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Kuwait Amir receives Crown Prince, Premier and officials



KUWAIT'S AMIR MOURNS PASSING OF QATAR'S FATHER AMIR



Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani

Kuwait declares four days of mourning for Sheikh Hamad

KUWAIT CITY, July 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences on Sunday to the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, expressing profound sorrow over the passing of Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani.

His Highness conveyed, on behalf of himself, the Government and people of Kuwait, heartfelt condolences to Sheikh Tamim, the ruling family and the people of Qatar, praying for mercy upon the late Father Amir.

The Amir said Qatar, the Gulf family, the Arab and Islamic nations, and the world had lost a distinguished leader known for his wisdom, who devoted his life to serving his country and supporting Arab and Islamic causes.

His Highness recalled his close brotherly relationship with the late Father Amir, affirming Kuwait would always remember with pride Qatar's support, particularly during the Iraqi occupation.

The Amir also praised Qatar's remarkable development under the late Father Amir's leadership, praying that Allah Almighty grants him eternal mercy and bestows patience and solace upon Qatar's leadership, ruling family and people.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences on Sunday to the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, over the passing of Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani.

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HOSTILE IRANIAN ATTACK DAMAGES KUWAIT BORDER POSTS, OIL PLATFORM



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

The Houthis' predicament ... like a wasp buzzing around its ruined nest

THE Houthis are acting as if they control the region, but in reality, they are like a "wasp buzzing around its ruined nest" after the defeats suffered by Iran in most of the areas it once controlled. This is evident in Lebanon, where Hezbollah is now much weaker than it was in 2013, and in Iraq, where the government took the initiative to monopolize illegal weapons. Today, the Houthi group is besieged by these developments. This means the window of opportunity for terrorism that is open at Bab al-Mandab is beginning to close.

Since 2011, Iran has been relying on the Houthi group, believing it is in control of the internal Yemeni situation. However, the Gulf-led 'Operation Decisive Storm' undermined this project. The world's recognition of the legitimacy of the government in Aden thwarted the attempt to make Yemen a thorn on the side of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, especially after the heroic resistance to Iranian attacks on the region.

Today, the landscape is completely different from what it was in previous years. The threats issued by the outcasts in Yemen to close the Bab al-Mandab Strait and intimidate Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states are just empty rhetoric. These threats cannot neutralize the political stance of the Gulf, which is keen on normalizing relations with neighboring countries, free from the control of terrorist groups. Recent developments in the conflict between the United States of America and Israel on one side, and Iran on the other side, rendered the Yemeni statements meaningless on the international stage.

Moreover, Iran is currently suffering from weaknesses that are beginning to manifest as cracks within the regime. Iran needs to deal

with its internal situation. As a result of such weakness, and to prevent further fragmentation, Iran is attempting to export its crisis by continuing to target Gulf states, including Qatar and Oman, despite their efforts to mediate between Tehran and Washington.

What is happening today in the region, including Lebanon and Yemen, entails that the idea of militias operating outside the state even under the banner of 'resisting Israel', is no longer viable. The global situation has become so sensitive that half-measures are unacceptable. As US President George W. Bush said in 2001, "You're either with us or against us." This is the principle adopted by the current US administration.

Indeed, the Houthis were controlled in 2025 through the agreement with the United States signed in Muscat. Therefore, any intervention by the group in the current war means its end as a disruptive force, and it is fully aware of this. The statements issued by the Houthi group from Sana'a not only violate the 2022 ceasefire agreement with Riyadh, but also legitimize the return of 'Operation Decisive Storm'.

The reality today is different from what it was in 2011, not only for Iran's proxies in the region, the Houthis in particular, but also for Tehran itself. Thus, the continuous Iranian attacks on the Gulf Arab states and the threats from the Houthi group signal the beginning of the end for the terrorist nightmare that the region has endured for years.

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Gulf's fragile calm breaks



Commercial vessels are seen in the Strait of Hormuz off Bandar Abbas, Iran, Tuesday, June 30, 2026. (AP)

Hormuz standoff raises global alarm

KUWAIT CITY, June 12, (Agencies): Three land border posts in northern Kuwait came under a hostile attack, resulting in material damage, the Ministry of Defense said on Sunday.

In a statement, the ministry's official spokesperson, Colonel Saud Abdulaziz Al-Atwan, said a Kuwait Oil Company offshore drilling platform in Kuwait's territorial waters was also targeted by a hostile drone.

The attack caused material damage and injured one

worker, who is receiving the necessary medical treatment, he added.

Al-Atwan said the competent authorities immediately initiated the necessary response measures in coordination with the relevant agencies.

He affirmed that the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Armed Forces remains fully prepared and has taken all necessary measures and precautions to safeguard the country's security and territorial integrity.

Continued on Page 5

Address sweep hits 325 homes

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) announced the removal of 325 residential addresses from its records based on the homeowner's declaration or due to the demolition of the building.

In an announcement published in the official gazette, 'Kuwait Al-Yaum', on Sunday, PACI called on those covered by the decision to register their new address at its offices or complete the process through the Sahel application, along with the submission of the required documents, within a period not exceeding 30 days from the date of publication.

PACI warned that those who fail to update their residential data within the specified period will be subject to the penalty stipulated in Article 33 of Law No. 32/1982 -- a maximum fine of KD100 per individual.

One-stop shop opens investment doors

Kuwait courts investors with 100% ownership

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyasaah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: The Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) took measures to attract major international companies and financial institutions, leveraging the advanced and attractive investment environment in the country and the extensive legal guarantees offered to investors, says an official report.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the report, stating that KDIPA intensified its efforts to promote investment opportunities in the Kuwaiti market, urging international banks to strengthen their presence in Kuwait despite the fact that 10 foreign banks are currently operating here, according to Central Bank of Kuwait data.

The report indicated that foreign investors can establish companies in Kuwait with 100 percent ownership within a comprehensive regu-

latory and supervisory framework that aligns with global best practices. This enhances the competitiveness of the financial sector and maintains monetary and financial stability through continuous oversight by the Central Bank.

It emphasized that the strength of the Kuwaiti banking sector, along with its high level of capital adequacy, liquidity, asset quality and profitability, are the main attraction factors for foreign investment and provide a secure environment for investors.

It added that the full privatization of Boursa Kuwait in 2019 contributed to the resilience of the financial market and in increasing its ability to withstand global fluctuations, thus, bolstering Kuwait's position as an attractive hub for capital and investments.

It explained that KDIPA operates an Investor Service Center as a one-stop shop, providing investors with various services and facilities. This one-stop shop coordinates

with relevant government agencies, committing to processing eligible investment applications within a maximum of 30 days.

It pointed out that Kuwait continues to offer a package of incentives and competitive advantages for eligible enterprises in accordance with Direct Investment Promotion Law No. 116/2013.

It indicated that the Kuwaiti market offers valuable investment and financing opportunities in strategic sectors like information and communications technology, energy and water, transportation, construction and housing, healthcare, education, clean technology, and the oil and gas sector.

It emphasized that the stable investment environment, huge sovereign reserves and stable credit rating boost the global investors' confidence in the ability of Kuwait to meet its financial obligations and solidify its position as a promising regional destination for long-term investments.

Death upheld for wife killer

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: The Court of Appeals, presided over by Judge Salah Al-Houti, upheld the ruling of a lower court to execute an Indian man for the premeditated murder of his wife after their marital dispute.

Case files indicate that the defendant purchased a hammer from a scrapyard in Amghara and used it to repeatedly hit his wife, causing her death. He later transported the body and dumped it at Salmi desert in an attempt to conceal the crime.

Continued on Page 5

Newswatch

NEW DELHI: At least 51 people were dead and 39 others injured following floods and landslides triggered by monsoon rains in different parts of Bangladesh, official sources said on Sunday.

Data from the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief of Bangladesh showed that 51 people lost their lives and 39 others are injured while around one million people across seven districts are affected due to the incessant rains hitting the country for last one week. (KUNA)

Kuwait enters midsummer furnace as sun intensifies

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: The Al-Ojeiri Scientific Center announced that midsummer will begin on July 16, coinciding with the start of the second Gemini period, which lasts 13 days, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The center explained that this period marks the beginning of a gradual decline in daylight hours, accompanied by an increase in the sun's intensity.

Kuwait's skies will witness a conjunction of

the moon and Saturn on July 16, followed by a conjunction of the moon and Venus on July 17. The month will conclude with the full moon on July 29, internationally known as the "Buck Moon."



8 Hani AlAwadhi makes Forbes Top 50 Asset Managers 2026



8 Gulf Bank rewards AIDanah winner with KD 1 mln

9 KFH opens Al-Qairawan service center to bring group services closer to customers



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:24 Asr 15:28
Sunrise .. 04:57 Maghrib .. 18:50
Zohr 11:54 Isha 20:20



HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince

Kuwait Amir receives Crown Prince, Premier and officials

KUWAIT CITY, July 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Sunday, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness later received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah.

The Amir also received Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, followed by

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Crown Prince audiences

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Crown Prince also received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah, Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Amiri Diwan thanks mourners over ‘royal’s’ demise

KUWAIT CITY, July 12, (KUNA): On behalf of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Al-Sabah Family, the Amiri Diwan thanked

on Saturday all citizens and residents who offered condolences over the demise of Sheikh Ali Humoud Al-Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

The Amiri Diwan prayed to Almighty Allah to bestow mercy upon the deceased’s soul and grant him highest place in heavens.

Other Voices

The leader who shaped modern Qatar

By Nasser Al-Hajeri

The passing of His Highness the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani is a great loss for Qatar and the entire Gulf region. Today, many people are mourning a leader who played an important role in shaping modern Qatar and changing the country in ways that will be remembered for generations.



Al-Hajeri

When Sheikh Hamad became Amir in 1995, Qatar was entering a new chapter. During his years of leadership, the country grew rapidly and became increasingly recognised around the world.

His vision was not only about building

roads, towers and major projects. He believed in investing in people, particularly through education, healthcare and opportunities for future generations.

Under his leadership, Qatar became one of the world’s leading energy producers and developed a stronger presence internationally. The country became known for its diplomacy, global investments, education and growing cultural influence. Many of the institutions and achievements associated with Qatar today began or expanded during his time as Amir.

One of the most memorable moments of his leadership came in 2013, when he handed over responsibility to his son, His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. The peaceful transition reflected his trust in the next generation and his belief that the future of the country should be placed in capable young hands.

Even after stepping down, Sheikh Hamad

remained a respected and much loved figure. To many Qataris, he was not only a former leader but also the father of modern Qatar. His influence could still be seen in the country’s continued growth and success.

For us in Kuwait, Qatar is more than a neighbouring country. We share deep family ties, a common history and a strong Gulf identity. The loss of Sheikh Hamad is therefore felt across the region. We stand with the people of Qatar during this difficult time and share their sadness.

Sheikh Hamad will be remembered as a leader who believed in his country and worked to give it a respected place in the world. His legacy lives on through the nation he helped build and the generations who will continue his vision.

May Allah have mercy on him, grant him the highest place in Paradise and give strength and patience to his family and the people of Qatar.

‘El Alamein’ exhibit opens Sept 8

Egypt eyes major role in aviation, space industry

By Bassam Al-Qassas

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 12 : The Second El Alamein International Aviation and Space Exhibition will be held at El Alamein International Airport in New Alamein City on Sept 8-10, under the patronage of Egyptian President and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Abdel Fattah El-Sisi.

The exhibition is a manifestation of the vision of Egypt to become a leading regional hub for the aviation and space industries, as well as the advanced infrastructure and organizational and logistical capabilities of the countries, which make it qualified to host major international events.

The second edition of the exhibition will witness the vast participation of leading international companies and institutions specializing in the fields of aviation, defense and space technology.

The event will include professional air displays and will showcase the latest systems, technologies and innovations, in addition to the exhibition of civil and military aircraft, and the products and services that represent the future of the aviation industry at the regional and international levels.

The exhibition is organized through the cooperation of the Ministry of Defense, Air Force, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Egyptian Space Agency and Egypt Air, reflecting the integration of state institu-



Brig Gen Mustafa Al-Dalal

tions in holding a world-class event that keeps pace with the rapid developments in the aviation and space sectors.

Egyptian Military Attaché to Kuwait Brigadier General Mustafa Al-Dalal affirmed that the Alamein International Aviation and Space Exhibition is not just a specialized exhibition, but a strategic platform for exchanging experiences, showcasing the latest innovations, and strengthening international cooperation in the fields of aviation, defense and space, which solidify the position of Egypt and its vital role in Africa and the Middle East.



Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate photo

Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governor and acting Hawally Governor Sheikh Sabah Bader Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah honors the outstanding students.

Students achieved success by combined efforts – Gov.

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governor and acting Hawally Governor Sheikh Sabah Bader Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah honored the outstanding students in Mubarak Al-Kabeer and Hawally governorates at the headquarters of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate on Sunday.

This is in recognition of the academic excellence of the students and the fruits of their hard work and perseverance throughout the academic year.

Present at the ceremony were Under-secretary of the Ministry of Education Dr. Khaled Suleiman Al-Rasheed, Director General of Hawally Governorate Security Directorate Brigadier General Hussein Dashti, Director General of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate Security Directorate (in charge of exam security) Brigadier General Suleiman Al-Jarrah, Director General of the General Administration of Educational Districts Mohammad Turki Al-Wazzan, Director of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Educational District Dr. Musaed

Al-Shammari, and Deputy General Manager for Corporate Communications at the Commercial Bank of Kuwait Amani Al-Wara.

The Governor expressed his immense pride in the outstanding results achieved by the top students, emphasizing that this excellence is the true fruit of the combined efforts exerted through the students’ determination, the support of their parents, and the dedication of the educational and administrative staff in the schools.

He commended the Commercial Bank of Kuwait for sponsoring the ceremony, and for its unwavering support and active participation. He also affirmed the full and continuous support of the governorates for the educational efforts and initiatives that hone the skills of young people under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Sabah, may Allah protect them.

KUWAIT CITY, July 12, (KUNA): It is imperative to boost awareness about global efforts aiming to limit the environmental impact of sandstorms, Kuwait’s Public Environment Authority (EPA) said on Sunday, coinciding with a UN-designated day devoted to the matter.

Thanks largely to its geographical location and desert landscape, Kuwait is among the countries most susceptible to sandstorms, which would behoove state bodies to work closer together in a bid to ratchet up awareness about the matter, EPA’s chief public relations officer Sheikhha Al-Ibrahim told KUNA.

Given the frequency of sandstorms in Kuwait, EPA works diligently to effectively and accurately detect air quality and purity, which in turn, allows relevant bodies to take the measures needed to limit the environmental impact of sandstorms, added the official.

On potential solutions to this environmental problem, the official cited “sustainable practices,” including efforts to fight desertification and green initiatives as chief among these strategies, she added.

Meanwhile, the Kuwait Environment Protection Society (KEPS) also called for sustainable environmental solutions to curb dust storms and reduce their harmful effects on human health and the environment. The appeal came on the International Day to Combat



Al-Ibrahim



Dr Behbehani

Sand and Dust Storms.

Dr. Wafa Behbehani, a society member, said sand and dust storms are a development issue that requires coordinated action from all relevant authorities. She described them as a serious environmental phenomenon with direct effects on ecosystems, as well as broader economic and social costs.

She said dust storms do not only reduce visibility, but also affect road safety, disrupt air traffic, halt some port operations and damage the agricultural sector by lowering productivity. Behbehani added that afforestation is one of the most effective scientific tools for limiting these impacts because it helps stabilize soil, reduce sand encroachment and cut the spread of dust.

She said expanding vegetation cover is a long-term investment in environmental security, noting that trees, green belts and wind-breaks help slow winds near the ground and

reduce soil erosion and the movement of fine particles. She added that greening also improves air quality, lowers dust levels, reduces urban temperatures and strengthens cities’ ability to adapt to climate change.

Behbehani stressed that successful afforestation projects in Kuwait depend on scientific planning and on choosing plant species suited to the local environment, especially those able to withstand high temperatures, soil salinity and limited water resources. She said the sustainability of these projects also requires ongoing maintenance and close cooperation among government bodies, the private sector and civil society to turn afforestation into a permanent national project rather than a seasonal effort.

She also said environmental legislation plays a key role in combating desertification and land degradation. The Environmental Protection Law, she noted, does not only impose penalties but also adopts a preventive approach aimed at preserving vegetation cover as the first line of defense against sand encroachment and dust storms.

Behbehani pointed to Article 41 of the law, which prohibits overgrazing, land exploitation or any activity that damages vegetation cover and may lead to desertification, as well as uprooting trees or picking plants and flowers in public spaces. She said these provisions reflect the legislature’s awareness of the importance of protecting natural resources and preserving green cover.

Need to organize job structure: official

‘Admin inefficiencies, funds waste in co-ops’

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: The acting Assistant Undersecretary for Financial and Administrative Affairs and Cooperative Affairs at the Ministry of Social Affairs, Dr. Sayed Issa Mahmoud, says a review of cooperative societies’ budgets revealed administrative inefficiencies and financial waste resulting from the large number of overlapping positions.

He stated that restructuring these positions in accordance with sound administrative and organizational principles would generate significant savings by reducing unjustified salary expenditures.

In his interview on Kuwait TV, Dr. Mahmoud explained that organizing the job structure according to sound technical and administrative principles would help improve spending efficiency and generate financial savings that could be directed towards serving shareholders and enhancing

the performance of cooperative societies.

The reforms also included raising the maximum profit margin on purchases allocated to shareholders from 12 percent to 15 percent, in addition to granting citizens additional points on their purchases, similar to the system applied to expatriates.

He clarified that citizens and residents can redeem these points for free purchases at cooperative societies, with a maximum redemption limit based on purchases of up to KD 10,000.

Kuwait Mol busts foreign gang for ‘financial fraud’

KUWAIT CITY, July 12, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Ministry of Interior on Sunday said it has arrested a foreign gang that specialized in the forgery of customary documents with the aim of filing fictitious financial claims to illegally seize money from citizens and non-Kuwaitis alike.

The arrest comes as part of ongoing ministry efforts to clamp down on all of forgery and financial fraud, it said in a statement, citing that the case traced back to Kuwaiti national who was the victim of civil fraud.

The statement went on to reveal the intricacies of the case, in which the main suspect “exploited his previous work” at a car rental company to obtain signatures from citizens and foreigners on blank documents under the pretext of completing rental procedures.

The suspect is believed to have retained these documents and left the country before using the paperwork to prepare fictitious financial claims and submit them to the courts, according to the statement.

The main suspect’s sister was also arrested for “submitting forged documents” and filing more than 130 false financial claims before the court using the same “criminal method,” it said.

