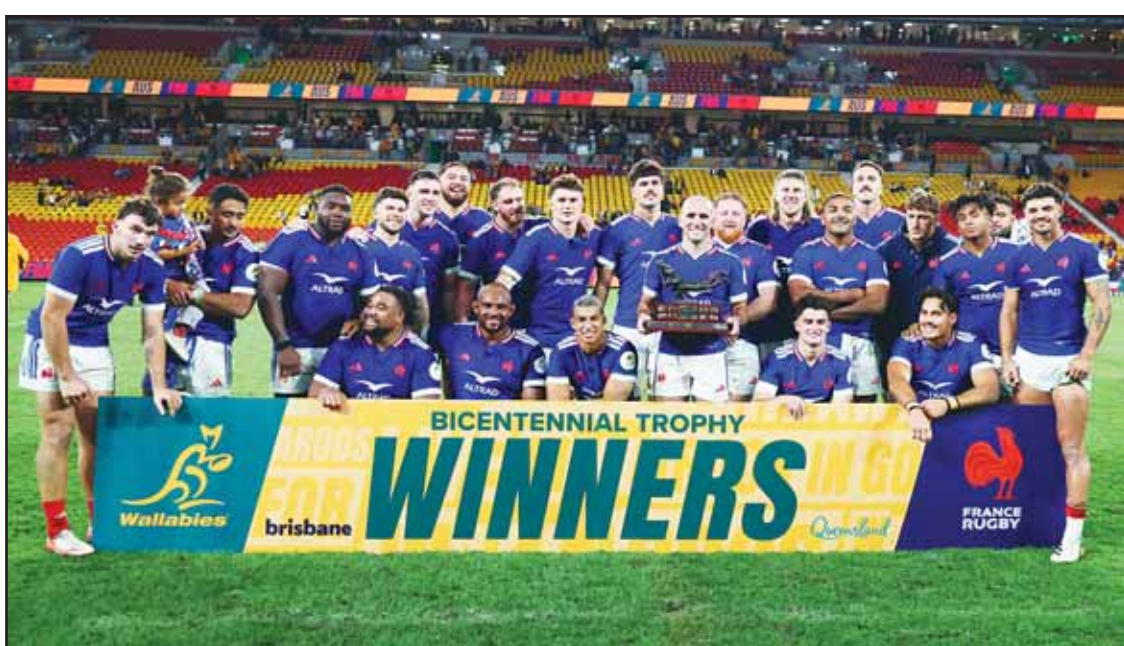
In an eventful first half for Emmanuel Meafou, who grew up in Australia before moving to France to pursue a professional contract, he scored the opening try in the third minute and also received the yellow card and spent 10 minutes on the sidelines.

Australia responded six minutes later following a trick lineout move involving hooker Brandon Paenga-Amosa throwing to scrumhalf Ryan Loneragan at the front, getting the return pass and starting the movement that finished with him scoring.

France went ahead again in the 18th when Grandidier-Nkanang beat rookie Australian flyhalf Duncan Meredith in the chase for Ntamack's perfectly-weighted stab kick into the left corner from 30 meters out.

In the 25th, with France leading 12-7, Meafou was carded for making head-on-head contact with Australian backrower Rob Valentini and that gave the Wallabies extra space to attack.

Flanker Fraser McReight scored



France pose with their trophy following the Nations Championship rugby international between France and Australia in Brisbane, Australia. (AP)

twice, both from close-range, and also saved a try just before halftime when he beat a flying Matthieu Jalibert in a race for the ball into the in-goal.

Three tries in a seven-minute span, including two when Australian full-back Tom Wright was on the sidelines for a yellow card, swung momentum fully in favor of the back-to-back Six Nations champions.

Meanwhile, the gap between New Zealand's ambition and execution widened as the All Blacks overcame a slow start to beat Italy 47-17 and remain unbeaten after two rounds of rugby's Nations Championship.

A dismal first-half performance was partly redeemed as winger Will Jordan scored three tries to become New Zealand's all-time leading try-scorer in rugby tests with 50 in 56 matches and Josh Moorby came off the bench to make an live-wire debut on his birthday.