MEWRE, Info Ministry to jointly promote ‘water saving’ culture

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: The national electricity and water conservation campaign, ‘Wafer’ (Rationalize), of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy launched a media partnership with the Ministry of Information in order to unify media and awareness efforts to promote the culture of rational electricity and water consumption and instill discipline within the community.

This partnership is in line with the integration of state institutions and the importance of unifying media and awareness messages to raise public awareness on the importance of the judicious use of electricity and water and to encourage all segments of society to adopt sustainable conservation practices.

It consists of a comprehensive media plan that will be implemented through various television and radio programs, and producing diverse awareness content suitable for different age groups. It includes the production of awareness vid-

eos, video reports, short media messages, and talk shows hosting experts to provide practical guidance that promotes the culture of rational electricity and water consumption.

This is in addition to utilizing digital platforms and social media to deliver awareness messages using innovative methods and interactive content that pique the interest of the public.

It exemplifies institutional cooperation among government entities in supporting national initiatives aimed at establishing sustainability principles.

The Ministry of Information plays a pivotal role in disseminating awareness messages and enhancing community awareness.

The ‘Wafer’ campaign continues to develop its awareness programs and tools, and expand its partnership with government agencies and community organizations, based on the principle of shared responsibility and the belief that every positive action leads to electricity and water security, hence, preserving these vital resources for the future generations.

Iran, our strength lies in will of resolute people

“SPEAKING to the Iranians, particularly the Revolutionary Guard, should not be done with a restrained tone but with firm language. The repeated aggression against our country is not merely a reflection of a harsh political position but it demonstrates the extent of the hostile intent towards the Gulf states, including Kuwait,” columnist Eng. Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

“On Kuwaiti soil, Hormuz, the Persian commander who fled before the forces of Khalid ibn al-Walid, was defeated in the Battle of Kazma, also known as the Battle of the Baskets.



“In Kuwait, there is no distinction between the citizen and the land; they are inseparable. When we speak of the Kuwaiti citizen, we speak of a spirit shaped by resilience. Throughout history, since the establishment of this state four centuries ago, hardship has translated into solidarity among its people, reflected even in the smallest details of daily life.

“Our forefathers endured the dangers of the sea in search of a morsel of food, carrying the burdens of exile and the hardships of life. Through their perseverance, they were able to tame the harsh desert, transforming it into an oasis of security and a refuge for all who sought safety.

“Kuwait is not merely a land to be violated, nor are its people a nation that accepts aggression. The Kuwaiti people possess determination and resilience, combined with a wisdom capable of moving mountains. They are not easy prey for a hostile neighbor who conceals his true intentions.

“The Iranian neighbor disguises himself in sheep’s clothing, but he is a cunning wolf, and he knows that no matter how much he disguises himself as powerful, he is weaker than dust scattered by the winds of truth. The Iranian enemy is treacherous, and his intentions have long been untrustworthy.

“Therefore, dealing with him is like dealing with a desert viper. Removing his fangs and venom can only be achieved through Gulf unity and by standing firm against him, especially since he is faltering today more than ever before. We are a people who, despite our gentleness, are fierce when confronted by those who seek to harm us. Iran must respect its neighbors and not rely on the unfair advantage of geography, for such an approach will ultimately work against its own interests.

“The slogans Iran raises, claiming to uphold good neighborliness, are merely a form of deception. Whoever sows chaos in this region must bear the consequences of their actions. Iran has made missiles and drones a language of dialogue with other nations. Our neighbors, and Kuwait in particular, know very well that we will not surrender or be broken.”

Also:

“According to Google, Microsoft founder and American billionaire Bill Gates surprised the world by stating that there are only four professions that artificial intelligence cannot perform, including tennis,” Kuwaiti journalist Hassan Ali Karam wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

“The Kuwaiti government has instructed the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Education to introduce artificial intelligence into the school curriculum. At the same time, it is working to expand online transactions, meaning citizens will no longer need to visit ministries and government departments to complete their paperwork. Kuwait has entered the technological age in a major way.

“However, there is another side to the picture. Last week, approximately 500 job seekers applied for positions in the oil sector. The interview results had not been announced at the time this article was written. In addition, around 5,430 Kuwaitis applied for jobs in cooperative societies, which were established in the 1960s as a form of voluntary community service. Of these applicants, 2,880 passed the interviews.

“It appears that the powers of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) have been restricted, or so I believe. The CSC no longer accepts recruitment requests from ministries that have already reached their staffing levels and do not require additional employees. Government offices are so overcrowded that some employees reportedly have no desks and must stand while working. Moreover, nearly three-quarters of the state budget is allocated to salaries for employees who, in many cases, work only a few minutes of their official working hours.

“With the announcement of the latest examination results for students graduating from public and private universities, secondary schools, and technical institutes, the unemployment issue, arguably the country’s most pressing national concern, is be-

coming increasingly severe.

“The government has urged universities to introduce artificial intelligence courses so that Kuwait does not fall behind in this rapidly advancing technology. We are in no rush, however, because we have the financial resources to purchase even the most advanced and expensive technologies from developed countries. But how will we deal with the future of our children and future generations as unemployment continues to rise? In the past, Kuwait had what was known as the Planning Council, which served as the brain of the state, but it was later abolished.

“We must admit that we have fallen behind while others have continued to innovate. We have become preoccupied with travel and with boasting about spending our summers and winters in the world’s most luxurious tourist destinations. The industrial zones that the state allocated for manufacturing goods to meet the country’s needs or for export have been neglected, turning instead into car repair garages and shopping malls. Even restaurants and fashion brands are imported from Italy, France, and China.

“Frankly, we have fallen behind; indeed, we are far behind the developed world. Are we content to import our ready-made dishdashas from China, our shoes from Italy, and our perfumes from Paris or India? Is this to be our ultimate ambition? The truth is that we have become consumed with consumption and appearances, as though they were our highest priorities. The world is moving in one direction while we are moving in the opposite direction. The world is busy with industry and innovation, while we are preoccupied with social gatherings. I say this with sadness, especially because Kuwait was once a center of leadership.”

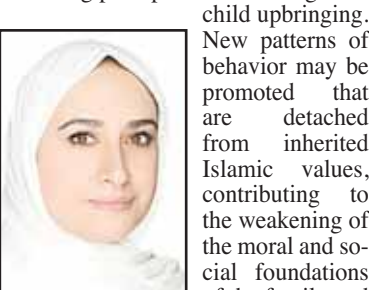
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“Today, the contemporary family and society are undergoing significant transformations as a result of digital openness and the widespread use of social media. They no longer exist within the closed environment as they did in the past; instead, they have become part of a vast virtual world that reaches into the details of daily life and reshapes patterns of thought and behavior,” Kuwaiti writer Shaikha Issa Mahmoud Al-Asfour wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

“This new reality presents fundamental challenges to educational and social values and raises questions about the ability of families to preserve their values and cohesion amid these rapidly evolving influences.

“Social media has contributed to weakening the role of key educational figures and has even assumed a dangerous role. Fathers, mothers, and teachers have become targets of ridicule and mockery under the guise of humor, often justified through distorted interpretations of awareness and openness. This has diminished their authority and weakened their position in the eyes of children.

“These platforms have also reshaped traditional social priorities, including perceptions of marriage and child upbringing.



Shaikha Al-Asfour society.

“The impact has extended beyond passing humor and has evolved into behaviors that are imitated and practiced in everyday life. Consequently, unjustified attitudes, disrespect, and the belittling of others have become more prevalent, while expressions of respect within family and educational environments have declined.

“These transformations have created a number of challenges that are becoming increasingly apparent. Among them are weakened family bonds, as individuals become increasingly absorbed in their virtual worlds, and the decline of essential educational values such as obedience, respect, social responsibility, discipline, and commitment. They have also contributed to the spread of negative role models through digital content, often at the expense of authentic role models.

“All of this has been reflected in rising divorce rates, family disintegration, the spread of psychological distress, and a growing gap between generations, as parents often feel powerless when facing the virtual world in which their children are immersed.

“To address these challenges, there is a need for conscious guidance that does not rely on absolute restriction but instead encourages access to meaningful and beneficial content. There is also a need to revive family dialogue by dedicating daily time for conversation and connection away from screens.

— Compiled by Simi K.Kutty

Dentist offers drugs, in exchange for ‘love’

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: The General Department of Criminal Investigation, represented by the Anti-Human Trafficking and Negative Phenomena Department, arrested a Kuwaiti citizen working as a dentist on charges of possessing narcotics and intoxicants for personal use and exchanging them for immoral acts, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press release, the Ministry of Interior (Mol) explained that investigations revealed

the accused had been using social media platforms to offer narcotics and intoxicants in exchange for engaging in immoral activities (sex).

A carefully planned ambush led to the accused being caught in the act inside a rented room, where he was found in possession of two bags containing pieces of hashish, three bags containing methamphetamine, 10 capsules of Lyrica, a bag containing narcotic powder, and drug-related paraphernalia.

Following the issuance of a warrant by the Public Prosecution, authorities searched the accused’s residence, where additional quantities of narcotics were found in his closet, including methamphetamine, 46 Captagon tablets, three pieces of hashish, and various psychotropic pills.

The ministry confirmed that the accused was referred with the seized items to the relevant authorities to take the necessary legal measures.

Gold heist at Jleeb shop

Disguised gunmen flee in stolen car; hunt on

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: The Criminal Security Sector has launched a search for two unidentified individuals who carried out an armed robbery at a jewelry store in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, stealing a large quantity of gold jewelry, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, detectives have circulated descriptions of the stolen items among jewelry stores in all six governorates, along with details of the suspects, to border crossings in an effort to prevent their

escape from the country.

Authorities have also circulated information about the vehicle used in the crime, a small Japanese car that was reported stolen from an Asian expatriate.

The suspects took advantage of the quiet morning hours at the gold market to carry out the robbery. The crime was reported at around 11:00 am on Thursday, after an employee discovered his colleague restrained and unable to move or use his mobile phone. He revealed that the store management had begun an inventory of the stolen items to determine their total value.

Security personnel and forensic teams arrived at the scene to collect evidence and fin-

gerprints. The victim stated that after opening the store at around 8:00am, he saw a person wearing a niqab, later identified as a man, along with another masked individual, enter the shop. The man then brandished a firearm and ordered the employee to remain calm before instructing his accomplice to restrain the victim. The suspects subsequently stole the gold jewelry and fled the scene.

A review of surveillance footage revealed that the firearm used in the robbery was a 9mm pistol. Further investigations showed that the suspects were using a vehicle reported stolen, and the vehicle’s license plate had also been reported stolen.

Sabahiya diversions

Road opposite Khaldiya shut down for one mth

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: The General Traffic Department (GTD) announced the closure of the right and middle lanes on King Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud Road (Riyadh Road), starting from the Third Ring Road exit opposite Al-Khaldiya towards Kuwait International Airport and extending to the exit leading to the Fourth Ring Road, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The closure will also include the entrance and exit to Salim bin Ali Buqammaz Street on Riyadh Road in Al-Khaldiya.

The General Traffic Department clarified that the closure will begin on Sunday, July 12, and will continue until Tuesday, August 11.

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Diversions in Sabahiya: The Ministry of Public Works, in cooperation with the General Traffic Department, announced a traffic diversion on Street 9 in Sabahiya between Blocks 1 and 5, affecting vehicles coming from the first roundabout towards South Sabahiya to the roundabout separating Blocks 1 and 4, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ministry explained that traffic will be redirected to the opposite side of the road, with the roadway divided into one lane in each direction. The traffic diversion will begin at dawn on Saturday, July 12.

The ministry urged motorists to follow traffic signs and observe speed limits to ensure the safety of all road users.

Expat trio arrested for illegal public transport

By Munif Nayef

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: Traffic police referred three expatriates to the traffic detention center after they were caught transporting passengers using private vehicles.

According to a security source, traffic detectives apprehended the three expatriates at separate locations, after which they were transferred to the traffic detention center for the necessary legal procedures.



Farwaniya Governorate photo
Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah receives the Kuwait Industries Union officials.

Industrial sector’s role for Kuwait wins praise

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah recently met with a delegation from the Kuwait Industries Union, headed by Director General Huda Al-Baqshi, along with members of the Board of Directors Khalid Al-Abdulghani and Talal Al-Ajil, Business Development Officer Ghanem Al-Ghanem, Projects Officer Nour Al-Raghib and Saleh Al-Shathi.

During the meeting, they looked into ways to strengthen coordination between the Farwaniya Governorate and the union. They also discussed several topics of mutual interest, with the aim of supporting development and economic initiatives and solidify partnerships with private sector entities.

Sheikh Athbi Nasser confirmed that the governorate remains committed to expanding cooperation with various entities. He praised the role of the union in supporting the industrial sector and increasing its contribution to national development, in line with the direction of the country towards sustainable development and the realization of its vision in terms of developing and supporting national industries.

The guests expressed their gratitude to the Governor for the warm reception, affirming the readiness of the union to strengthen cooperation with the governorate and support joint initiatives and projects that better serve the community and guarantee comprehensive development.

Teenager ‘kidnapped’ after winning Al-Salmi road race

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: A race between several motorists on Al-Salmi Road turned into a kidnapping incident after the young man who finished the race ahead of his competitors was forcibly stopped and taken away by one of the racers and another unidentified individual, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the victim, a 16-year-old boy, reported that the incident occurred at kilometer 51 mark towards Jahra.

He stated that the suspect, assisted by an unknown person, intercepted him, forced him out of his vehicle, and took him away in their vehicle before later releasing him. He indicated that one of the suspects may have been under the influence of an abnormal substance or condition during the incident.

The relevant authorities registered a case and assigned detectives to conduct investigations, determine the circumstances of the incident, and identify and apprehend those involved.

MoU inked on state assets exchange

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance Asil Sulaiman Al-Saad Al-Munaifi and Head of Kuwait Financial Intelligence Unit Dr. Hamad Khalid Al-Makrad signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the exchange of information about state assets, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The main objective of the MoU is to strengthen cooperation between the two parties in combating money laundering, related crimes and the financing of terrorism.

The MoU also aims to develop mechanisms for exchanging information and expertise, thereby, improving the system for preventing and uncovering financial crimes.

It is part of the strategy of the ministry to expand partnerships with government entities and guarantee institutional integration in combating money laundering



Finance Ministry photo

Picture taken after signing of the MoU.

and the financing of terrorism in order to protect the national economy and promote transparency and integrity in financial transactions.

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Photos by Rizk Taufiq

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 illuminated the beach, drawing enthusiastic responses from the audience.



Group photo of the KISR-held training course participants.

KUNA photos



Dr. Ayoub Taher



Mona Al-Failakawi

KISR launches course to develop youths’ skills, deepen interest in scientific research

KUWAIT CITY, July 12, (KUNA): The Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) launched its 47th summer training course on Sunday with 262 students taking part, including 208 high school students and 54 university students. The program is designed to build young people’s skills and deepen their interest in scientific research.

In a press statement, Manpower Development De-

partment Director Mona Al-Failakawi said the course continues KISR’s mission to promote scientific culture and strengthen the principles of research and innovation. She noted that the program drew 1,120 applications, a sign of public confidence in the institute’s role. Al-Failakawi said the course offers a learning and research environment that helps uncover promising talent by combining theory with hands-on work in

laboratories. She stressed that investing in people remains essential to sustainable development, and she thanked the program’s sponsors for supporting human resources.

Course director Dr. Ayoub Taher said the program includes lectures and practical workshops aimed at developing scientific and creative thinking, as well as teamwork skills. He added that it links academic

knowledge with practical application, giving students a richer experience that can help shape their future academic and professional paths.

KISR has organized the summer course since 1976, making it one of the institute’s oldest community initiatives and one that has given thousands of students exposure to the scientific research environment and community service.

Never leave kids ‘alone’

KFF: How to avert drowning!

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) published an awareness message on its official accounts containing a set of preventive guidelines aimed at protecting children from drowning accidents. It urged parents to follow these measures to ensure their children’s safety, reports Al-Anba daily.

KFF emphasized that prevention begins with never leaving children unattended near the sea, swimming pools, or other bodies of water, stressing the importance of continuous and direct supervision while children are swimming.

It also highlighted the importance of teaching children basic swimming skills at an early age, noting that this is an important factor in improving water safety.

KFF further advised ensuring that children wear life jackets when participating in water activities or when in designated swimming areas.

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PAMA nods bonuses: The acting Director General of the Public Authority for Minors’ Affairs (PAMA), Alia Al-Saqr, approved a series of administrative decisions that included the promotion of 59 employees based on seniority, the upgrading of job levels for 116 employees, and the approval of periodic bonuses for 357 employees. In addition, 16 seconded employees were confirmed in supervisory positions, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

She stated that these decisions reflect appreciation for the efforts of PAMA employees and demonstrate the authority’s commitment to supporting and motivating staff to continue carrying out their responsibilities effectively.

Meanwhile, Al-Saqr revealed that PAMA achieved an important milestone in June by completing its Kuwaitization process, further strengthening reliance on national talent and enhancing institutional efficiency.

14 MEWRE contracts worth KD46 million under review

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy has 14 contracts worth KD46 million under review, awaiting approval from the State Audit Bureau (SAB) to contract with the companies selected through the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) in accordance with the regulations and laws, say reliable sources.

Sources said the ministry referred these 14 contracts to SAB at various times for review and auditing to ensure the integrity and validity of the procedures.

Sources disclosed that the contracts vary in their objectives, but they all contribute to supporting the development and mod-

ernization of the electricity and water networks, raising the efficiency of the main generation and transmission stations, and enhancing their readiness to handle increased loads, especially during the summer season.

It is worth noting that the largest tender under review is for the supply and installation of a 400 kV overhead line from the Al-Shagaya solar power plant to the Al-Wafra (Z) main transmission station.

The contract, valued at KD35.982 million, will support clean energy projects. The new line contributes to the efficient transmission of energy produced from the Shagaya solar power plant, in addition to enhancing the reliability of the electrical grid and increasing its capacity to accommodate the rising demand for energy.

‘Retired officers can help society’

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: The Retired Officers Association has called on all its members to register on the “Experienced Platform,” which is a national initiative launched to utilize security and military expertise, enhance the role of retired officers, and support community security efforts, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The association explained that registration is carried out through the dedicated online platform, which aims to identify and

document the human resources, competencies, experience, and skills available among members, while creating a comprehensive national database.

Registration represents an important step in linking individual capabilities with available national opportunities, strengthening partnerships with government and private sector entities, and supporting the implementation of effective initiatives that benefit the community and vital sectors.



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LOCAL

Gold hits KD 41.350 per gram in Kuwait

Geopolitical storm keeps gold volatile

KUWAIT CITY, July 12, (KUNA): Gold prices in Kuwait reached approximately KD 41.350 per gram for 24-karat gold (about \$134), while 22-karat gold was priced at around KD 37.900 per gram (about \$123). The price of one kilogram of silver stood at approximately KD 701 (about \$2,278).