New Zealand scored five tries and 33 points after halftime to make its win comfortable. But the errors that featured at both ends of the match will worry head coach Dave Rennie as the All Blacks prepare to face Ireland next weekend in Auckland.

In its 34-32 first-round win over France, New Zealand revealed its intention to play at a high tempo, although its effort to do so was undermined by errors in handling, defense, in the aerial contest and in discipline.

The All Blacks were worse in all of those areas in the first half Saturday as they were rushed into errors by Italy's flat and physical defense

and rocked by an Italian try after only three minutes. They hoped to dominate the breakdown and collision areas and at set pieces but failed in all three objectives.

Center Tommaso Menoncello opened the scoring with a try from an All Blacks turnover and, though New Zealand responded within five minutes with a try to lock Sam Darry, Italy denied New Zealand space and possession as the home team limped to halftime with a 14-10 lead.

In Liverpool, England, England mollified its critics for a week after smothering a dismal Fiji by a record



France's Romain Ntamack breaks the tackle of Australia's James Slipper to score a try during the Nations Championship rugby international between France and Australia in Brisbane, Australia. (AP)

73-8 in Nations Championship rugby on Saturday.

Relevant questions about England's lineup, tactics and attitude after the hammering from world champion South Africa in Johannesburg last weekend were pacified somewhat by coming home and posting an equally unsurprising 11-try win against outclassed Fiji.

Fiji struggled for possession and could not handle England's scrum, maul and defense. Under pressure, Fiji conceded 12 penalties - nine by halftime - and a red card to scrumhalf Simone Kuruvoli for lashing out with his boot into the stomach of Ellis Genge.

That meant Fiji played the entire second half down a man and England could play wider and be ruthless. Up 35-3 at halftime, England added six more tries, including a hat trick for replacement flanker Henry Pollock. Fin Smith converted nine.

England tallied a record score against Fiji and its biggest win since beating Chile 71-0 in Lille at the 2023 Rugby World Cup.

A more thorough vetting of England's latest changes, including Henry Slade recalled to outside center, should come from Argentina next weekend in Santiago del Estero.

After a poor show against the Springboks, England was under pressure to avoid a sixth straight test defeat for the first time in 20 years and beat Fiji, which ran Wales ragged last weekend but was overcome in the set-pieces.

WNBA record crowd sees Wings overcome Tempo

MONTREAL, July 11, (AP): Paige Bueckers scored 34 points and the Dallas Wings beat the expansion Toronto Tempo 108-95 on Friday night in front of a WNBA regular-season record crowd of 20,996 at Bell Centre.

The game broke the regular-season mark of 20,711 set in Washington on Sept. 19, 2024, against Indiana. The league's two largest crowds - both 22,076 - came in Detroit in the 2003 and 2007 WNBA Finals.

"Being the only team in Canada, it's a responsibility for us and how cool is that," Tempo coach Sandy Brondello said. "We get to be seen all over Canada. We want to make sure we can come out tonight and celebrate the WNBA and celebrate the Tempo with our new fans."

Toronto will face New York in Montreal on Sunday. The Tempo also will play two games in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Jessica Shepard had 20 points and 17 rebounds to help the Wings (15-8) sweep a four-game trip that also saw them beat the Tempo in Toronto. Arike Ogunbowale also had 20 points, and Azzi Fudd added 13.

Bueckers was 13 of 22 from the field and had six assists and six rebounds. Marina Mabrey had 34 points for Toronto (9-13), hitting 6 of 9 3-pointers. Laura Juskaite added 25 points. The Tempo have lost four straight.

Sparks 102, Sky 87
In Los Angeles, Nneka Ogumike had 25 points, 12 rebounds and five assists, Erica Wheeler added 15 points and eight assists, and the Los Angeles Sparks beat the Chicago Sky 102-87 on Friday night.

Ogumike sank a 3-pointer midway through the fourth quarter and Dearica Hamby added a driving layup on the Sparks' next possession for a 90-80 lead.