According to a report issued by the Kuwaiti company Dar Al-Sabaek on Sunday, gold prices ended last week’s trading at \$4,120 per ounce, recording weekly losses of about 0.5 percent amid pressure from a stronger US dollar, higher US Treasury yields, and continued geopolitical tensions in the Middle East.

Gold declined during Friday’s session to \$4,103 per ounce before recovering some of its losses by the close of trading following a session marked by sharp volatility.

Gold movements came after US President Donald Trump announced that the United States had agreed to resume talks with Iran, while also confirming the end of the ceasefire agreement between the two sides. This kept markets cautious amid concerns over the possibility of further escalation in regional tensions.

The yield on 10-year US Treasury bonds increased amid growing concerns that rising energy prices could intensify inflationary pressures, reinforcing expectations that monetary policy would remain restrictive in the coming period.

The minutes of the latest US Federal Reserve meeting showed that policy makers remain concerned about inflation. Some officials maintained that interest rate increases could remain an option if price pressures persist, while a decline in initial unemployment claims highlighted the continued

strength of the US labor market.

Furthermore, oil prices recorded weekly gains due to rising geopolitical tensions, increasing concerns over global inflation. This followed a warning from the International Energy Agency that continued escalation could undermine expectations of an oil market surplus next year if supplies are disrupted.

Regarding physical demand, the report stated that gold traded in the Indian market at notable discounts, indicating weaker demand, while the Chinese market remained stable due to continued purchases by the Chinese central bank, which recorded its largest monthly increase in gold reserves in more than two and a half years during June.

On the technical side, the report said gold continues to move within a downward trend, with lower highs and lower lows continuing to form. Trading below the 200-day moving average has kept short-term negative pressure in place.

The Relative Strength Index indicates continued weak momentum, suggesting that any upward movement could face renewed selling unless gold breaks through key resistance levels.

The report identified the first support level at \$4,021 per ounce, followed by \$3,941 and \$3,886. The first major resistance level stands at \$4,200, and a break above it could open the way toward \$4,300 before reaching the main resistance level of \$4,493.

For the current week, the report explained that investors are focusing on the release of US consumer price index data, considered the most important factor in determining expectations for monetary policy. Attention is also directed toward Federal Reserve Chair testimony before Congress and the beginning of the earnings season for major US companies.

The expected data also includes consumer confidence indicators, trade and housing figures in the United States, as well as GDP and industrial production data from the United Kingdom and the eurozone.



Namaa Charity photo

A refreshing break for Kuwait’s field workers.

5,000 workers receive cool break

Namaa’s sweet gesture beats summer heat

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: As part of its humanitarian and community efforts to support field workers and ease the impact of high temperatures, Namaa Charity has launched an initiative to distribute 10 ice cream carts along with cold water to municipal workers and laborers in the Shuwaikh Industrial Area, Al-Wafra farms and petrol stations. About 5,000 people benefited from the initiative, in appreciation of their continued efforts in serving the community while carrying out their field duties.

Public Relations and Media Director Waleed Al-Kandari said the initiative reflects Namaa Charity’s mission to promote solidarity and support those who work hard in the field, especially during the summer months, when temperatures rise noticeably.

“We were keen to reach workers at their places of work, whether in Shu-

waikh Industrial Area, Al-Wafra farms or petrol stations, to bring them some joy and ease the hardship of their work by distributing ice cream and cold water,” he said.

Al-Kandari said the initiative included 10 ice cream carts and quantities of cold water, benefiting about 5,000 workers, which reflects Namaa Charity’s commitment to humanitarian initiatives that have a direct impact on people’s lives.

He added that these initiatives are not limited to material support, but also carry a message of appreciation and gratitude for workers who continue performing their daily tasks across various sites and play an important role in serving the community and maintaining the continuity of services.

He noted that Namaa Charity places great importance on social responsibil-

ity and seeks to launch seasonal initiatives that respond to the needs of different segments of society, especially those working in harsh weather conditions.

Al-Kandari praised the efforts of the volunteers and work teams who helped implement the initiative, stressing that their cooperation and coordination played a major role in reaching beneficiaries and completing the distribution smoothly and on time.

He concluded by saying that Namaa Charity will continue launching humanitarian and community initiatives that promote a culture of giving and compassion, support those in need, and reflect its mission of serving people wherever they are, while reinforcing the values of social responsibility and partnership with various entities in community service.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait declares

His Highness expressed sincere condolences and heartfelt sympathy to the Qatari Amir, the ruling family and the people of Qatar over the passing of the late Father Amir, praying that Allah Almighty bestows His mercy upon the deceased.

The Crown Prince said the Arab and Islamic nations had lost a great leader who devoted his life to serving his people and supporting Arab and Islamic causes, praying that Allah grants patience and solace to Qatar’s leadership and people.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a cable of condolences on Sunday to the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, over the passing of Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani.

Meanwhile, by the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, official mourning has been declared for four days following the death of Qatar’s Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani.

Flags will be flown at half-mast across Kuwait and at the country’s diplomatic missions abroad, effective Sunday, July 12, 2026, corresponding to Muharram 27, 1448 AH.

The Amiri Diwan prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow His mercy upon the deceased.

Elsewhere, Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassem Al-Budaiwi, expressed his deepest condolences on Sunday to the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, the Al-Thani family, and the government and people of Qatar following the death of the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani.

In a statement, Al-Budaiwi said that the late Amir was one of the leaders who contributed sincerely and wisely to the renaissance of Qatar and its comprehensive development across all sectors.

The late Amir also played a prominent role in supporting the joint Gulf action and strengthening the bonds of brotherhood, solidarity, and integration among the GCC states, stemming from his firm belief in the importance of Gulf unity and consolidating the foundations of security, stability, and prosperity in the GCC countries.

Al-Budaiwi prayed to Allah to grant the deceased abundant mercy and forgiveness, and to grant the Amir of Qatar, the Al-Thani family, and the people of Qatar patience, tranquility, and solace.

Qatar’s Father Amir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, one of the country’s historic leaders and the architect of its modern renaissance, passed away on Sunday at the age of 74 after a lifetime of service during which Qatar rose to a prominent regional and international position.

The Qatari Amiri Diwan announced public mourning in the State of Qatar period of four days, commencing Sunday, July 12, 2026. Work will be suspended in all ministries, government agencies and public institutions starting Monday, July 13, 2026, with employees resuming work on Sunday, July 19, 2026. Flags will be flown at half-mast throughout the State for the duration of the mourning period.

Born in Doha in 1952, Sheikh Hamad received his primary, intermediate and secondary education in Qatar before enrolling at the Sandhurst Royal Military Academy in the United Kingdom, graduating in July 1971.

He later joined the Qatari Armed Forces with the rank of lieutenant colonel and was appointed commander of the First Mobile Brigade, later known as Hamad Mobile Brigade.

He rose to the rank of major general and became Commander-in-Chief of the Qatari Armed Forces, becoming the first Qatari to hold the post.

Sheikh Hamad played a key role in developing Qatar’s armed forces by expanding their personnel, establishing new units, equipping them with modern weaponry and strengthening the training of officers and personnel. He also oversaw the establishment of the Amiri Navy, the Amiri Air Force, commando, engineering, military police, special forces, border guard and leadership defense units.

On May 31, 1977, Sheikh Hamad was appointed Crown Prince, Minister of Defense and Chairman of the Supreme Planning Council, assuming significant executive responsibilities in the country’s development and modernization.

After assuming power in 1995, Sheikh Hamad led Qatar through a transformative period across political, economic, media and social sectors, positioning the country as an influential regional and international actor despite its small geographical size.

Under his leadership, Qatar pursued an active foreign policy, expanding diplomatic ties with countries across the world while strengthening cooperation at both regional and international levels. He also championed the development of the country’s media sector, helping elevate Qatar’s international profile.

Sheikh Hamad placed considerable emphasis on youth and sports, believing in their role in national development. One of the landmark achievements during his reign was Qatar’s successful bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup, announced in December 2010, making it the first Arab and Muslim country to secure the tournament.

His tenure also witnessed major domestic reforms, including granting women the right to vote and run in municipal elections, expanding employment opportunities, easing restrictions on the press and accelerating the development of the country’s natural gas sector to support economic growth.

He promoted the transition toward a knowledge-based economy aimed at achieving sustainable development and ensuring prosperity for future generations. His reform agenda covered education, healthcare, sports, culture, media and infrastructure, while Qatar emerged as the world’s largest exporter of liquefied natural gas and became a leading destination for political, economic, cultural and scientific conferences. Qatari diplomacy also gained recognition for mediating conflicts and helping resolve disputes in various regions.

Throughout his career, Sheikh Hamad sponsored numerous conferences, attended Gulf and Arab summits and paid official visits to many Arab and foreign countries.

He was awarded numerous decorations by Arab and foreign nations in recognition of his efforts to strengthen bilateral relations and expand cooperation.

These included the Order of Oman from the Sultanate of Oman (1975), the Collar of the Nile from Egypt and the Order of King Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia (1976), Indonesia’s Star of the Great Son and Venezuela’s Order of Francisco de Miranda (1977), Britain’s Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George (1979), France’s Grand Officer of the Legion of Honor (1980), Morocco’s Order of Mohammad (1981), Lebanon’s Order of Merit (1986), Jordan’s Collar of Al-Hussein Bin Ali and Oman’s First Class Order of Oman (1995).

He also received Tunisia’s highest national decoration (1997), France’s Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor and Senegal’s Order of the Lion (1998), Pakistan’s Nishan-e-Pakistan, Germany’s Grand Cross of the Order of Merit and Romania’s National Order of the Star (1999), as well as Lebanon’s National Order of the Cedar, Italy’s Knight Grand Cross and Yemen’s Order of the Republic in 2000.

Death upheld

The Public Prosecution charged the defendant with premeditated murder and requested that the maximum penalty be imposed on him.

Then, the Criminal Court sentenced the defendant to death, a verdict upheld by the Court of Appeals.

Gulf’s fragile

The General Staff of the Kuwait Army said air defense systems intercepted hostile aerial objects after they breached the country’s airspace early Sunday.

In a statement, the General Staff said the explosions heard in parts of Kuwait were caused by the mid-air interceptions and urged the public to follow safety instructions issued by the relevant authorities.

Later on Tuesday, the General Staff announced that the Land Force Engineering Corps’ Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team would carry out a controlled operation to dispose of shrapnel and unexploded ordnance in the Subhan area between 3:00 pm and 4:00 pm. It said any explosions heard during that period would result from the disposal process.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly condemned Iran’s attacks on Kuwait, describing them as a blatant violation of the country’s sovereignty, territorial integrity and security.

The ministry said the attacks reflected Iran’s continued hostile approach and constituted a serious breach of international law, the United Nations Charter and UN Security Council Resolution 2817.

It warned that the attacks represented a dangerous escalation capable of further destabilizing the region and undermining diplomatic efforts to ease tensions through peaceful means.

Reaffirming that Kuwait’s sovereignty and territorial integrity are inviolable, the ministry stressed that the country reserves the right to take all necessary measures under international law and the UN Charter to protect its security and national interests.

Kuwait backs Gulf states

The Foreign Ministry also condemned Iran’s attacks on Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and Jordan, describing them as repeated and blatant violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of those countries.

Kuwait expressed full solidarity with the four countries and affirmed its support for all measures taken to safeguard their security and stability.

The ministry renewed its call on Iran to immediately halt such attacks, respect the sovereignty of states and resolve disputes through dialogue and peaceful means.

Qatar condemns attacks, reports injuries

Qatar condemned Iran’s renewed attacks on its territory as well as attacks targeting Kuwait, Jordan, the UAE, Bahrain and Oman, calling them flagrant violations of sovereignty and international law.

The Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs held Iran fully responsible for the attacks and their consequences, warning that the escalation threatened regional stability and diplomatic efforts.

It said Qatar reserves the right to respond in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter and reaffirmed its solidarity with all affected countries.

Meanwhile, Qatar’s Ministry of Interior said three people, including a child, were injured by falling debris from interception operations and were receiving medical treatment.

Authorities activated emergency response plans, while the public was

urged to rely only on official information and avoid spreading rumors or unverified images and videos.

Separately, Qatar’s Ministry of Transport temporarily suspended all sailing and marine activities as a precautionary measure until further notice, excluding vessels operating under international maritime conventions.

Regional condemnation grows

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi strongly condemned Iran’s continued attacks against Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, the UAE and Jordan, as well as assaults on commercial vessels.

He described the attacks as serious violations of international law that undermine maritime security, freedom of navigation and regional stability, reaffirming the GCC’s support for all measures taken by the affected countries to protect their sovereignty and citizens.

Speaker of the Arab Parliament Mohammed Al-Yamahi also denounced Iran’s missile and drone attacks, calling them a dangerous escalation and a direct threat to Arab national security.

He urged the United Nations Security Council to take urgent action to halt the attacks, ensure accountability and uphold international law.

Arab League Secretary-General Nabil Fahmy likewise condemned the attacks on GCC countries and Jordan, saying they constituted unacceptable

violations of sovereignty and threatened regional security.

He also criticized Iran’s repeated attacks on commercial vessels and called for a firm, unified Arab response, stressing that the security of Arab states is indivisible.

The General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) strongly condemned Iran’s attacks against Kuwait, Bahrain, the UAE, Qatar, Oman and Jordan, describing them as a flagrant and continued violation of the sovereignty of those countries.

In a statement on Sunday, the General Secretariat said the continued attacks, along with Iran’s repeated assaults on commercial vessels and disruption of international trade, constitute a clear violation of international law, the UN Charter and the OIC Charter, warning that such actions undermine international efforts aimed at restoring security and stability in the region.

The OIC reaffirmed its full solidarity with Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman and Jordan, expressing support for all measures taken by those countries to safeguard their sovereignty, security and territorial integrity.

Jordan, Egypt express solidarity

Jordan condemned Iran’s attacks on Kuwait, the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman, describing them as flagrant viola-

tions of sovereignty and international law.

Amman reaffirmed its full solidarity with the Gulf states and support for measures to protect their security, stability and territorial integrity.

Egypt also strongly condemned the attacks targeting Kuwait, the UAE, Qatar and Bahrain, calling them a dangerous escalation and an unacceptable violation of the sovereignty of Arab states.

Cairo reiterated its rejection of any attacks threatening the security of Arab countries, affirmed its full solidarity with the Gulf states and called for an immediate end to the escalation in accordance with international law.

Tehran lashes out again at Gulf Arab states

The United States attacked Iran early Sunday morning over an Iranian strike on a vessel in the Strait of Hormuz that set the container ship ablaze and forced its crew to abandon it. Iran responded with attacks targeting several countries in the Middle East, including Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman and Jordan.

The burst of fighting raised new questions about efforts to reach a permanent end to a war that began on Feb. 28. The strait, a key transit route for oil and natural gas, has become the key sticking point in negotiations, and repeated fighting over the past week has left negotiations in danger of collapse.



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S. NO.	TENDER NO.	MATERIALS CLOSING DATE	FEES (KD)	CLOSING DATE
1	057626	Core Sample Boxes, 1 LI, MFR Any Reputed, Wafra, SUG & SF AMT	25	11 / 8 / 2026
2	057724	7 Line CS Fittings Req., 48" XS Flanges/Tees/Elbows, ASTM A860/A694-F60	25	11 / 8 / 2026
3	057725	7 Line Gate/Check/Globe Valves 1.5-16in, Approved MFR	5	11 / 8 / 2026
4	BPT#281/26	Blanket Purchase Tender for Misc. Engines - Cummins	50	25 / 8 / 2026
5	BPT#279-26	Blanket Purchase Tender for Caterpillar Spare Parts	15	25 / 8 / 2026



Police and paramedics respond to an active shooter at the Salsa on St. Clair event in Toronto on July 11. (AP)

Shooting near Toronto street festival kills 2, wounds 4

A shooting near a Toronto street festival killed two men and wounded four other people Saturday evening, police said, adding that what initially prompted an active-shooter warning was an exchange of gunfire between two people targeting each other.

Toronto Police Deputy Chief Frank Barredo said investigators recovered two firearms after the shooting that was reported at 8:12 pm near St Clair Avenue West and Arlington Avenue, where the Salsa on St Clair festival was underway. No suspect or suspects had

been arrested by the time of a late-night news conference, where Barredo confirmed both of the deceased victims were men. Officers initially urged the public to avoid the area before later announcing the scene had been secured. (AP)

DHS granted \$20m for body cams, ICE agents in Houston shooting had none

WASHINGTON, July 12, (AP): In the days after two American citizens were shot and killed in Minneapolis earlier this year, former Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem said the department would “rapidly acquire and deploy” body cameras to its officers around the country. Nearly half a year later, after another shooting death under disputed circumstances blamed on the department, the promise still hasn’t been fully met - prompting outrage from critics who say the cameras are a chance at accountability for officers enforcing President Donald Trump’s immigration crackdown. The Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers involved in the Houston shooting death of Lorenzo Salgado Araujo, a Mexican man who lived in the US for more than 35 years, were not wearing body cameras, Homeland Security has said. No evidence has emerged to support DHS’ version of events - that an officer opened fire at Salgado Araujo after he rammed an ICE vehicle chasing his van. Witnesses deny those claims. Cameras could have helped shed light on what exactly took place. The shooting has opened ICE up to fresh scrutiny over its tactics at a time when arrests have ticked up and as DHS is flush with billions of



Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia speaks during a press briefing regarding her conversation with Acting ICE Director David Venturrella outside her office in Houston, on July 10. (AP)

dollars from an infusion granted by Congress - some of which was earmarked to outfit officers with body cameras. “Even after we’ve given ICE specifically \$20 million for body cameras and Kristi Noem promised in February of this year that she was going to purchase them and get them in the field, that here we were in Houston that the agents didn’t have them,” said Rep. Sylvia Garcia, a Democrat

from Houston, during a news conference Friday. Days after Alex Pretti was killed while protesting ICE activity in Minneapolis in January, Noem announced that every Homeland Security officer on the ground there would be issued body-worn cameras. Noem said it was the beginning of a nationwide effort to get them to every officer around the country as funding becomes available.

‘Lindsey was a true defender of freedom’

US Senator Graham dies after brief and unexpected illness

WASHINGTON, July 12, (AP): US Sen Lindsey Graham, one of President Donald Trump’s closest allies in Congress who traveled the globe to advocate for a more aggressive US foreign policy, died Saturday evening after a “brief and sudden illness,” his office said in a statement posted on social media. He was 71. His office did not provide did not provide any additional details about the South Carolina Republican and said his family “appreciates prayers at this time and asks for privacy during this incredibly difficult period.” “Senator Lindsey Graham, one of the greatest people and Senators I have ever known, is dead!” Trump posted on social media early Sunday morning. “He was always working, and was a true American Patriot. Lindsey will be greatly missed!!!! DETAILS AND ARRANGEMENTS TO FOLLOW. So sad!” Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., said “my heart is heavy this morning to learn the passing of my friend and colleague, Senator Lindsey Graham.” “Lindsey’s long and dedicated service in the Air Force and in Congress carried him to far-flung regions of the world,” Thune said. “He was a strong advocate for the United States and a strong ally to freedom-loving countries across the globe. He believed in the night of America to achieve good in the world and dedicated his life to advancing that cause.” First elected to the US Senate in 2002 after serving in the House, the former Air Force lawyer long promoted a policy of robust US military interven-

tionism and strong national defense that in later years, would put him at odds with the growing isolationist wing of the Republican Party. But in recent years, Graham also became well known for his close ties with Trump, whom he briefly ran against for the party’s presidential nomination in 2016. Graham and Trump’s relationship would begin on a rough note, with the senator calling the then-businessman “unfit for office.” Graham also used a profanity to describe Trump after he made disparaging comments about former Sen. John McCain, Graham’s best friend in the Senate and a Vietnam War veteran. McCain and Graham, along with former Sen. Joe Lieberman, I-Conn., were known as the “Three Amigos” and frequently traveled to push their hawkish foreign policy views around the globe. Not long after, Trump read out Graham’s personal cellphone number during a campaign rally in South Carolina and continued to belittle him throughout 2016 as Graham made it clear he would not support Trump, even though he was the party’s presidential nominee. But Graham shifted significantly once Trump won the White House, emerging as one of Trump’s top allies — speaking with him frequently and becoming a regular presence on the golf course alongside the president — even as McCain remained a critic. In a 2018 interview with The Associated Press, Graham explained his pivot by saying McCain taught him that the country must move forward after elections and that meant “you have an obliga-

tion” to help the president. McCain ran twice for the White House. “And I’ve tried to be helpful where I could because I think he needs all the help he can get,” Graham said of Trump. “You can be a better critic when people understand that you’re trying to help them be successful.” Graham appeared to break with Trump after the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol, saying, “Count me out. Enough is enough.” But the senator returned to the fold and remained close with the president during his second term. Graham especially advised Trump on foreign policy matters such as Iran and Russia, and had just announced an agreement on Friday with the Trump administration to move forward on a package of Russia sanctions. The senator had been in Ukraine to meet with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who said that the senator visited his country 10 times during the years of Russia’s full-scale invasion. “Lindsey was a true defender of freedom and the values that make our world safer,” Zelenskyy said. His travels made him a familiar face to dozens of world leaders. Graham was a key player in the Senate’s efforts to craft a massive immigration overhaul in 2013 as a member of the so-called Gang of Eight, a bipartisan group that wrote a sweeping measure that would have altered virtually every part of US immigration law. It passed the Senate with 68 votes but was never taken up by the House, so it did not become law.



US Sen Lindsey Graham, R-S.C. answer media questions near damaged Russian vehicles exhibition in central Kyiv on July 10. (AP)



Ukrainian Air Force's F-16 fighter jets fly over a Patriot Air and Missile Defense System in an undisclosed location in Ukraine, on Aug 4, 2024. (AP)

US license could let Ukraine produce Patriot missiles, but it won’t be simple or quick

KYIV, Ukraine, July 12, (AP): US President Donald Trump’s pledge to give Ukraine a license to produce Patriot air-defense systems could mark a major breakthrough for Kyiv, but experts and Ukrainian officials warn that turning the idea into real weapons would likely take years. Speaking Wednesday alongside Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at a NATO summit in Ankara, Turkey, Trump said the United States would allow Ukraine to make the US-designed systems that Kyiv has long sought to shield its cities and infrastructure from Russian missiles and drones. “We’ll give them the right to make Patriots. We’ll show them how to do it,” Trump said. “I think they can produce them pretty quickly.” But the statement left open a crucial question: What exactly would Ukraine be allowed to produce? “America has recognized Ukraine as a country that is ready to do this,” Zelenskyy told reporters adding that Ukrainian and US diplomats and defense officials must now work “without pauses” to finalize the licensing

arrangements. Patriot interceptor missiles, which are fired to shoot down incoming missiles, drones and aircraft, are produced by US defense contractors Lockheed Martin and Raytheon, part of RTX. A production license would not automatically allow Ukraine to manufacture complete Patriot batteries - including launchers, radar systems, command posts and missiles - from scratch. It could instead cover narrower parts of the system, such as interceptor missiles, final assembly from imported component kits or production of selected components. Serhii Beskrestnov, an adviser to Ukraine’s defense minister, said a US license would typically come with technical documentation, training for specialists, supplier contacts and foreign consultants to help launch manufacturing. Other experts say the first step would likely be more limited than full domestic production. Anatolii Khrapchynskyi, development director of the Fly Group

Ukraine defense company, said Trump’s wording was ambiguous because he referred broadly to producing “Patriots,” without specifying whether he meant missiles, launchers, radar systems, command centers or components. Missile production alone involves a vast supply chain, Khrapchynskyi said, with hundreds of companies making parts such as control surfaces, engines, guidance systems and communications equipment. The Trump administration has not offered details about the Ukraine license, but an administration official said the U.S. is significantly accelerating and expanding Patriot production to meet growing demand and is forming industrial partnerships with allies and partners globally to deliver Patriots. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly. Any additional Patriot systems would enter a war that has shown how quickly weapons production can expand when a country receives designs, technical support and access to components.

With Marine Le Pen sentencing, France’s election veers into extraordinary

PARIS, July 12, (AP): France already faced one of the world’s most important elections next year. Now it has one of the more unusual. Far-right leader Marine Le Pen’s decision to run for the presidency for a fourth time means that someone found guilty not once but twice of embezzling public funds will campaign to lead the European Union’s largest nation. A Paris appeals court cleared a path for the 57-year-old Le Pen to run by shortening a ban on seeking public office that had spelled possible doom for her ambitions. Opponents now know who they’ll be up against in the election less than 10 months away. She’s using the latest twist in her legal saga to fortify her story of a combative politician who is taking on the system in the interests, she says, of France. “Her argument is essentially this: ‘Despite all the obstacles and all the ordeals I’ve been through, I’m still standing, I’m still running. I entered politics to carry this national project for France through to the end,’” said Luc Rouban, a senior researcher at Paris’ Sciences Po school of political sciences who studies Le Pen’s Na-



Far-right leader Marine Le Pen leaves a market as she campaigns in La Fleche, western France on July 8. (AP)

tional Rally party. While the Paris appeals court reduced both the ban and the prison sentence that judges handed down last year, it still ordered that she must serve a year of home detention, with her whereabouts monitored electronically. The punishment conjured up the prospect of a candidate hoping to

lead France stumping for votes with an electronic tag on her ankle. Whether that will happen is unknown. By declaring Tuesday that she’ll challenge the ruling to France’s highest court, Le Pen bought time. The court said Wednesday that the process will suspend the sentence that she be electronically monitored, at least until it has ruled.

Europe

UK makes new arrest over politician killing: British police arrested a 28-year-old man late Saturday on suspicion of murder over the death of former politician and reality TV contestant Ann Widdecombe. Devon and Cornwall Police said the suspect was arrested in South Yorkshire county in northern England, more than 200 miles (320 kilometers) from the southwest England village where Widdecombe was found dead on Thursday. Earlier, police released a 26-year-old man arrested Friday a few miles from the scene of the attack, saying he 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. (AP)

Orbán allies protest in Hungary: Opponents of the Hungarian government’s efforts to oust the country’s president gathered for a protest in the capital Budapest after being called to action by the former autocratic prime minister, Viktor Orbán. The protest drew several thousand people to the presidential offices at the opulent Sándor Palace in Budapest’s Castle District, where demonstrators



Police outside the house of former lawmaker Ann Widdecombe, in Haytor, England on July 10, after she was found dead in her home on Thursday with serious injuries. (AP)

spoke out in defense of President Tamás Sulyok, whom the new center-right government has vowed to remove from office with a constitutional amendment. After defeating Orbán in a blowout election in April, bringing an end to his 16 years in power, Hungary’s new pro-European prime minister, Péter Magyar, has taken action to dismantle what he calls Orbán’s “mafia” by removing numerous political appointees and heads of institutions viewed as having facilitated Orbán’s autocratic regime. (AP)

Asia

Malaysia's Johor state sees return of BN: Malaysia's Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition led by the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) scored a decisive election victory late on Saturday, retaining control of Johor state.

The Election Commission announced the final result early on Sunday, although BN's landslide victory was already known based on unofficial counts the night before.

The coalition took 48 of 56 state assembly seats, granting it a two-thirds majority in the state assembly.

Meanwhile, the other major contender, Pakatan Harapan, won eight seats while Perikatan Nasional failed to secure a single seat.

The state election was triggered after the chief minister of the state, **Onn Hafiz Ghazi**, received the consent from the Johor Regent, Tunku Mahkota Ismail, to dissolve the state assembly on June 1. (Xinhua)



Ghazi

Australia stabbings kill 1, injure 2: One man has died and two others have been hospitalized in separate stabbing incidents in the eastern Australian state of New South Wales (NSW).

Police in NSW said in a statement that emer-

gency services were immediately called to reports of the first stabbing in the suburb of Hamilton South, 115 km north of Sydney, around 3:30 pm on Saturday.

Officers arrived at the scene and found a man believed to be in his 40s suffering from a stab wound. He was treated by ambulance paramedics and taken to the hospital, where he later died.

Hours later, police said emergency services were deployed to an assault at a western Sydney home shortly after midnight.

The NSW Police Force said that officers confronted a large number of people gathering at the house, but could not find anyone with injuries.

Two men believed to be aged in their 20s, one with stab wounds to his torso and the other with stab wounds to his thigh, were found in separate vehicles nearby a short time later.

They were both taken to the hospital in stable condition.

Police established crime scenes at the locations of both stabbings and commenced investigations into the incidents. (Xinhua)



Quake hits Talaud Islands, Indonesia: An earthquake with a magnitude of 5.2 jolted Talaud Islands, Indonesia at 1749 GMT on Saturday, the GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences said.

The epicenter, with a depth of 10 km, was initially determined to be at 4.93 degrees north latitude and 125.47 degrees east longitude. (Xinhua)



An aerial drone photo taken on July 11, 2026 shows the Tiantang Reservoir that has dropped to the dead water level in Luotian County of Huanggang City, central China's Hubei Province. (Xinhua)

Typhoon Bavi weakens but brings strong winds, rain to China

Typhoon Bavi weakened Sunday to a tropical storm hours after making landfall in eastern China's Zhejiang province, but was still bringing days of strong winds and heavy rain to parts of China.

Its intensity continued to weaken as it moved northwestward across eastern China into the province of Anhui as of Sunday afternoon, according to China's na-

tional weather center.

Strong winds and heavy rain are expected to impact many eastern and northeastern Chinese cities on Sunday and Monday, China's National Meteorological Center said, adding that heavy to torrential rain was recorded Sunday afternoon in provinces including Anhui. (AP)

One Indian tourist in critical condition

Captain detained in Vietnam boat accident

HANOI, Vietnam, July 12, (AP): Vietnamese police detained Sunday the captain of a speedboat that capsized off southern Vietnam, killing 15 Indian tourists.

The speedboat was carrying 32 Indian tourists and four Vietnamese crew members when it overturned less than half a kilometer (0.30 mile) from shore Saturday afternoon, shortly after leaving Hon May Rut Ngoai island near Phu Quoc, Vietnam's largest island, authorities said.

The captain, Nguyen Hong Hai, 57, is under investigation for alleged violations of waterway transport safety regulations, state media reported.

Sixteen survivors of Saturday's speedboat accident have been discharged from the hospital and are returning to India, the Indian Embassy in Hanoi said on social media Sunday. One remains in critical condition in a Vietnamese hospital.

The bodies of the victims were being transported to Ho Chi Minh City before being flown to India after official formalities, according to the embassy.

All 15 victims were on a company trip organized by India's Lava In-



b An Indian tourist, who was rescued from a speedboat that capsized, receives treatment at a hospital in Phu Quoc, Vietnam, Saturday, July 11. (AP)

ternational, a smartphone and consumer electronics manufacturer, for its employees, distributors and retail partners, the company said.

Ashish Kumar, a 48-year-old distributor for the company from the Indian city of Guntur who took part in the trip, said the party had split into three groups to travel between

islands when he witnessed the accident from shore.

The first boat had already departed while the other two were still docked when it capsized.

The boat was relatively close to shore when it flipped, he told The Associated Press over the phone. "We screamed, 'Help! Help!'"

DPRK denounces NATO's intention for inter-camp confrontation

PYONGYANG, July 12, (Xinhua): The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) condemned "the United States and its vassal forces" for inter-camp confrontation intention displayed at the NATO summit, a foreign ministry spokesperson said Saturday.

The spokesperson made the remarks in a press statement reported by the official Korean Central News Agency, saying the trans-Atlantic bloc is exacerbating the security environment of Europe and creating instability in the Asia-Pacific.

The US-led NATO allies and their partners incited confrontation throughout the NATO summit, held earlier this week in Ankara, Türkiye, the statement said, calling it a clear proof that the organization is "a war and confrontation body that goes against international peace and security in all parts of the world while pursuing exclusive geopolitical interests."

Also:

BEIJING: Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and Chinese president, and Kim



In this photo provided by the North Korean government, its leader Kim Jong Un, (front right), visits a new facility to produce nuclear bomb fuels at an undisclosed place in North Korea on June 3. (AP)

Jong Un, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) and president of the State Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), on Saturday exchanged congratulations over the 65th anniversary of the signing of the China-DPRK Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance.

In his message, Xi said that in 1961, the older generations of leaders of China and the DPRK signed the China-DPRK Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, laying an important political and legal foundation for consolidating the friendship forged in blood between the two peoples.

'We have a legacy that, despite our differences, should be preserved'

Outgoing Colombia minister warns climate gains could be at risk under new govt

BOGOTA, Colombia, July 12, (AP): Colombia's outgoing environment minister warned that the incoming government could reverse recent climate and conservation gains, pointing to its support for fracking and fossil fuel development and what she described as climate skepticism among some officials.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Environment Minister Irene Vélez Torres said she fears Colombia could lose ground on climate action at a time when the country is already confronting increasingly severe environmental challenges, including El Niño, a naturally occurring climate phenomenon that can disrupt rainfall patterns and trigger droughts, floods and extreme heat. "Arriving with an attitude of climate denialism is absolutely dangerous," Vélez said.

The comments come weeks before President-elect Abelardo de la Espiella takes office on Aug 7 following a narrow election victory that marked a sharp political shift in Colombia after four years under President Gustavo Petro. The outgoing administration sought to position Colombia as a global leader on climate diplomacy, Amazon protection and a transition away from fossil fuels.

During his campaign endorsed by US President Donald Trump, de la Espiella pledged to revive Colombia's oil sector, voiced support for fracking and argued the country should make greater use of its natural resources to spur economic growth. Environmental advocates and some Indigenous leaders have warned that greater emphasis on extractive industries could increase pressure on environmentally sensitive areas, including parts of the Amazon rainforest.

About 42% of Colombia's territory is covered by Amazon rainforest, and the Petro administration made rainforest protection and a transition away from



Colombian President-elect Abelardo de la Espiella, (left), waves to supporters next to his wife Ana Lucia Pineda during a Mass in honor of Our Lady of the Rosary of Chiquinquirá, in Chiquinquirá, Colombia, July 9. (AP)

fossil fuels central pillars of its environmental agenda.

Among Vélez's biggest concerns is the future of Indigenous environmental

governance in the Amazon. She said she worries the incoming administration could weaken recent efforts to recognize Indigenous authorities as key environmental decision-makers and reduce support for Indigenous territorial governance initiatives.

She also expressed concern about the possible return of aerial glyphosate spraying of coca, the plant used to make cocaine, describing the herbicide as "potentially carcinogenic to humans" and saying its use had caused lasting environmental and health impacts in Colombia.

Vélez also warned about expanded fossil fuel development and mining in Colombia's paramos, unique high-altitude wetlands that supply water to millions of people.

The incoming administration has rejected some of those characterizations. Fabio Arjona, the marine biologist chosen by de la Espiella to serve as environment minister, has said environmental debates should be less ideological, criticized what he called "environmental hysteria" and defended the possibility of fracking under strict controls while saying it should not occur in protected areas such as national parks and paramos.

Representatives of de la Espiella and Arjona did not respond to requests for comment before publication.

Vélez said the change in government should not erase recent efforts to reduce deforestation, restore ecosystems and strengthen protections for wetlands, paramos and the Amazon.

"We have a legacy that, despite our differences, should be preserved," Vélez said. "It would be an unforgivable mistake to abandon this agenda simply because it comes from a different political sector. Social and environmental justice must remain at the center of the political agenda."

Mali and Algeria reopen airspace and reinstate ambassadors

BAMAKO, Mali, July 12, (Agencies): Mali and Algeria reopened their airspace and reinstated their ambassadors, ending a diplomatic rift that started over a year ago after Algeria shot down a Malian armed drone near the shared border.

Mali's military junta said in a statement late Friday it would restore the Algerian ambassador to Bamako and open its airspace to "all civilian and military aircraft operating flights to or from the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria."

Algerian media also confirmed the restoration of diplomatic relations.

The two nations recalled their ambassadors and closed their airspace in April 2025 after the drone shooting, with Algeria accusing Mali of repeatedly violating its airspace. Mali denied the claim.

Relations between the Malian military junta and Algeria began to deteriorate two years ago, when Mali ended a crucial 2015 peace deal with local Azawad separatists, mainly mediated by Algeria. The rebels have long sought to create an independent state in northern Mali, which has thrown the West African nation into a violent conflict for over a decade. Mali's junta has accused Algeria



Leader of Mali's ruling junta Lt. Col. Assimi Goita, (center), attends an independence day military parade in Bamako, Mali on Sept 22, 2022. (AP)

of backing local extremist rebels who are linked to the Muslim militant group al-Qaeda. Algeria denies the accusation.

Also:

ALGIERS: A persistent heatwave sweeping across large parts of Algeria has fueled dozens of vegetation fires, with firefighting crews responding to 127 blazes over the past 24 hours, the country's Civil Protec-

tion Department said Saturday.

Sixty-three agricultural fires have been fully extinguished, one was brought under control and placed under monitoring, while another remained active in the eastern province of Setif, the department said in a statement.

All other fires across several northern and southern provinces have been completely extinguished, it said.

18,437 quake-affected moved to shelters in Venezuela

CARACAS, July 12, (Xinhua): A total of 18,437 people affected by the earthquakes that struck Venezuela on June 24 have been moved to shelters, Hector Rodriguez, vice president for social affairs, said Saturday on Telegram.

Rodriguez said 94 temporary camps have been set up so far.