Hamby made a reverse layup with 1:36 remaining for a 97-87 lead and she blocked Courtney Vandersloot's shot at the other end to seal it.

Valkyries 79, Sun 64
In Uncasville, Conn., Veronica Burton scored 17 points, Janelle Salaun had 16 points and four 3-pointers off the bench, and the Golden State Valkyries beat the Connecticut Sun 79-64 on Friday night for a franchise-record seventh straight victory.

Golden State (17-7) has won 11 of its last 13 games to move into a first-place tie with Minnesota and Las Vegas in the WNBA standings. The Valkyries' only losses in that span came against the Lynx and at the Aces.

Golden State went on an 11-0 run in the second half to go ahead 60-44. Burton converted a three-point play with 31 seconds left in the third quarter to become the first Golden State player to reach double-digit points. She added a driving layup just before the buzzer for a 54-44 lead.



Dallas Wings' Paige Bueckers (5) goes up to shoot a 3-point basket against the Toronto Tempo during the second half of a WNBA basketball game in Montreal. (AP)



Egypt gets a warm welcome home after World Cup loss



Mohamed Salah, right, smiles as he is greeted by fans upon the Egyptian national soccer team arrival at El-Alamein airport, 160 km (99 miles) west of Alexandria, Egypt. (AP)



Fans crowd to greet the Egyptian national soccer team during their arrival at El-Alamein airport, 160 km (99 miles) west of Alexandria, Egypt. (AP)

Sporting Kansas City dreams of landing Salah

EL-ALAMEIN, Egypt, July 11, (AP): Thousands of fans turned out to greet Egypt's national soccer team on its return home after its World Cup adventure ended with a 3-2 loss to Argentina in the knock-out stage of the tournament.

Crowds gathered at the el-Alamein airport, waving photos of star player Mohamed Salah and holding signs celebrating the team's achievements as they cheered the players' return.

Egypt made it to the last 16 teams in the tournament for the first time after beating Australia 4-2 on penalty kicks, led by Salah.

The players met with Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, who thanked the team in a Facebook statement on Tuesday "for their honorable performance and for achieving an unprecedented milestone in the history of Egyptian soccer."

Emotions ran high across Egypt on Tuesday as supporters gathered in coffee shops, homes and public squares to watch the match against Argentina, with Egyptian flags draped from balconies, storefronts and streets.

The Egyptian Football Association, or EFA, said Wednesday that it's deeply dissatisfied with the refereeing in Tuesday's match and decisions related to the Video Assistant Referee, or VAR system.

Egypt coach Hossam Hassan and several players criticized the referees after 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.

In a statement issued later Wednesday, the head of refereeing for soccer's world governing body FIFA, Pierluigi Collina, said the debate over decisions is a natural part of soccer, but stressed that "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."

Meanwhile, Salah's future has returned to the spotlight, with the Egyptian superstar facing a major career decision after confirming his departure from Liverpool last March.

Just days after Egypt's 2026 World Cup campaign ended with a Round of 16 defeat to Argentina, the 34-year-old forward is weighing his next move, with several options on the table.

According to The Athletic, Major League Soccer side Sporting Kansas City has emerged as a potential destination for Salah. However, completing the deal will be a difficult task, with strong interest from the Saudi Pro League and Salah's preference to continue playing in Europe.

Despite those factors, the report indicates that the Egyptian forward has kept the door open to a move to MLS as he evaluates his future.

Sporting Kansas City's new majority owner Peter Malouk, who has Egyptian roots, is reportedly eager to bring Salah to the club and views the Liverpool legend as a marquee signing capable of transforming the team.

The MLS club is currently undergoing a rebuilding phase following the departure of longtime figure Peter Vermes. New sporting director David Lee has been handed the responsibility of reshaping the squad after Sporting Kansas City struggled last season and slipped to the bottom of the Western Conference standings.

The club already has two designated players — Dejan Joveljić and Manu García — whose contracts exceed the league's standard salary limits. Sporting Kansas City also has an available third designated-player slot, and the club's ambition appears clear: use it on a global superstar, with Mohamed Salah at the top of its wish list.