La Guaira, the coastal state where the two quakes caused the most damage, has 10,981 people in shelters, while Caracas has 6,133 and the central state of Miranda has 1,323, he said.

The magnitude 7.2 and 7.5 earthquakes that struck central Venezuela have killed 4,333, National Assembly President Jorge Rodriguez said Saturday.

Venezuela's acting President Delcy Rodriguez expressed gratitude for the humanitarian aid provided by 28 countries, including China, to support victims of the country's recent quakes.

She made the remarks after inspecting a collection center in Caracas, where more than 2,000 tons of international aid are sorted for distribution to temporary camps housing victims of the June 24 earthquakes.

"Venezuela never tires of thanking the countries, the peoples of the world, and the governments of the world that have offered a helping hand," Rodriguez said.

"Each country will be able to see how its aid is being used so that the Venezuelan people feel the friendly helping hand of that country," she added.

Thanks to the international response to the tragedy, Venezuela knows it is not alone, said Rodriguez. "The most important thing is to look to the future, how we are going to recover, how we are going to rebuild the affected areas."



Rescue workers search for earthquake survivors in La Guaira, Venezuela on June 28. (AP)

Omani crude price edges up to \$76.2 pb

MUSCAT, July 12, (KUNA): Oman's oil exports climbed 2.7 percent in the first five months of this year, reaching about 129.5 million barrels, according to official data released Sunday.

Preliminary figures from the National Centre for Statistics and Information also showed that the average price of Omani crude rose 1.3 percent to USD 76.2 per barrel by the end of May, up from USD 75.2 per barrel in the same period last year.

Daily oil production increased 9.7 percent to an average of 1.083 million barrels per day, compared with 987,000 barrels per day a year earlier.



Hani Mohammed AlAwadhi

Recognition reflects InvestGB's expertise

Hani AlAwadhi makes Forbes Top 50 Asset Managers 2026

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: Gulf Capital Investment Company K.S.C.C. ("InvestGB"), the investment arm of Gulf Bank, today announced that its Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Hani Mohammed AlAwadhi, has been named among Forbes Middle East's Top 50 Asset Managers in the Middle East for 2026, recognizing the region's leading executives in the asset management industry. This recognition comes less than two years after InvestGB commenced operations, underscoring the company's rapid growth, strategic execution, and expanding presence in the regional asset management landscape.

Mr. AlAwadhi's inclusion on the list reflects InvestGB's standing and its role in advancing the asset management sector in Kuwait and the wider region, as well as the depth of experience he brings as Chief Executive Officer.

The annual list brings together senior executives in asset management from across the region, selected based on criteria including leadership, institutional performance, innovation, and contribution to the development of the industry.

The recognition reflects the progress InvestGB has made since its founding in 2023, during which the company has established itself as one of Kuwait's leading investment institutions. In 2025, InvestGB launched its first investment funds, the Lulwa KD Money Market Fund and the Lulwa USD Money Market Fund, both Shariah compliant, reflecting its commitment to offering innovative investment solutions that meet the needs of diverse investor segments.

InvestGB has also strengthened its global presence, expanding its strategic partnership with Investcorp to provide access to Shariah compliant US real estate investment opportunities. In addition it has entered into a partnership with Arrow Global for access to European asset backed private credit strategies, alongside partnerships with a number of global investment managers, reflecting its commitment to delivering world class investment solutions to its clients.

Commenting on the recognition, Mr. AlAwadhi, said: "This recognition from Forbes Middle East is a testament to InvestGB's journey and what we have achieved since inception, and it is the result of the efforts of an outstanding team and the continued support of Gulf Bank and our Board of Directors. Since InvestGB's launch, we have focused on building a global investment platform that connects investors in Kuwait with the best opportunities and investment managers around the world, upholding the highest standards of governance and innovation. We will continue to develop distinctive investment solutions that create sustainable value for our clients and reinforce Kuwait's position as a leading investment hub in the region."

Mr. AlAwadhi brings more than 20 years of experience in the financial sector, having held a number of leadership positions at Gulf Bank and Gulf Investment Corporation before leading InvestGB, where he has played a central role in shaping the company's standing and growth since inception.

Ahmed Khatib's win follows a 10-year savings journey

Gulf Bank rewards AIDanah winner with KD 1 mln

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: Gulf Bank has deposited a KD1 million prize into the account of Ahmed Ibrahim Mahmoud Khatib, the winner of the AIDanah Millionaire Account semi-annual draw, the bank said on Sunday.

The draw was held last week under the supervision of international audit firms RSM and Grant Thornton and was broadcast live on Gulf Bank's social media channels and 360 FM.

Khatib is the 26th millionaire named since the launch of the AIDanah draws. He was received at Gulf Bank's Private Banking branch in Crystal Tower by Chief Marketing Officer Najla Aleisa, Deputy General Manager of Wealth Management Abdulrahman AlKhubaizi and other senior bank officials.

Following the completion of the prize-deposit procedures, Khatib said the award marked the culmination of a 10-year savings journey with Gulf Bank.

He said he had remained hopeful of winning since opening his account a decade ago and received the news while spending his summer holiday with his family in Jordan.

Khatib said the AIDanah Account had been his primary destination for funds he was able to set aside since moving to Kuwait for work. He encouraged customers to make saving a regular part of their financial planning.

He added that the prize could help him meet the capital requirements for a business venture he has long planned to establish in Kuwait.

"Ahmed Khatib's journey reflects a decade of commitment, patience and disciplined saving, culminating in a life-changing moment," Gulf Bank said.



A group photo of bank officials with the winner.



The winner receives a commemorative check from Najla Aleisa and Abdulrahman AlKhubaizi.



The winner expresses his delight at the award and the press coverage.

- Najla Aleisa: AIDanah continues to offer customers more opportunities to win life-changing prizes.
- Abdulrahman AlKhubaizi: Gulf Bank provides wealth-management clients with tailored services designed to meet their financial ambitions.

September 30, 2026."

Wealth-Management Services

AlKhubaizi said Gulf Bank provides high-net-worth clients with specialised services designed for customers seeking a more tailored banking experience.

"Our offering combines high-quality banking products and services with specialised investment

guidance and advisory solutions aligned with each client's financial objectives," he said.

The AIDanah Millionaire Account is available to Kuwaiti citizens and residents. Customers can open an account through Gulf Bank's branches or mobile application with a minimum deposit of KD200.

Maintaining the minimum balance

qualifies customers to enter upcoming AIDanah draws, subject to the programme's terms and conditions.

Gulf Bank said customers can increase their chances of winning by increasing the balances maintained in their AIDanah accounts. Deposits can be made through the bank's website, mobile banking application or other available banking channels.

Boursa closes mixed, trading value at KD 60.1 mln

KUWAIT CITY, July 12, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Sunday's trading session on a mixed note, with the General Index rising by 12.71 points, or 0.15 percent, to close at 8,676.04 points. Trading activity totaled 271.1 million shares across 15,984 transactions, with a combined value of KD 60.1 million (approximately USD 195.6 million).

The Main Market Index recorded strong

gains, advancing 116.32 points, or 1.33 percent, to reach 8,885.33 points. A total of 193.9 million shares were exchanged through 10,148 transactions, valued at KD 30.6 million (around USD 99.6 million).

In contrast, the Premier Market Index edged lower by 8.69 points, or 0.10 percent, closing at 9,081.79 points. Trading in this segment amounted to 77.1 million shares

across 5,836 transactions, with a total value of KD 29.5 million (approximately USD 96 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index posted notable gains, rising 167.57 points, or 1.68 percent, to settle at 10,167.67 points. The index saw 159.6 million shares traded through 7,647 transactions, valued at KD 25.4 million (around USD 82.6 million).

Zain Summer Program places youth at the heart of the customer experience

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: Zain Kuwait kicked-off the seventh season of the Summer Program, one of its leading community initiatives dedicated to empowering the next generation of young national talents as they prepare to enter the workforce. This year, the program returns with a refreshed format that centers on hands-on training in Zain's main branches across Kuwait.

This season welcomes 30 university students and fresh graduates, who have been assigned to 22 Zain branches across Kuwait to take part in an immersive experience within a real work environment. The program gives them the opportunity to gain first-hand insight into day-to-day operations at the frontline of the ICT sector, while developing essential skills in sales, marketing, customer service, communication, and teamwork.

The program attracted strong interest this year, receiving more than 2,400 applications during the registration phase. This reflects the program's growing appeal among students and ambitious young people seeking early practical exposure to the workplace experience. More than 600 applicants were then interviewed to identify those best aligned with the program's objectives and field-training format, before the final group of trainees was selected to begin their journey across Zain branches.

Over the course of five weeks, the program gives participants practical exposure to Zain's customer-facing operations, as they work during set hours at the company's branches and engage side by side with branch teams. They will learn how services and solutions are delivered, understand customer needs, and gain hands-on experience across different aspects of sales and marketing.

The program aims to enhance youth readiness for the job market by connecting participants with a dynamic and fast-evolving work environment. Throughout the experience, they will learn the fundamentals of professional communication, customer engagement, product and service knowledge, presentation and marketing techniques, while also



The program strengthens youth readiness for the job market.



Group photo of this year's cohort.



- 7th season kicks-off with immersive training experience across 22 branches
- 30 trainees gain sales, marketing, and customer service skills over 5 weeks

developing discipline, responsibility, self-confidence, and problem-solving skills in everyday situations.

The program also featured an orientation session that introduced participants to its objectives, training tracks, and work mechanisms inside the branches, alongside workshops and training sessions delivered in collaboration with INJAZ Kuwait. These sessions focused on developing personal and professional skills and strengthening the trainees' readiness for the job market. The program also included a range of recreational and interactive activities designed to build team spirit, strengthen bonds between trainees, and create a positive, motivating environment that combines practical learning with constructive engagement, enriching their experience throughout the program.

The program's focus on Zain branches reflects the company's commitment to giving youth a realistic training experience within one of the most important touchpoints between the brand and its customers. Branches serve as vibrant spaces that combine service, sales, marketing, and direct human interaction, giving trainees the opportunity to understand the full picture of customer experience in the telecom sector.

The Zain Summer Program continues to play its role as one of the first and most prominent training platforms for developing the skills of Kuwaiti youth and inspiring them to discover their professional potential. Over the past six seasons, the program has evolved to meet the needs of new generations and the requirements of the job market, with this year's focus placed on building deeper practical experience within Zain's operational and commercial ecosystem.

Zain's investment in youth potential represents a core pillar of its social responsibility, and that empowering young national talents begins with providing practical opportunities that help them explore their interests, develop their skills, and gain the confidence needed to move forward in their future career paths.

KFH opens Al-Qairawan service center to bring group services closer to customers

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has opened a new Group Service Center at its Al-Qairawan branch, dedicated to serving KFH Turkey and KFH Egypt customers. This move is in line with the bank's strategy to drive integration across Group subsidiaries and reinforce its unified vision, offering customers a seamless and more convenient banking experience.

KFH Deputy General Manager of Products, Nehal Al-Musallam said the opening aligns with bank's efforts to integrate Group subsidiaries and provide advanced banking services in Kuwait. She noted that Al-Qairawan is the third dedicated service center, joining Khaldiya and Mishref branches.



■ **Al-Musallam:** Integrated services for Group customers in Turkey and Egypt via a unified vision and seamless banking
Third Group Service Center to open after Mishref and Khaldiya

Al-Musallam explained that the Group Service Center at Al-Qairawan branch offers a range of services tailored to customer needs. These include facilitating account opening, updating

personal and banking information to ensure uninterrupted banking services, and providing technical support to activate and use the digital banking applications of both KFH Turkey and KFH

Egypt. She added that the center offers ATM card request and delivery for KFH Egypt customers, enabling easy, secure account management

and transactions. She emphasized that these centers aim to provide customers in Kuwait a comprehensive, convenient banking experience with maximum speed and flexibility.



Al-Qairawan branch

Al-Musallam noted that the center serves personal and higher segment customers, reaffirming KFH's commitment to delivering high-quality, evolving financial products that meet expectations and enhance the banking experience. She added that these centers reflect KFH's customer-centric approach and its commitment to staying close to customers while effectively addressing their needs.

KFH opened its first Group Service Center at Khaldiya branch in 2023, followed by a second center at Mishref branch last year. The newly opened Al-Qairawan center now serves customers of KFH Turkey and KFH Egypt. The bank is looking to expand this service to other Group markets in the coming period.

Other Voices

Japan's weakening yen: A double-edged sword

By Hassan F. Beidas

The Japanese yen has fallen to its weakest level against the U.S. dollar in more than four decades, slipping to around 161.7 yen per dollar. The sharp depreciation has heightened concerns among policymakers, with the Japanese government signaling that it stands ready to take appropriate action should market volatility intensify.



Hassan Beidas

The primary driver behind the yen's decline is the widening interest rate gap between Japan and other major economies – particularly the United States. Although the Bank of Japan ended years of negative interest rates in 2024 and subsequently raised its benchmark rate to 1%, the highest level since 1990, Japanese interest rates remain significantly lower than those in the U.S. and many other developed markets.

This persistent yield differential has fueled the popular "carry trade," where investors borrow cheaply in yen and invest in higher-yielding assets abroad. As capital flows out of Japan in search of stronger returns, demand for the yen weakens further, placing additional downward pressure on the currency.

Looking ahead, the divergence in monetary policy is expected to continue. While the Bank of Japan is anticipated to raise interest rates further this year, the U.S. Federal Reserve is expected to maintain relatively restrictive monetary policy. As a result, the interest rate gap is likely to remain wide, continuing to support demand for dollar-denominated assets at the expense of the yen.

The weak yen also presents a significant challenge for Japan's import-dependent economy. As the world's fourth-largest economy, Japan relies heavily on energy imports, with most of its oil sourced from the Middle East. Since crude

oil is priced in U.S. dollars, a stronger dollar means Japan must spend more yen for every barrel it imports, increasing import costs and adding to inflationary pressures across the economy.

Consumers are already feeling the impact through rising prices for everyday goods and essential imports, reducing household purchasing power and increasing the cost of living.

Despite these challenges, a weaker currency is not without its advantages. Japanese exports become more competitively priced in international markets, boosting the earnings of export-oriented companies. In addition, Japan has experienced a surge in inbound tourism, as foreign visitors benefit from greater purchasing power, driving strong spending on shopping, hospitality, and entertainment.

To slow the currency's decline, Japanese government have intervened in foreign exchange markets on several occasions by selling U.S. dollars and purchasing yen using the country's substantial foreign exchange reserves. According to official economic data, Japan spent approximately 11.7 trillion yen on currency intervention between late April and May in an effort to stabilize the exchange rate.

Meanwhile, Japan's bond market has reflected growing inflation concerns. According to data, Government bond yields have risen sharply, with the 40-year Japanese Government Bond (JGB) yield climbing 7 basis points to 3.779%, while the 30-year yield increased 8 basis points to 3.914%, signaling investors' expectations of tighter monetary policy and higher long-term inflation.

Ultimately, the long-term stability of the yen and Japan's economy will depend on maintaining a stable balance between monetary and fiscal policy. A sustained commitment to fiscal discipline, combined with confidence in the Bank of Japan's independence to pursue appropriate monetary policy, will be essential in containing inflation, preserving market confidence, and supporting sustainable economic growth.

Markets reprice risks: Inflation, policy signals, and geopolitical uncertainty drive sentiment

By National Bank of Kuwait

This week, global markets focused on inflation, central bank signals, and Middle East geopolitical tensions, with US policy expectations remaining a key driver. Fed minutes showed some officials saw a case for a June rate hike, although all ultimately supported keeping the federal funds rate unchanged. Fed Chair Kevin Warsh also announced five strategic policy review task forces covering communications, the USD 6.7T balance sheet, data usage, productivity and employment, and the monetary policy framework. Meanwhile, the ISM Services PMI eased to 54.0 and initial jobless claims fell to 215K, signaling continued expansion and resilient labour market conditions. US Treasury yields moved higher, with the 2-year and 10-year yields closing at 4.208% and 4.561%, respectively, while DXY ended the week at 100.952 [+0.09%]. In Canada, employment increased by 18.2K in June while the unemployment rate declined to 6.5%, with USDCAD closing at 1.4154 [-0.32%]. In Europe, German and French inflation slowed to 2.4% YoY and 2.0% YoY, respectively, although ECB policymakers maintained a cautious stance as inflation risks remained elevated. The SNB reiterated its readiness to intervene in FX markets after keeping rates at 0% in June, while Swiss inflation stood at 0.5% YoY. EURUSD and USDFCHF closed at 1.1416 [-0.18%] and 0.8086 [+0.66%], respectively. The Bank of England proposed targeted capital rule reforms to support lending while warning that AI-related leverage and geopolitical risks remain key financial stability concerns. GBPUSD closed at 1.3404 [+0.40%]. Across Asia-Pacific, China's CPI slowed to 1.0% YoY while PPI rose 4.1% YoY but declined 0.3% MoM, signalling fading reflation momentum and preserving scope for further easing. USDCNH closed at 6.7820 [-0.05%]. In Japan, producer prices rose 7.1% YoY, reinforcing expectations of further BOJ tightening, while policymakers encouraged greater domestic investment by pension funds. USDJPY closed at 161.68 [+0.21%]. Commodities remained sensitive to Middle East tensions, with Brent crude and spot gold closing at 76.01 [5.39%] and 4119.93 [-1.36%], respectively, while the US 2s10s and 5s30s spreads closed at 34.920 bps [+0.516 bps] and 75.332 bps [-0.02 bps], respectively.

United States and Canada

FOMC Minutes Show Some Officials Favored June Rate Hike; Warsh Launches Five Strategic Policy Task Forces

Federal Reserve Chair Kevin Warsh announced the leadership of five task forces to review the central bank's communications framework, USD 6.7T balance sheet, data usage, productivity and employment, and inflation framework as part of a broader effort to modernise monetary policymaking. The groups, comprising former central bankers, academics, and private sector executives, are expected to deliver recommendations by year-end. Separately, minutes released this week from the June 16-17 Federal Open Market Committee meeting revealed that a few policymakers believed there was a case for raising interest rates at the June meeting, although all ultimately supported keeping the federal funds rate unchanged. The minutes indicated that upside inflation risks remained elevated while labour market concerns had moderated, with most participants viewing further policy tightening as appropriate if inflation remains persistent due to strong AI-driven demand, higher energy prices and tariffs. The updated projections released after the meeting showed nine officials expected at least one 25 bp rate increase this year, while six anticipated at least two hikes. DXY last printed at 100.952.