Fan Zone

The Conversation



Passionate supporters fuel the unforgettable atmosphere at the World Cup. (AP)

Goalkeepers' complaints fade away

World Cup ball silences critics with flawless performance

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

By John Eric Goff
Purdue University

Not every World Cup goal is a classic. Sometimes a half-hearted shot goes in as a result of little more than goalkeeper error. And on those occasions, goalies may be inclined to find an excuse.

During the 2026 tournament, some members of what is jokingly referred to as the "goalkeepers' union" have pointed toward the performance of the ball. Joe Hart, a former England goalkeeper and serving BBC pundit, noted after one blunder: "The ball is coming into the keepers a lot faster than it feels when it comes off the foot."

But are his concerns justified? The Conversation turned to John Eric Goff, who has been studying the physics of World Cup balls for two decades and previously wrote about what to expect from the Trionda ball being used at the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Colleagues of mine at the University of Tsukuba in Japan took the World Cup ball, put a little hole in it, stuck it on a rod, attached force sensors and then set it up in a wind tunnel to obtain all

kinds of aerodynamic data. They sent that data to me to look at what the trajectory modeling for the ball suggested about how it would perform in comparison to its predecessors.

Central to the performance is the airflow around the ball and how it changes as the speed of the ball increases. For the Jabulani ball used in the 2010 World Cup, for example, this airflow change happened at a speed that was right in the middle of typical free kicks and corner kicks. That caused problems for goalkeepers, as it moved in the air unpredictably as a result.

Among the recent World Cup balls we tested, Trionda has the lowest critical speed at which that airflow change takes place. That led us to predict free kicks and corner kicks with fairly consistent, stable flight.

But we also found that Trionda's drag coefficient was slightly larger than that of its predecessors, which implied a slightly rougher surface. So there was a possible trade-off; it might fall a couple of meters short.

It has depended a little on conditions. Take the Mexico vs. England game at Estadio Azteca in Mexico City, which took place at high elevation.

That meant the ball had less air drag on it, so it could actually go farther than it would when kicked

with the same launch speed in lower-altitude conditions. It also meant that because the sideways, or Magnus forces, are proportional to air density, it would curve less.

During the England vs. Mexico game, what I noticed, especially early on, was many of England's kicks tended to go a little long. They would kick the ball down the pitch in those first 20 minutes and it would be just out of reach of teammates.

The sense I got was they weren't quite adjusting for the higher elevation and lower air density.

I have heard the complaints by former England goalkeeper Joe Hart about the ball. But I haven't heard a whole lot of detail about the substance of those complaints.

In other words, I've heard about the ball not being their favorite, but not why. The scientist in me really wants to interview a goalkeeper and find out: "Do you think it's moving in erratic ways? Or is it something to do with the color scheme that's flummoxing you on the pitch?"

I think goalkeepers are always going to complain about a new ball. But the Nike Flight, which was used in the 2024-25 English Premier League season, has an aerodynamic profile most similar to that of the current World Cup ball. So players who used that ball might already be somewhat famil-

iar with the motion of Trionda.

As far as I can tell, the ball appears to be flying in ways that not only we predicted but that don't look completely out of touch with what players would have seen with other balls.

As the World Cup has progressed, I've been watching the ball come in toward the goalkeepers, and it could be that the reds, blues and greens twirling in front of the goalkeepers' eyes are confusing them.

I have read there are more goals coming from farther out than in previous World Cups. But I don't know if I could attribute it specifically to the ball.

It's possible, of course. But I would really have to see what the actual number is and see what the percentage increase has been, because, for a sport like soccer where you only get two or three goals in a match, the sample size is so small.

It would certainly be a very interesting research question to pursue. But I don't think the ball alone can be credited for these longer-range goals.

I think the ball has been fine. It is an attractive ball, with the colors of the original version representing the three host countries - all of whom are now out of the tournament, so it didn't bring them much luck, unfortunately. (AP)

Portugal appoints Jorge as new coach

LISBON, Portugal, July 11, (AP): Portugal announced Jorge Jesus as its new coach following its disappointing run at the World Cup.

The 71-year-old Jesus has coached several Portuguese clubs, including Benfica and Sporting Lisbon. His last job was with Al-Nassr in the Saudi Arabian league, where he coached Portugal star Cristiano Ronaldo.

The experienced Portuguese coach will replace Spaniard Roberto Martinez after Portugal lost 1-0 to Spain in the round-of-16 of the World Cup.

The Portuguese national team wrote on X on Friday that "A new journey begins today. Welcome to the National Team, Mister Jorge Jesus."

World Cup quarterfinal resale prices drop

NEW YORK, July 11, (AP): World Cup ticket resale prices dropped for quarterfinal matches following the elimination of co-hosts United States and Mexico, and FIFA has nearly 1,200 seats on sale for the final at \$7,380.

The site TickPick listed the lowest price for the Spain-Belgium game on Friday at Inglewood, California, at \$1,381, down from \$3,261 before the U.S. lost to Belgium in the round of 16.

The lowest price for the England-Norway match at Miami Gardens, Florida, on Saturday was \$2,049, down from \$3,866 before England defeated Mexico to reach the quarterfinals. It listed the lowest price for the Argentina-Switzerland game at Kansas City, Missouri, at \$1,142, down from \$2,381 before the round of 16.

Standing outside SoFi Stadium on Friday, Jake van Baarsel said he bought tickets two days earlier. The 65-year-old from Riverside, California, said he hadn't previously planned on attending because he knew ticket prices were so high. But when his son called to tell him he obtained seats at a lower price, he decided to pay for two at \$1,000 each to share the moment with his 13-year-old grandson.

"It's one of those things - it's a memory maker for my grandson and me," he said. "So how much money do you put on a memory?"



FIFA staff place a FIFA logo on the pitch prior to the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between Argentina and Egypt in Atlanta. (AP)

"So yeah, it's steep for a game, but we enjoy."

Others who bought tickets well ahead of Friday's quarterfinal match paid far more.

Lisandro Pineda, 70, of East Los Angeles, said he paid about \$2,200 a month ago.

"The price was too high, I think, but it's a resale, remember," he said. "I didn't want to be left out. I've never been to a World Cup. I didn't go to the one we had before. So I figured, I have the money, I have the time, what the heck, buy the ticket, so here we are."



Karolina Muchova of Czech Republic returns the ball to Linda Noskova of Czech Republic in the women's singles final at Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London. (AP)

Sports

Race favorite Pogacar keeps yellow jersey

Merlier wins stage 8 of Tour de France

BERGERAC, France, July 11, (AP) — Belgian rider Tim Merlier won the eighth stage of the Tour in a sprint finish to claim back-to-back-stage victories, while defending champion Tadej Pogacar kept the race leader's yellow jersey on Saturday.

Four-time champion Pogacar finished in the main pack along with two-time champion Jonas Vingegaard and maintained his overall lead of 2 minutes, 42 seconds over his main rival. Pogacar's teammate Isaac del Toro is third.

Stage 8 took the peloton on a 180-kilometer (112-mile) route from Périgueux to the southeastern city of Bergerac in sweltering conditions, amid another heatwave.

"Just like every day, a lot of water and keep cooling the body down," the Slovenian rider Pogacar said. "The body gets tired in the heat. Definitely we need to be careful and keep cooling down, take care of nutrition, hydration."



Slovenia's Tadej Pogacar, wearing the overall leader's yellow jersey, celebrates on the podium after the eighth stage of the Tour de France cycling race with start in Perigueux and finish in Bergerac, France. (AP)

For the second day running, Mathieu van der Poel rode hard to put his teammate Jasper Philipsen at the front, but their attack came too early and Merlier timed his run to the line perfectly for a fifth career stage win in the showcase race.

"I needed to fight for my position all the time ... I almost crashed, thought it was over," Merlier said. "In this heat it was a really difficult effort."

Eritrean Biniam Girmay finished second and Dutchman Olav Kooij was third, all timed at 3 hours, 52 minutes, 50 seconds.