US ISM Services Index Eases to 54.0 as Jobless Claims Fall to 215K

The US services sector continued expanding in June, although growth moderated as the Institute for Supply Management's Services PMI slipped 0.5 points to 54.0. While business activity and new orders softened, employment recorded its

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.1437	1.1391	1.1461	1.1416	1.1200	1.1500	1.1459
GBP	1.3350	1.3322	1.3452	1.3404	1.3300	1.3480	1.3404
JPY	161.34	161.2	162.71	161.68	160.80	163.80	160.48
CHF	0.8033	0.8028	0.8108	0.8086	0.8000	0.8190	0.8005

strongest improvement since 2024 and returned to expansion for the first time since February, supported by easing cost pressures as the prices index declined to a four-month low of 67.7. Meanwhile, initial jobless claims fell by 2K to 215K during the week ended July 4, remaining below market expectations and signalling that layoffs remain limited despite a broader moderation in hiring momentum. Continuing claims edged higher to 1.81 million, suggesting the labour market remains resilient overall, although firms continue to adopt a cautious hiring approach amid persistent inflation and geopolitical uncertainty.

Canada Adds 18.2K Jobs in June as Unemployment Rate Falls to 6.5%

Canada's labour market showed signs of modest tightening in June, with employment rising by 18.2K following an 87.8K increase in May, while the unemployment rate declined to 6.5% from 6.6%. The gain exceeded expectations for a 10.0K increase and was driven by services and part-time employment, with retail and wholesale trade adding 16.4K jobs and accommodation and food services rising by 14.7K. However, goods-producing sectors remained weak, shedding 43.7K positions, including a 16.8K decline in manufacturing. The participation rate held at 65.0%, while the employment rate rose to 60.8%. Private sector employment increased by 31.6K, offsetting a 30.5K decline in public sector jobs. Wage growth for full-time permanent employees firmed to 3.7% YoY from 3.2% YoY, supporting expectations for the Bank of Canada to remain on hold. USDCAD last printed at 1.4154.

Europe and the United Kingdom

German Inflation Slows to 2.4% YoY and French Inflation Eases to 2.0% YoY as ECB Maintains Cautious Stance

German harmonised inflation slowed to 2.4% YoY in June from 2.7% YoY in May, while France's harmonised consumer price inflation eased to 2.0% YoY from 2.8% YoY, confirming preliminary estimates and indicating some moderation in headline price pressures across the euro area. Nevertheless, European Central Bank meeting accounts revealed policymakers continue to expect inflation to remain above target into 2027 despite nearly three additional 25 bp rate increases embedded in staff projections. Officials agreed that policy communication should remain flexible, avoiding commitments to either a sustained tightening cycle or a single policy adjustment, while renewed geopolitical tensions and resilient core inflation continue to support expectations for further monetary tightening. EURUSD last printed at 1.1416.

SNB's Schlegel Reiterates Willingness to Intervene in FX Markets

Swiss National Bank President Martin Schlegel reiterated that medium-term inflation dynamics remain broadly unchanged while reaffirming the central bank's increased willingness to intervene in foreign exchange markets if required. Consumer price inflation slowed to 0.5% YoY in June from 0.6% YoY in May, marking the first moderation in eight months and reflecting lower energy costs. Following its decision to maintain the policy rate at 0% in June, the SNB continues to monitor inflation developments closely while preserving flexibility to respond through cur-

rency market intervention should the Swiss franc experience excessive volatility. USDFCHF last printed at 0.8086.

BOE Proposes 20 bp Reduction in Leverage Requirement While Maintaining Focus on Financial Stability Risks

The Bank of England proposed targeted reforms to ease selected capital requirements by reducing aggregate leverage ratio requirements by 20 bp and allowing major domestic lenders greater flexibility to utilise capital buffers during periods of financial stress. Governor Andrew Bailey stated that the changes are intended to support lending without materially weakening banking sector resilience. Nevertheless, policymakers warned that elevated leverage, high asset valuations, AI-related financial risks and ongoing geopolitical tensions continue to pose significant threats to financial stability. The BOE will consult on the proposals while continuing to evaluate their implications for market resilience and broader financial conditions. GBPUSD last printed at 1.3404.

Asia-Pacific

Japan Producer Prices Rise 7.1% YoY and 0.4% MoM as BOJ Maintains Tightening Bias

Japan's corporate goods price index increased 7.1% YoY and 0.4% MoM in June, marking the strongest annual producer inflation since early 2023 and reinforcing evidence of persistent upstream price pressures. Higher energy, electricity and plastics costs continued to drive inflation, while firms increasingly passed rising labour and logistics expenses on to consumers. Meanwhile, the Bank of Japan maintained its assessment that all regional economies continue recovering despite geopolitical uncertainty and highlighted growing upside inflation risks, supporting expectations for additional interest rate increases later this year. Separately, Finance Minister Satsuki Katayama encouraged Japan's public pension funds to increase investment in domestic assets, boosting the yen and government bonds amid renewed discussions over capital repatriation and long-term financial market stability. USDJPY last printed at 161.68.

China CPI Slows to 1.0% YoY as PPI Rises 4.1% YoY but Falls 0.3% MoM

China's reflation momentum weakened in June as consumer price inflation eased to 1.0% YoY, below expectations, while core inflation also moderated, signalling fragile domestic demand. Producer price inflation accelerated to 4.1% YoY, its strongest pace in almost four years, largely reflecting favourable base effects and earlier commodity price increases. However, factory gate prices declined 0.3% MoM, marking their first monthly decline since July 2025 and suggesting producer inflation may have peaked. While renewed Middle East tensions could provide temporary support to energy prices, economists expect underlying inflationary pressures to remain subdued, allowing the People's Bank of China to retain flexibility for additional monetary easing should economic growth continue to soften. USDCNH last printed at 6.7820.

Kuwait

USDKWD closed last week at 0.30775.

Fed officials divided on US inflation views, US home prices hit all-time high

WASHINGTON, July 12, (AP): The economy, inflation and how those forces could impact the lives of Americans were front and center over the past week. Trips to the grocery store or gas station are more painful than they were last year, and rising costs are impacting the decisions of both households and businesses.

Here's a snapshot of prominent economic data and news that occurred over the past week and what it potentially means for you.

The International Monetary Fund this week downgraded its outlook for the world economy in 2026 citing the energy shock caused by the Iran war. But the fallout from the conflict is being partially offset by booming investment in artificial intelligence and other technologies.

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

The IMF expects the U.S. economy - the world's largest - to grow a solid 2.3% this year, up from 2.1% in 2025 and unchanged from the April forecast. The 21 European countries that share the euro currency, hit hard by higher energy prices, are collectively forecast to grow just 0.9% this year, down from 1.4% in 2025.

Sales of previously occupied U.S. homes slowed in June, but a key measure of home prices climbed to an all-time high, adding to prospective homebuyers' affordability challenges.

Existing home sales fell 2.4% last month from May to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.09 million units, the National Association of Realtors said this week. Sales rose 2.8% compared with June last year.

The latest sales tally fell short of the roughly 4.21 million pace economists were expecting, according to FactSet.

Despite the lackluster sales, home prices continued to rise nationally last month. The U.S. median sales price increased 1.8% in June from a year earlier to \$440,600, an all-time high on data going back to 1999, NAR said. Home prices have risen on an annual basis for 36 months in a row.

The Federal Reserve's rate-setting committee is split over whether inflation is likely to stay elevated or whether it will cool once the Iran war winds down, according to minutes released this week.

In the first set of minutes released under new Chair Kevin Warsh, "many" of the Fed's 19 officials said its key rate would be unchanged from or slightly below its current level of 3.6% by the end of this year. But they also also said that it would likely be higher by year-end.

Forecasts released after the meeting ended June 17 showed that half of the 18 policymakers who submitted projections supported lifting rates by the end of this year, while the other half supported keeping them unchanged or reducing them. Warsh did not submit a forecast, reflecting his view that doing so can lock policymakers into a specific approach that is harder to change if the economy shifts direction.

Global oil demand will likely decline this year for the first time since 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic isolated billions of people at home, according to the International Energy Agency.

The agency expects demand to drop by 1 million barrels per day in 2026 due to higher prices and disruptions to physical supply that weighed heavily on various parts of the world.

Most of the decline in demand has been in Asia, which is heavily reliant on oil shipped through the Strait of Hormuz that has largely

been shut down to tanker traffic by the war.

Asian nations have altered workdays and made other changes to lower energy use during the war.

One notable exception to the global slump in oil usage was in the United States, where gasoline use increased in the second quarter of 2026, despite the fact that pump prices were almost 50% above their pre-war levels in May.

The number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits dipped slightly last week as layoffs in the U.S. remain historically low.

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

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

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

U.S. stocks and oil prices drifted toward a quiet finish of the week Friday following their earlier fireworks on worries about how the war with Iran will affect the global flow of crude.

The S&P 500 rose and was on track to close out a fourth winning week in the last five. The Dow Jones Industrial Average edged up slightly, and the Nasdaq composite was nearly unchanged.

Oil prices held relatively steady, even after a series of unclaimed airstrikes hit Iran after the U.S. said it finished its attacks.

Programmable money powers next-gen AI financial agents

AI agents with digital cash would transform finance, but expand risk surface

By Moody's Ratings

The emergence of AI-driven autonomous agentic systems could become significantly more consequential for financial systems when paired with digital cash, such as stablecoins, tokenized deposits or deposit tokens. As agentic systems evolve from decision-support tools to autonomous economic actors, efficient participation across platforms will increasingly require interoperable, machine-readable payment infrastructure. Digital cash could enable agents not just to decide, but also to transact, settle obligations and coordinate value transfer more efficiently across digital environments.

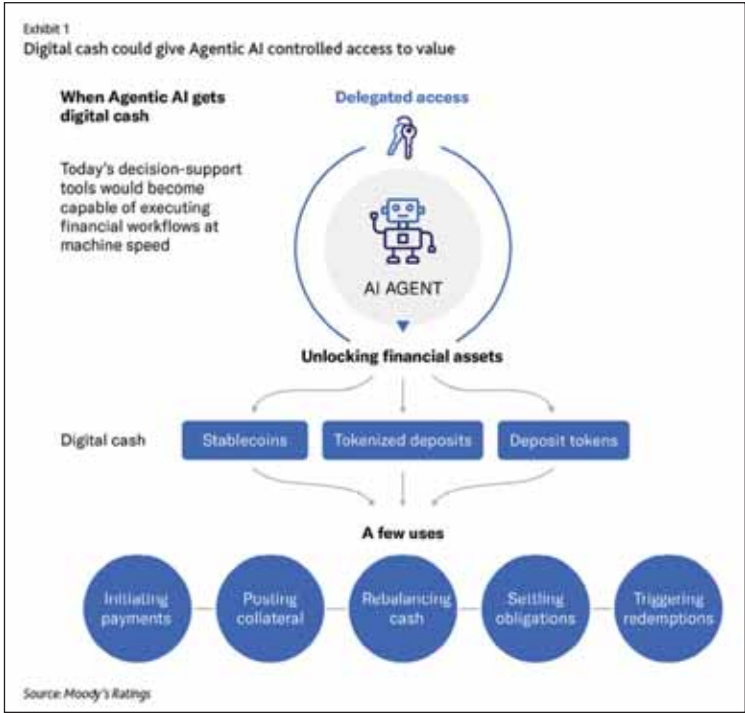
» Agents could use digital cash to move from insight to action. Digital cash has the potential to turn AI agents from tools that recommend actions into delegated economic actors that can initiate payments, move liquidity, post collateral and settle obligations. Their authority remains constrained by mandates, limits, compliance checks and settlement rules.

» AI agents with digital cash have potential to unlock several use cases for institutions: automating treasury management, collateral posting, capital markets settlement, trade finance, supply-chain and cross-border payments, and e-commerce workflows. Stablecoins, tokenized deposits and deposit tokens give agents continuous access to value and interoperability, while deterministic rules govern authorization, compliance and settlement. As more assets become tokenized, agents will coordinate entire financial processes in real time.

» AI agents expand the risk surface across financial, technological, operational and regulatory dimensions. Giving agents access to digital cash increases financial, cyber, operational, regulatory and legal risks, including liquidity runs, correlated agent behavior, prompt injection¹, API² compromise, authorization gaps and unclear liability. Strong controls such as Know-Your-Agent frameworks, transaction limits, audit trails, real-time monitoring and human override mechanisms will be essential.

Agents could use digital cash to move from insight to action

AI-driven agentic systems are becoming more capable of interpreting objectives, planning actions and interacting with digital services. But without access to a native, programmable medium of exchange, they remain largely advisory. They can recommend a liquidity transfer, identify a market opportunity, flag a payment obligation or optimize a treasury decision, but execution still depends on a human, a bank process or a conventional payment workflow.



Digital cash could change this. Stablecoins, tokenized deposits and deposit tokens³ give agents delegated, rule-constrained access to value, allowing them to initiate payments, rebalance cash, post collateral, trigger redemptions or settle obligations automatically. This does not make agents independent legal persons or unconstrained financial actors; they would act on behalf of individuals, companies or financial institutions under predefined mandates, spending limits, compliance checks and settlement rules.

The scale of the enabling infrastructure is already significant: Stablecoin supply has recently surpassed \$300 billion, stablecoin transaction volumes reached about \$33 trillion⁴ in 2025, and active stablecoin addresses on major chains reached the tens of millions in mid-2025. At the same time, tokenized deposits and bank-led settlement networks are moving from pilots to early production, including Partior's 24/7 interbank settlement network as well as JPMorgan Chase & Co. (JPM, A1 stable, lead bank Aa1 stable, a1)⁵ and Citigroup Inc. (C, A3 stable, lead bank Aa3 stable, baa1) work on tokenized deposit-based transactions.

The core implication is that agentic AI could become materially more consequential when it can move value, not just analyze information. Digital cash could turn AI agents from decision-support tools into delegated economic actors capable of executing financial workflows at machine speed.

AI agents with digital cash could unlock several use cases for institutions

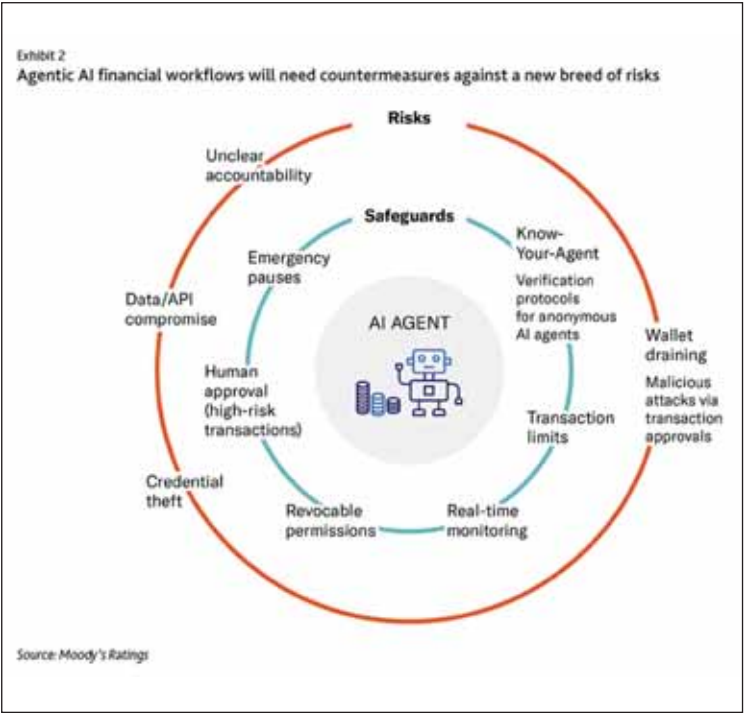
The combination of agentic AI and digital cash could transform

financial and commercial activity where decisions involve multiple payment paths, fragmented systems or incomplete pre-coded rules. Agentic AI does not require digital cash — automated payments can also use real-time payment systems, bank APIs and other instant rails — but digital cash is especially well suited because it gives agents access to value, deterministic execution and interoperability.

First, stablecoins and tokenized deposits are continuously available, unlike traditional payment systems constrained by banking hours, cutoffs, batch processing and correspondent banking delays. This lets agents act when conditions are met, rather than when banking systems reopen.

Second, AI agents make probabilistic recommendations, while payments require deterministic execution. Programmable digital cash can bridge this gap by using smart contracts to enforce rules before settlement. Agents may suggest or request payment, but execution occurs only when objective conditions — authorization, compliance, spending limits and confidence thresholds — are satisfied. This separates non-deterministic AI reasoning from irreversible settlement. A sound blockchain architecture reinforces this through three layers: agents interpret intent and orchestrate actions; control systems verify mandates, permissions, limits and compliance; and settlement systems execute legally final transfers. This model, outlined by the IMF's work⁶ on agentic AI in payments, helps reconcile adaptive AI with deterministic financial infrastructure.

Third, digital cash is interoperable with digital platforms, wallets,



tokenized assets and smart-contract environments. Stablecoins, tokenized deposits and deposit tokens are likely to coexist across a multi-rail digital-money landscape. Stablecoins may be more relevant for public-blockchain, cross-platform and global use cases, while tokenized deposits and deposit tokens may be better suited to regulated institutional settlement, liquidity management and tokenized-asset workflows.

Together, these features support a shift from “click-to-pay” to “agent-directed payment execution.” Rules such as delivery confirmations, invoice matching, margin thresholds or liquidity triggers can determine when payment is eligible. Smart contracts or programmable wallets can handle deterministic checks, while AI agents add value by selecting the payment rail, timing, funding source or settlement path in complex environments not fully anticipated when rules were written. The key design point is that agents should not control the full chain end-to-end; they should operate within verifiable mandates, audit trails, Know-Your-Agent controls and deterministic settlement finality.

These capabilities create concrete opportunities across financial and commercial workflows. In payments, agents could route⁷ transactions through the cheapest or fastest rail, including stablecoins, tokenized deposits, instant payment systems or traditional bank rails. In e-commerce, agentic commerce could span product discovery, comparison, negotiation, authorization, payment, delivery, returns and dispute management.

The broader tokenized-asset market reinforces the opportunity. On-chain real-world assets

excluding stablecoins surpassed \$15 billion in 2026, driven by tokenized US Treasuries, funds and other financial assets. As more assets and money become programmable, agents will be able to coordinate not only payments but entire financial workflows. The likely outcome is coexistence, not one dominant form of digital cash: stablecoins for open, cross-platform and global use cases; deposit tokens and tokenized deposits for bank-led, regulated and institutional settlement.

In treasury management, agents could monitor cash balances, FX rates, yields and obligations, then recommend or initiate liquidity movements across accounts, currencies or entities. Threshold-based sweeps can be automated without AI, but agents add value by selecting the best route, timing and funding source in real time, especially across legacy systems.

In capital markets, agents could support faster settlement, collateral posting and margin management. Smart contracts can execute predefined triggers, while AI agents could determine the most efficient collateral source, settlement venue or payment rail when options change intraday. This could reduce settlement risk, manual intervention and operational delays.