Stage 9 on Sunday is a hilly trek from Malemort to Ussel in central France and has been shortened by 30 kilometers to 155.5 kilometers due to the extreme heat.

Organizers took the decision on Saturday evening because the local department where the stage takes place has been placed on red alert.

The race concludes with its traditional finish in Paris on July 26.



Belgium's Tim Merlier, left, crosses the finish line to win the eighth stage of the Tour de France cycling race with start in Perigueux and finish in Bergerac, France. (AP)

Merino the hero, Spain sets up France blockbuster clash



Spain's Pau Cubarsi goes for the header with Belgium's Brandon Mechele (4) and Belgium's Timothy Castagne (21) during the World Cup quarterfinal soccer match between Spain and Belgium in Inglewood, Calif., near Los Angeles. (AP)

South Africa World Cup midfielder Jayden Adams dies at the age of 25

JOHANNESBURG, July 11, (AP) — South Africa midfielder Jayden Adams, who played at the World Cup, has died. He was 25.

His death was confirmed by Gayton McKenzie, South Africa's minister of sport, arts and culture, in a statement on Saturday.

"It is with profound shock and a heavy heart that I have learnt of the passing of Jayden Adams, midfielder for Mamelodi Sundowns and Bafana Bafana, at the age of 25," McKenzie posted on X.

"South African football has lost one of its brightest young talents, and our nation mourns alongside his family, his team-mates and the millions of supporters."

Adams helped South Africa reach the World Cup knockout stage for the first time.

Further details of his death were not given.

"The cause of Jayden's passing has not yet been confirmed," McKenzie said. "I wish to appeal to members of the media and the public to exercise restraint and compassion, and to refrain from speculation."

Adams started South Africa's first Group A game against the Czech Republic and was substituted at halftime. McKenzie said he played that game only hours after learning that his grandmother had died.

Adams played several seasons for Stellenbosch before joining Mamelodi Sundowns last year. He helped the club win the CAF (African) Champions League this year.

"Death has cruelly stolen one of our own. It has robbed our nation of a remarkable footballer," the South African Football Players Union posted on X. "We will forever remember his humility, his extraordinary talent and the pride with which he represented South Africa. Rest in eternal peace, Jayden. You will never be forgotten."

South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa and the South African Federation of Trade Unions also expressed their condolences.



In this file photo, South Africa's Jayden Adams during the World Cup Group A soccer match between Czechia and South Africa in Atlanta. (AP)

Belgium finally ends Simón's 650-minute World Cup shutout streak

INGLEWOOD, Calif., July 11, (AP) — Mikel Merino is Spain's World Cup hero once again, and even he finds it hard to believe.

A mere four days after Merino scored a clutch goal as a substitute in injury time to beat Portugal, he found himself in the right spot again in the quarterfinals when Belgium's backup goalkeeper spilled the ball into his path.

Merino booted it home in the 88th minute, sending Spain to a 2-1 victory Friday and into a titanic semifinal showdown with tournament favorite France.

"I've done this again, and it's happened to me again, so it would seem that coincidence exists," a smiling Merino said. "If you're ready and you try, I guess it can happen for you."

Already a versatile contributor in any role he can get as a depth player for his country or English club Arsenal, the multi-positional Merino has transformed into the ultimate super-sub while providing exactly what Spain needed to survive two knockout matches against top opponents.

Merino has scored two goals in his first World Cup - and they're both historic.

"Honestly, it's crazy to be able to help the team once again," he said. "This time in a different way, but at the same time to believe and trust that the opposing goalkeeper could make a mistake and to stay alert. ... I prepare for when the moment comes, and hopefully they keep



Spain's Mikel Merino (6) celebrates scoring their second goal during the World Cup quarterfinal soccer match between Spain and Belgium in Inglewood, Calif., near Los Angeles. (AP)

coming."

Merino is the first to admit he also needed luck, and Belgium keeper Senne Lammens provided it after he was forced into his first World Cup match in the 71st minute by an injury to starter Thibaut Courtois.