In trade finance and supply chains, agents could reconcile purchase orders, invoices, shipment data and delivery confirmations across disconnected systems, then trigger payment once deterministic conditions are met. AI's role is not simply payment automation, but interpreting unstructured data, bridging legacy platforms and modernizing workflows that would otherwise require significant system integration.

AI agents expand the risk surface across financial, technological, operational and regulatory dimensions

The same features that make agentic digital-cash systems powerful also increase risk. Financially, agents can accelerate liquidity movements and amplify stress. If many agents use similar models, data or objectives, they may react to the same signal at the same time: sweeping cash to higher-yielding accounts, delaying non-urgent payments, redeeming a stablecoin, switching issuers, selling assets or posting collateral simultaneously. This creates a tension between micro-efficiency and macro-fragility. While each agent may optimize rationally for its principal, the aggregate effect has potential to be procyclical and destabilizing.

Stablecoins add reserve, redemption, peg and custody risks. Tokenized deposits and deposit tokens reduce some of these risks by remaining linked to bank balance sheets, but introduce bank credit risk, operational dependencies and concentration risk in permissioned networks.

Technologically, agents expand the attack surface because they interact with wallets, APIs, bank systems, market-data feeds, smart contracts and cloud infrastructure. Risks include prompt injection, tool misuse, API privilege escalation, compromised data feeds, malicious invoices, wallet-draining permissions, credential theft and model manipulation.

Operationally, the move from explicit human payment approval to mandate-based agent execution creates an authorization and instruction risk: It may be unclear whether a payment was properly authorized, outside the agent's mandate, caused by model error, or triggered by cyber compromise. This can create losses, disputes, litigation and liquidity shortfalls for companies, banks, merchants, payment service providers, stablecoin issuers and financial market infrastructures.

Regulators and institutional risk management programs will likely place increasing emphasis not only on stablecoin reserves and bank capital, but also on agent identity, auditability, liability, cyber resilience and human override mechanisms. Key safeguards include Know-Your-Agent frameworks, counterparty limits, transaction caps, real-time monitoring, revocable permissions, secure API governance, reconciliation, emergency pause tools and human approval for high-risk actions. The credit impact will depend on whether institutions can combine automation with strong controls, deterministic settlement and clear accountability.

Porsche, Mercedes call China market ‘challenging’

German carmakers’ China sales plunge up to 41%

HONG KONG, July 12, (AP): Major German carmakers saw sharp quarterly sales declines in China as domestic demand weakened and competition heated up in the world's biggest auto market.

At Volkswagen, Mercedes-Benz, BMW and Porsche, China sales for the April-June quarter plummeted between 30% and 41% compared with the same period a year ago, according to company data released over the past week.

For the first half of this year, they all reported a more than 20% year-on-year drop in China. The falling China sales have squeezed their overall profits and in some cases offset gains from other regions.

This also comes at a time when these legacy German carmakers are faced with intensified competition from Chinese automakers outside of China, including in Europe, as leading Chinese brands like BYD make inroads overseas.

The latest quarterly sales declines were some of the steepest seen for the German automakers in China, said Lei Xing, an independent auto analyst.

Volkswagen group, for example, saw deliveries in China down 36.6% during the quarter to 424,300 vehicles, which dragged down its global sales to a 8.6% decline, even as deliveries increased in Europe and the Americas.

The Wolfsburg, Germany-based auto group, which has been betting big on the Chinese market, said it would be slashing its model lineup by up to half after the latest sales declines.

China's prolonged property sector downturn and an economic slowdown have hurt consumer sentiment, with more people shunning big-ticket purchases. Strong competition in its domestic car market and a yearslong fierce price war have also hit many European carmakers, with drivers opting for affordable Chinese car brands.

Porsche, part of the Volkswagen group, called China's market environment “challenging” in a statement, while Mercedes-Benz said China is facing “a significantly weaker overall market and macroeconomic environment.”

China's passenger car sales at home fell 24% in the first half of this year to nearly 8.3 million, according to the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers, an industry group.

Consultancy AlixPartners expects sales of light vehicles, including passenger cars, in China will likely fall about 10% for the whole of this year.

As Chinese car brands become increasingly preferable in China, “foreign automakers are going to have to fight for every share of (the) market,” Stephen Dyer, Asia-Pacific leader of the automotive practice at AlixPartners, said at a news briefing last month.

German auto groups remain much stronger in making internal combustion engine vehicles, such as gasoline cars, than electric vehicles, said Chris Liu, with the research and advisory group Omdia, at a time when EVs sales in China are doing better than conventional fuel vehicles.

“The German automakers are bearing most of the brunt,” said Xing, the independent analyst.

Chinese carmakers also have a competitive edge over foreign automakers as they typically update their model lineup a lot more frequently than their rivals, Dyer added.

Data centers to create 5,000 jobs

Trinidad signs US deals for large AI data centers

PORT-OF-SPAIN, July 12, (AP): Trinidad and Tobago has signed agreements paving the way for U.S. companies to begin groundwork for installing large data centers in the Caribbean nation, sparking concerns about potential energy consumption and environmental impacts.

The memorandums of understanding with the Florida-headquartered Hummingbird AI Holdings and New York-based Ernst and Young LLP were signed on Friday, according to a statement from the office of Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar. These are the first such agreements with a Caribbean country.

The deal with Ernst and Young LLP will set out the framework for collaboration on developing large-scale data centers, with the company planning to “partner with third parties in the development” of a 300 megawatt data center, the statement said.

The agreement with Hummingbird AI Holdings sets up the framework for “preliminary cooperation, due diligence and coordination” for a proposed 150 MW AI infrastructure and data center facility.

Data centers are listed with a megawatt figure to indicate their electrical power capacity to operate at peak load. The 300 MW center has a capacity of 300 million watts of electricity.

The deals raised online questions about the environmental impact of the centers.

Renowned social activist Dr. Wayne Kúblalsingh told The Associated Press he was concerned about the energy consumption by the planned data centers.

The government is “trying to present something which looks like development, but which is not development,” he said.

Trinidad and Tobago has long grappled with chronic water shortages and intermittent supply, raising concerns that large, water-intensive

data centers could place additional strain on an already overstretched system.

The majority of the twin-island country functions on water schedules set by the state's utility company. Most homes have water tanks since the supply in their taps can be as rare as once a week. In some instances, communities have gone weeks without water being supplied by the state company.

Data centers could account for nearly 3% of the world's projected electricity use by 2030, with 935 trillion watt-hours, according to a recent United Nations University report. The environmental footprint of data centers already rivals some of the world's largest countries, according to the report.

Electricity supply in Trinidad and Tobago has improved over the years. While there are still power outages at times in parts of the country, they are rare.

Trinidad and Tobago's government signed a third agreement with another American company, Pinnacle Steel and Vanadium Corporation, which recently acquired a local iron and steel plant. Government officials said the agreement allows for further talks on recommissioning operating the plant.

The government said the three initiatives, combined, are expected to generate over 5,000 jobs.

The prime minister has been a strong supporter of the Trump administration. Her office said the U.S. government played a role in facilitating the parties involved in the agreements.

“They're going to invest here to work on data centers, two for data centers, and one to help us rejuvenate and rebuild our steel industry,” Persad-Bissessar said Friday night, speaking at a U.S. independence anniversary celebration ceremony hosted by the U.S. Embassy in Trinidad and Tobago.

Delegation pushes for exemptions on platinum, citrus, autos

South Africa seeks tariff exemption as US probes forced labor tied to imports

JOHANNESBURG, July 12, (AP): South Africa has asked the United States to exempt it from proposed tariffs linked to a U.S. investigation into the enforcement of bans on imports of products made with forced labor in dozens of countries, arguing that it has robust laws prohibiting the practice.

A South African delegation led by the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition appeared before the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative in Washington this week as part of a Section 301 investigation examining whether at least 60 economies adequately enforce bans on imports of goods made with forced labor.

The delegation stressed that South Africa has ratified key International Labor Organization conventions prohibiting forced labor

and has legislation that allows authorities to block imports produced using forced labor. It also noted that goods produced through prison labor are already prohibited under South African law.

It urged Washington not to impose a proposed 12.5% tariff on South African exports and requested exemptions for key exports, including platinum group metals, vehicles, citrus, seafood, wine, and nuts, arguing there was no evidence they were produced using forced labor.

Trade relations between Washington and Pretoria have become increasingly strained with repeated tensions over trade and foreign policy in recent years, including disagreements over tariffs, South Africa's domestic policies and differing positions on several conflicts, including

the war in Gaza.

South Africa has long benefited from duty-free access to the U.S. market under the African Growth and Opportunity Act, a trade program that has supported billions of dollars in exports from sub-Saharan Africa. The program is due to expire unless renewed by the U.S. Congress.

South Africa's Trade Minister Parks Tau said the U.S. remained an important trading partner, adding that the government would continue to engage with Washington on the probe and other issues, such as the existing U.S. tariffs on steel, aluminum, and automobiles.

After the hearing, the U.S. trade office gave time for additional submissions by Thursday, before it was to make a decision.

‘Evil Dead Burn’ goes for gore ... not grace

This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Luciane Buchanan in a scene from ‘Evil Dead Burn.’ (AP)



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows actor Erroll Shand, left, with director Sébastien Vanicek on the set of ‘Evil Dead Burn.’ (AP)



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Souheila Yacoub in a scene from ‘Evil Dead Burn.’ (AP)

Horror sequel goes full brutality, without humor or verve

LOS ANGELES, July 12, (AP): French filmmaker Sébastien Vanicek vowed when he took charge of the sixth installment in the “Evil Dead” film series that it would be the most brutal. Mission accomplished, mon ami. Not the most artful or clever or scariest. Brutal.

Vanicek has certainly delivered - a relentlessly violent, overlong, one-note, meandering grindhouse that lacks its predecessors’ Looney Tunes approach to horror and humor. “Evil Dead Burn” shows signs that the franchise may have found itself a savage, nihilistic dead end in torture-porn, even as a seventh is on its way.

Chunks of flesh fly after a weirdly convoluted introduction to a family possessed. Dogs are stabbed, scissors carve into heads, hot candle wax is swallowed, a head is caved in with a metal dishwasher door, a fountain pen is jabbed through an ear, a corkscrew finds itself in someone’s throat, grilling skewers are used in non-FDA approved methods, a face is melted on a radiator and an electric knife is used, but not to carve a holiday roast. Someone shoots themselves - not once, but three times in the face - and then this same sturdy character somehow

has a long make-out session with a loved one. And they say romance is dead.

There’s tons of gore but to what point? The 2013 reboot was about drug addiction, while 2023’s femme-centered “Evil Dead Rise” was about maternal anxieties - and alternate uses for cheese graters. This one seems to try to explore domestic violence, but it’s a poor vehicle since someone gets their head cartoonishly bashed in with a prosthetic limb.

And, alas, there isn’t the customary chain saw whipped out at the end. No, this time we get a weed wacker as an appetizer and then a jackhammer in the face. It all ends with a weird “Terminator”-esque finale. What “Evil Dead Burn” needs is an editor and a visit from Amnesty International.

To be fair, there are some great set pieces: A multi-minute fight between three characters in a car is a triumph - fingers get amputated in a door, the sunroof is crushed, seat belts are used to strangle and headrests impale. And one long, continuous shot of one of our shallow-breathing heroes crawling to safety across an extended fight scene

indicates where this film could have gone.

The script by Vanicek and Florent Bernard tries to connect all this mayhem to the “Evil Dead” canon, starting with a nifty opening sequence that involves two buddies whose fishing trip is brutally interrupted by a demon-possessed young woman, who we are left to surmise is a leftover from the last scene of “Evil Dead Rise.” There are the necessary references to “The Book of the Dead” and a connection to Professor Raymond Knowby, who sits at the heart of the original mythology. For all you “Evil Dead”-heads, there’s the reappearance of the Kandarian Dagger (Guess how many slashes it will deliver).

It sets up a plot - loose, very loose - about a new widow (a fearsome Souheila Yacoub) whose relationship with the family of her late husband is strained. There’s a nutso dad who shouldn’t be left around sharp objects and rips at his son’s coffin (Erroll Shand), a chilly mom (Tandi Wright) who is every inch the Matriarch - “Without family, you’re nothing,” she says firmly - a wimpy son (Hunter Doohan) and his pretty cool girlfriend (Lu-

ciane Buchanan), a little more psychotic than you’d like in a life partner.

Vanicek seems incapable of dread and his humor is odd. He apparently thinks it’s hysterical to have an 85-year-old grandmother with dementia and a missing leg keep accusing people of stealing from her and then turn her into a demon (Maude Davey, working hard). The script bafflingly notes early on that our widow’s shoes make one of her heels pinched so she needs a Band-Aid - maybe funny because of the buckets of gore to come? And you can tell two Frenchmen wrote the script because smoking is, checks notes, encouraged.

We’ve come a long way since Sam Raimi’s original trilogy, and not in a good way. With so much elevated horror at the movie theaters these days, “Evil Dead Burn” seems like a step back - off a cliff.

“Evil Dead Burn,” a Warner Bros. Pictures was released in theaters July 10, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for “strong bloody horror violence and gore, and language.” Running time: 110 minutes. One star out of four.

Variety

LONDON: Kate, the Princess of Wales, returned to Wimbledon for the women’s final between Linda Noskova and Karolina Muchova on Saturday as part of a Royal Box contingent that included tennis greats Martina Navratilova and Billie Jean King.

Jodie Foster, “Emily in Paris” star Lily Collins, and “Ted Lasso” actress Hannah Waddingham were also among the invited guests in the Royal Box at Centre Court for the all-Czech women’s final, along with two-time Wimbledon singles champion Petra Kvitova of the Czech Republic.

Eileen Gu, a three-time Olympic goal medalist, was also on hand. The U.S.-born skier, one of the stars of the Milan Cortina Games, competes for her mother’s homeland of China. (AP)

LONDON: British actor Micheal Ward was acquitted Friday of rape and other charges in a London court on allegations he sexually assaulted a woman in the back of a friend’s Mercedes in 2023.

Ward, 28, who starred in the Netflix crime drama “Top Boy,” sobbed after a jury in Snaresbrook Crown Court found him not guilty of two counts of rape, two counts of assault by penetration and one count of sexual assault.

Ward has appeared in films including “Blue Story,” “The Book of Clarence” and last year’s American political satire “Eddington,” alongside Joaquin Phoenix and Pedro Pascal. (AP)

Remake recasts the American dream

Netflix brings new life to ‘Little House on the Prairie’

It’s a story with covered wagons and one room schoolhouses, but showrunner Rebecca Sonnenshine says the “Little House on the Prairie” remake for Netflix still speaks to today’s American dream.

The show, premiering Thursday and set in the late 1800s, follows the Ingalls family led by Charles and Caroline and their two daughters Mary and Laura - as they settle in the American frontier. It’s adapted from a series of semi-autobiographical books written by Laura Ingalls Wilder about her own family’s pioneer life. In 1974, Michael Landon co-created the TV series based on the books where he played Pa alongside Melissa Gilbert as Laura. It aired for nine seasons. In the new version, Luke Bracey plays Pa and Alice Halsey is Laura.

Sonnenshine says the same frontier spirit from back then is baked into how Americans see themselves, even today.

“This idea of rugged individualism is the cornerstone of American mythos,” Sonnenshine says. “It’s still manifesting in our lives constantly ... We’re real go-getters.”

In “Little House,” we see the Ingalls family seeking land and opportunity as they move west. In real life, Sonnenshine says, those settlers often didn’t understand what they were part of.

“There was no CNN or up-to-date newspapers, telling you” what was really happening, she says. “They did not understand the politics of land ownership or these treaties that have been made or these reservations,” she said. In the show, we see Charles begin to grasp the politics at play as the family encounters the Osage Nation and their new neighbors - and keeps some of that to himself. Sonnenshine says “it’s not out of malice, exactly” but because “knowledge did not flow as freely as it does now.”



This image released by Netflix shows, from left, Luke Bracey as Charles Ingalls, Skywalker Hughes as Mary Ingalls, Crosby Fitzgerald as Caroline Ingalls, and Alice Halsey as Laura Ingalls, in a scene from “Little House on the Prairie.” (AP)

As the Ingalls family builds their new life, we’re introduced to various neighbors who help them do it. That includes an Osage family adjusting to their own new way of life as settlers claim parts of their land. Laura strikes up a friendship with an Osage girl, and there’s a mutual respect among Charles and the Osage family patriarch.

“A lot of what this show is about is getting to know people that are not like you, all kinds of different people, because once you get to know people, that’s where all the change happens,” said Sonnenshine.

Mr. Edwards, a fan favorite from the books and series, helps Pa build the family’s cabin. He’s a rugged Civil War veteran with a heart of gold - grieving the loss of his own

family, finding a new one in the Ingalls.

Staying true to characters like Edwards and including key events from the source material was a priority for Sonnenshine. She and her writers made a list of “iconic moments” with a checklist to follow. “We just crossed them off as we went along. ‘OK, we’ve found a way to incorporate this’ or ‘Ma gets a chair,’ which is very important, or ‘great Pa builds a door.’” Building a door, says Sonnenshine, is “a whole chapter in a book.”

Trip Friendly, whose father Ed co-created the series with Landon and was an executive producer, controls the overall rights to the Laura Ingalls Wilder stories. He’s an executive producer on the remake, and Sonnenshine says Trip is

“very passionate about telling the story of the books.”

Landon’s portrayal of Pa made him arguably one of the most popular TV dads in the history of the medium. He was a devoted family man with strong morals and compassion for others.

Bracey had never watched the original which he says was beneficial to creating his own interpretation of the character.

“I didn’t feel that burden,” said Bracey. “The intimidating factor has come after making it. When I’ve told people what I’ve done, and I’ve been told how important it is to them. That’s where it’s got intimidating.”

Bracey said it’s refreshing to play a genuinely good person, who makes mistakes, but is good.

“There’s very few really good people in television and movies. I feel lots of times they have to have a dark secret or a checkered past or whatever,” he said.

Crosby Fitzgerald, who plays Ma, says that goodness is present off-screen too. “Working with Luke is incredible. He actually is like Pa in person. Just really lifted me up all the time. It’s impossible to work on a set like this, especially with this legacy, and not be uplifted by the vibe.”

Sonnenshine says Season 1 is also about Laura learning that neither of her parents are perfect, particularly Pa. She comes to understand that “he does make mistakes and that’s OK.” And even Charles talks about that. I think that’s a more honest portrayal of fatherhood.” (AP)

Heritage hangs in the balance

Yemen’s fight to protect Arabian horses from war



A boy poses for a photo with a horse at an equestrian club in Sanaa, Yemen, on July 9, 2026. (Xinhua)

SANAA, July 12, (Xinhua): As the morning sun bathes Al-Oroubah Equestrian Stable in Yemen’s capital, Sanaa, Ahmed Ahwal gently adjusts the saddle of a pure Arabian horse before leading it into the training ground.