Merino came on in the 86th minute and scored on his second touch of the match, charging into the box and pouncing after Lammens lost control of Pau Cubarsi's long shot. Fabián Ruiz scored a rebound goal

in the 30th minute for Spain, but Belgium forward Charles De Ketelaere evened it with the first goal allowed by the Spanish team in the entire World Cup in the 41st minute.

Merino's clutch goal against an upset-minded Belgium sent La Roja to the semifinals for the first time since they won the World Cup in 2010. A powerhouse matchup with France has been anticipated since the draw was announced late last year, and Spain was grateful to secure its spot.

Spain and France will meet Tuesday in Arlington, Texas, in a matchup anticipated for years. Neither team has lost at this year's World Cup.

"It will be a clash of giants," Spain coach Luis De La Fuente said through a translator. "We are capable of winning this game - and not just now, but I would have said this a few weeks ago as well. They are a great giant of football, but I trust our team."

Courtois made four saves, but the Real Madrid keeper went down to the grass in the second half after a long kick. He received treatment during the hydration break, but broke down in tears when coach Rudi Garcia removed him moments later.

Only Germany's Manuel Neuer has played more World Cup matches than Courtois' 21. Lammens, the capable Manchester United keeper, was forced to become the first goalkeeper other than Courtois to play for Belgium in the last four World Cup tournaments - and he couldn't make the play that would have kept

it level.

Belgium desperately pressed for an equalizer in the final minutes with substitute forward Romelu Lukaku leading the effort, but Aymeric Laporte acrobatically volleyed the best chance out of the box in the second minute of injury time.

"We knew how we could hurt them, and I think we did this today," Belgium defender Brandon Mechele said. "It's a pity that it ended like this, but I think we can be proud of the tournament we played."

Spain remained unbeaten in 37 straight competitive matches since March 2023, while Belgium's streak of 18 consecutive unbeaten matches across all competitions ended.

Spain didn't allow a goal in its first five matches at this year's tournament, and goalkeeper Unai Simón hadn't conceded in a World Cup-record 650 minutes dating to Qatar.

The streaks abruptly ended when De Ketelaere muscled past Cubarsi and headed home a cross from Timothy Castagne to tie the game for Belgium.

Belgium hadn't generated anything close to a strong scoring chance before the latest big moment for De Ketelaere, the Atalanta forward who scored two goals in Belgium's 4-1 rout of the co-host U.S. on Monday.

Belgium captain Youri Tielemans was removed from the starting lineup after getting injured during warm-ups. He joined injured defender Amadou Onana on the sidelines.

Germany officials confident Klopp will be next national team coach

ATLANTA, July 11, (AP) — Germany officials have held talks with Jurgen Klopp and both sides are confident he will take over as coach, the national soccer federation said Saturday.

Former coach Julian Nagelsmann resigned after his team failed to make the round of 16 for the third World Cup running.

Klopp, a serial trophy winner with Liverpool and Borussia Dortmund, was quickly identified as the favorite to succeed him.

The German federation said talks were held in New York on Friday with Klopp, who is currently in an executive role as head of global soccer for the Red Bull group.

"In the constructive exchange, an understanding was reached on essential key points of a potential contract," it said. "Both sides are confident that the negotiations, subject to an agreement with Klopp's current employer Red Bull, can ultimately be successfully concluded."

Klopp has been working as a pundit on German TV at the World Cup, even

taking part in postgame interviews with Nagelsmann at the side of the field.

He has not been a coach since leaving Liverpool in 2024 after winning a full set of trophies with the iconic club, including the Champions League and Premier League.

"About two years ago I stopped at Liverpool and said that I lacked the energy for another job or for another year with Liverpool. Since then I'm more than recharged, I'm ready," he told German broadcaster Magenta TV last week.

Germany has repeatedly failed at the World Cup since winning the trophy for the fourth time in 2014.

Since then it was eliminated at the group stage in 2018 and 2022. Germany advanced beyond the group stage at this year's expanded 48-team format, but was knocked out by Paraguay on penalties in the newly-introduced round of 32.

Klopp held talks with German federation president Bernd Neundorff and vice president Hans-Joachim Watzke.