Ahwal first climbed onto a horse at the age of six, never imagining that single moment would shape the rest of his life.

Today, he keeps several horses at the stable. What began as a childhood fascination has become a lifelong devotion to an animal he believes embodies Yemen’s history, culture and identity.

“You do not simply choose to love horses,” Ahwal said. “The feeling begins in childhood, grows with you, and eventually becomes part of your identity.”

Yet love, in Yemen, has never been simple. Across the country, breeders find their passion inseparable from a greater mission: protecting Yemen’s living heritage from being eroded by war. Years of conflict and economic hardship have driven up feed prices, disrupted access to specialized veterinary medicines, and weakened breeding programs until the survival of the pure Arabian horse has become increasingly uncertain.

As the world marks World Horse Day on July 11, established by the UN General Assembly in 2025, Yemen’s horse keepers say preservation has become less a choice than a quiet act of perseverance, a struggle not only for survival but for the soul of a centuries-old heritage.

Riding remains popular in Yemen, particularly in Sanaa, where several stables still operate. Many families still enroll their children in lessons, viewing horsemanship as both a cultural tradition and a way to build confidence and discipline. Yet rising feed prices and the broader economic crisis have made riding increasingly unaffordable for most Yemenis.

No one understands the mounting toll better than Jamal Al-Taweel, a veteran trainer who has cared for Arabian horses since 1994. He has watched Al-Oroubah expand from 27 horses to 61 today, yet keeping them healthy has grown harder than ever.

“Building a stable is easier than sustaining everything a horse needs inside it,” he said. “Feed has become extremely expensive, and the medicines we depend on are often unavailable.”

Basic staples such as barley, wheat and bran have become increasingly expensive, while specialized equine medicines are often unavailable, forcing trainers to seek assistance from colleagues elsewhere in the Middle East.

“People sometimes assume that hunger is the main danger,” Al-Taweel said, his voice lowering. “But many horses die because there is no specialist veterinarian nearby and no suitable medicine when an emergency occurs.”

Khaled Ahmed, a riding instructor and jumping coach at the stable, recalled that colic, a potentially fatal digestive disorder, has killed four purebred Arabian horses there in recent years.

“The decline of pure Arabian bloodlines is becoming increasingly visible,” he cautioned. “Once a valuable bloodline disappears, rebuilding it can take generations.”

He warned that uncontrolled crossbreeding has further eroded genetic purity. “These horses are not merely valuable animals,” he said. “They are part of Yemen’s cultural memory and a heritage that deserves protection.”

The struggle extends far beyond Al-Oroubah. At another major stable in Sanaa, veterinarian and horse caretaker Yahya Baydani described a landscape of scarcity where medicines once routinely imported from Europe are now nearly impossible to obtain, forcing trainers at times to rely on drugs intended for cattle or sheep.

“Sometimes we understand the illness and know what treatment is required,” Baydani said. “The painful part is knowing that the proper medicine cannot be found.”

Even breeding has become uncertain. Without proper diagnostic equipment, trainers may wait almost the entire 11-month gestation period before discovering that a mare is not pregnant.



Visitors check an Arabian horse at an equestrian club in Sanaa, Yemen, on July 9, 2026. (Xinhua)

ALECSO honors Mohammad Bakri as Arab icon

Palestinian arts & heritage endure a turbulent start

RAMALLAH, July 12, (KUNA): The Palestinian cultural scene during the first quarter of 2026 was marked by contrasting developments.

It witnessed the passing of prominent intellectual and creative figures who left a significant national and cultural legacy, alongside the honoring of Palestinian cultural personalities and the achievement of Arab and international accomplishments.

These developments occurred despite the challenges imposed by the Israeli occupation on cultural institutions and activities.

During the first quarter of the year, Palestine bid farewell to three of its most prominent cultural and national icons, whose intellectual and creative contributions became an integral part of the Palestinian national memory.

Historian Walid Khaldi documented the history of Palestine and the Nakba, Lebanese artist Ahmad Kaabour championed the Palestinian cause through his voice and committed songs, and poet Abdilnasser Tayeh chronicled his national and human experiences in poetry, some of which he wrote while imprisoned by Israeli authorities.

On March 8, Khaldi passed away in Cambridge, Massachusetts, at the age of 101. A member of Jerusalem’s distinguished Khaldi family, he was one of the foremost scholars to document Palestinian history, the Nakba, Israeli occupation actions in Palestine, the Palestinian refugee experience and the 1948 war.

Khaldi founded the Institute for Palestine Studies in Beirut in 1963, which became one of the leading research institutions on Palestinian history and the Palestinian question.

In 2015, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas awarded him the Star of Honor of the State of Palestine (Highest Class) in recognition of his scholarly contributions, which became essential references for researchers studying Palestine and the Middle East.

Born in Jerusalem on July 16, 1925, Khaldi received his early education in Ramallah and Jerusalem before earning a bachelor’s degree in Greek and Roman history and Latin from the University of London in 1945. He later graduated from Oxford University in 1951.

He taught political studies at the American University of Beirut until 1982, served as a researcher at Harvard University’s Center for International Affairs, lectured at Princeton and Oxford Universities, helped establish Jordan’s Royal Scientific Society and was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Widely regarded as one of the foremost historians of the Palestinian cause, Khaldi remained actively involved in the Institute for Palestine Studies until 2017 and authored numerous influential books and studies that became foundational references on Palestine’s modern history.

From Anadikum (I Call upon You) to Ya Nabd Al-Daffa (O Pulse of the West Bank), Call Me a Refugee, Heading Toward My Homeland, Leave, and We Are the People, Lebanese singer and composer Kaabour remained a steadfast artistic voice for Palestine and the broader struggle for freedom since the 1970s.

Born in Beirut in 1955, Kaabour passed away on March 26. A graduate of the Lebanese University’s Institute of Fine Arts, he emerged during the 1970s when art became closely intertwined with political and cultural commitment.

He began his career with the People’s Chorus, performing in military camps, hospitals and refugee camps, helping spread his music throughout the region.

Kaabour became widely known across the Arab world through his song Anadikum, based on a poem by Palestinian poet Tawfiq Ziad. The song became an anthem for solidarity with the Palestinian people, particularly during Israel occupation’s 1982 invasion of Lebanon and remains deeply em-

bedded in Arab collective memory.

In addition to music, Kaabour worked in theater, film and television. His film credits include Nadam (1989) and Naji Al-Ali (1992), alongside television productions such as The Search for Salahuddin and Abu Al-Tayyib Al-Mutanabbi.

Despite health challenges in his later years, he continued performing, becoming known for his accessible style and dedication to national and social causes. Alongside Marcel Khalife, he played a central role in developing politically committed Arabic music.

On February 4, poet, writer and activist Tayeh (also known as Abu Khaled) passed away in Tulkarm after a lifetime devoted to culture and national service.

Born on October 12, 1957, Tayeh served as Deputy Minister of Culture, Director of the Ministry of Culture’s office in Tulkarm, co-founder of the General Union of Palestinian Writers and Authors, member of the Palestinian National Council, leader in the Fatah movement and lecturer at An-Najah National University between 1985 and 1995.

He founded the Tulkarm Cultural and Artistic Forum (MATAF) in 1992 and became one of Tulkarm’s most influential literary voices.

Through his poetry and writings, he expressed the struggles of both homeland and humanity while embodying the spirit of resistance and steadfastness.

Known as the “Poet of Freedom,” Tayeh wrote several of his collections while imprisoned by Israeli occupation authorities. Iraqi poet Abdulwahab Al-Bayati called him the “Prince of Poets of Rejection.”

Meanwhile, The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) selected the late Palestinian actor and filmmaker Mohammad Bakri as the Arab Culture Icon for 2026 during the 12th Arab Poetry Day celebrations.

Obituary

‘She wasn’t supposed to live past 20’

Lillard, iron lung survivor, dies at 78

NEW YORK, July 12, (AP): Martha Lillard had just turned 5 when she was diagnosed with polio and depended on an iron lung to live. She died June 26 in Oklahoma, the last U.S. polio patient who used the machine, her sister said. She was 78.

“They told her she wasn’t supposed to live past 20 years old,” Lillard’s younger sister, Cindy McVey, told The Associated Press on Friday. “She had the enthusiasm and the drive to continue living and make the best of her life.”

McVey attributes her sister’s death to the effects of long-haul COVID-19. A death certificate lists causes as chronic pulmonary failure and post-polio syndrome, McVey said.

Lillard slept in the iron lung cylinder that encased her body as the air pressure in the chamber forced air in and out of her lungs. As a child, she went to grade school for two hours a day and was tutored the rest of the time. She attended Shawnee High School by using a phone system that allowed her to interact with her teachers and classmates through an intercom in her classrooms.

Her family went on road trips to Missouri thanks to a custom trailer and her father calling hotels to find out if they had doors wide enough to accommodate the machine Lillard slept in. Lillard was even able to drive for a time.

“To me, it was just normal,” recalled McVey, 75.

Polio was once one of the nation’s most feared diseases, with annual outbreaks causing thousands of cases of paralysis. The disease primarily affects children.

Vaccines became available starting in 1955. According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a national vaccination campaign cut the annual number of U.S. cases to fewer than 100 in the 1960s and fewer than 10 in the 1970s. In 1979, polio was declared eliminated in the U.S., meaning it was no longer routinely spread.



In this photo provided by Cindy McVey, her sister Martha Lillard rests in her iron lung on Friday, February 6, 2026 in Shawnee, Okla. (AP)

Later the internet would help Lillard stay informed and learn about all sorts of topics, including her disease, which paralyzed her from the neck down.

With therapy she was able to regain partial use of her left arm and use of her legs. But she could only move her left arm side to side at her waist. Even though she couldn’t reach up, she spent many years living alone and preparing her own meals.

The internet also allowed Lillard to meet her future husband. After the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Lillard wanted to understand more about what happened. In a chat room, she met a man in Egypt and communicated with him online for more than 20 years, McVey said.

Lillard married Baha Salh in February after he was finally able to ob-

tain a visa to travel to Oklahoma.

“They were really soulmates,” McVey said. “He’s extremely brokenhearted.”

During the coronavirus pandemic, Lillard got COVID-19 twice. Before getting COVID-19, she had less than 25% lung capacity. The last five years of her life, she wasn’t able to leave home as it became harder to breathe. For the past two years, she was in the iron lung nearly 24 hours a day, McVey said.

McVey described her sister as artistic and creative. She wrote poems and composed songs. She wrote her own obituary, which is now posted online by a funeral home. She described being a Humane Society volunteer. “She was an avid Beagle lover and assisted in animal rescue as a cross poster on Facebook,” Lillard wrote.

‘Misses the mark’

Meta pulls AI image feature

WASHINGTON, July 12, (AP): Meta has pulled the plug on a feature of a recently launched AI tool following criticism that it made Instagram accounts fodder for use in creating AI-generated images.

The move on Friday came less than a week after the parent of Instagram and Facebook rolled out Muse Image, its first image-generation model available through the company’s artificial intelligence assistant, Meta AI.

“Our intent was to provide a useful creative tool and to give people control over whether their public content could be referenced in this way,” Meta said in a statement. “We’ve heard the feedback that this feature missed the mark, so it’s no longer available.”

Like other AI apps with image-generating capabilities, Muse Image creates images based on users’ suggestions. But its also automatically made photos posted on all public Instagram accounts usable by the AI tool as a reference when creating new images.

That led to a flurry of social media posts flagging privacy concerns and instructing Instagram users how to opt out of having their accounts accessed by Muse Image.

Hollywood also was quick to raise concerns about the image-generation feature.

The Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists urged its members to change the settings on their Instagram account to protect their likeness.

In a statement on X, SAG-AFTRA applauded Meta’s decision to shut off the feature.

“With the dangers of non-consensual digital replicas well known to all, a feature that encouraged that behavior is unwise,” the union said. “We appreciate its discontinuance. It is the right thing to do.”

The Conversation

Student AI cheating concerns reveal a deeper learning crisis

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

By Brett DeJager
University of Wisconsin-Stout Polytechnic

The risk of students using AI to cheat tends to get a lot of attention - with good reason.

A student can simply copy and paste a prompt into a chatbot and receive a polished paragraph, a five-paragraph essay, a lab summary or a reading response almost instantly. Teachers may then be left wondering whether the work reflects the student’s thinking and actual work or what the chatbot generated.

An estimated 84% of high school students surveyed said they had used generative artificial intelligence for schoolwork in 2025, according to College Board, a nonprofit that administers the SAT and AP exams.

As an assistant professor of school psychology studying artificial intelligence in K-12 education, I think the question is not only whether students are using AI to cheat, but whether there is evidence that learning actually happened.

I recently surveyed public school educators and administrators about how generative AI is affecting schools to better understand the answer to this question.

My study, conducted from spring 2025 to spring 2026, included 303 educators and other school professionals in Wisconsin - teachers, administrators, IT staff and technology directors, as well as school psychologists and counselors. I also surveyed another 132 professionals at schools across the country.

The results are not nationally representative, but they offer a snapshot of how some K-12 professionals are thinking about AI and student learning.

While a large number of respondents were concerned about AI bias, misinformation and data privacy, the most common worries were about academic

dishonesty and plagiarism.

In Wisconsin, approximately 65% of respondents identified these issues as a concern, compared with 74% who did so on a broader, national level.

But respondents also pointed to a deeper issue: How do teachers know what students actually understand when AI can generate essays, summaries or math steps in seconds?

In the Wisconsin sample, 47% of respondents who answered this question said that “difficulty in assessing student learning when AI is used” is a concern.

That figure increased to 53% in the national sample.

When asked “What impact, if any, have you noticed AI has had on student behavior, mental health, or engagement?” respondents selected from a provided list of options. Among those options, 29% of Wisconsin respondents and 40% of respondents in the national sample selected “increased student reliance on AI,” while 19% and 33%, respectively, selected “reduced critical thinking or problem-solving.”

Teachers have long known that a student’s finished assignment is not perfect evidence of learning. A parent might help too much. A student might copy from a friend. A student might complete the work but not understand it well enough to explain it later.

Generative AI makes that problem more visible and more complicated.

Take a common homework task, such as writing a paragraph explaining the theme of a short story. In the past, teachers looked at students’ writing to understand whether they read the story, thought about the theme and could explain it in writing.

Now, this kind of homework prompt may produce a result that appears organized, accurate and polished. But it is becoming harder for teachers to understand whether students actually understood the story, identified the theme and articulated it independently, or whether students simply entered a prompt

into an AI tool.

Some teachers do use AI-detection tools to determine whether students’ work is original.

In a 2025 national survey of sixth- through 12th-grade public school teachers, 43% reported used these kinds of apps regularly, while another 27% had tested or experimented with them.

But these tools can make mistakes in both directions. One study of 14 AI-detection tools found false-positive rates as high as 50% and false-negative rates as high as 100%, depending on the tool. The same study found that about 20% of AI-generated texts were misclassified as human-written; that rose to about 52% when AI-written text was manually edited and 71% when it was machine-paraphrased. Other researchers found that detectors falsely flagged nonnative English writing as AI-generated at an average rate of 61.3%.

I don’t think that means schools should abandon writing assignments or homework altogether. But educators may need to be more intentional about what each assignment is supposed to measure.

Some teachers are already making those kinds of changes, including asking students to show or explain their process, or asking them to include oral components to their written work or write more in class.

Some teachers are also giving students paper-and-pencil tasks when they need to see students’ independent thinking.

If the goal is writing fluency, teachers may need to see students write. If the goal is reading comprehension, they may need students to explain, apply or defend their thinking.

Many schools are still deciding how to approach AI. In my survey, only 33% of Wisconsin respondents and 29% of national respondents said their district had a formal AI policy.

Teachers and students alike could benefit from clarity on how and when they can use AI. (AP)



Kimchi, sauerkraut and yogurt are displayed on a kitchen table in New York on July 10. (AP)

People have been fermenting food for millennia: Here’s why more people focused on gut health now

WASHINGTON, July 12, (AP): More people are focusing on their gut health, as fibermaxxing goes mainstream, colorectal cancer rises among young adults and personalized gut microbiome treatments become increasingly popular.

Now, a generation- and culture-spanning way of preserving food is in the spotlight: fermentation. The federal government’s latest dietary guidelines specifically encourage Americans to eat more fermented food.

The foods have been further popularized by followers of Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.’s Make America Healthy Again movement. And while other diet fads championed by MAHA have been questioned by health experts - like unproven claims about raw milk and seed oils - there’s some science behind the benefits of eating fermented foods.

Fermented foods go back thousands of years in human history, to the days when we needed to keep

food from spoiling but didn’t have refrigerators. Many cultures have traditional fermented foods: yogurt, kimchi, sauerkraut, South Indian idli and dosa.

Dietitians and doctors say they’re a great addition to almost anyone’s diet, but they warn against new, mass-produced products.

Here’s what to know.

Fermentation is a process by which naturally occurring microbes including bacteria and yeast break down and preserve food.

The foods are a hot research topic, though many of their health benefits are already clear, experts say.

“We’ve been doing this for ages and we just found out more recently that it’s actually helped our gut health,” said Dr. Lisa Ganjuhu, a gastroenterologist with New York University Langone Health.

Still, it doesn’t automatically mean something is healthy if it’s fermented.

“Beer and wine are fermented

foods, but they’re not necessarily probiotics,” she said. “If anything, they influence our own microbiome in more of a negative way.”

Barbara Olendzki, director of the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School’s Center for Applied Nutrition, said she recommends people focus on “whole fermented foods” like fermented beets or green beans in addition to foods like yogurt, kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut and tempeh.

The microbes in fermented foods help predigest it, breaking it down and changing the compounds available in it. The bacteria themselves also help keep the gut in balance, by competing with other bacteria - some of their less beneficial - already in your intestines.

“What is it that makes the fermented foods so healthy? The answer is we’re still working on it,” said Dalia Perelman, a Stanford University research dietitian.

Some fermented foods, like yogurt, give you the live probiotics

while you’re eating them. Others, like sourdough bread, give you few, if any, because they’ve been baked or otherwise processed in ways that kill the microbes. But there’s evidence that some fermented foods are beneficial even without the live microbes, Perelman said.

Experts warn against sodas, chocolate or other processed foods that market themselves as probiotic. Even probiotic supplements are essentially trying to replicate the combinations of beneficial bacteria that naturally grow in many fermented foods, Perelman said.

“Consumers are getting excited about it and trying to choose products that are fermented and with the idea that it’s very ‘gut healthy,’ which is not a clinical definition,” she said. “And then the marketing is running with this trend.”

Avoid sugary items, too, Ganjuhu said. Extra sugar feeds negative bacteria as opposed to the positive bacteria in fermented foods, she said.

Forecasters advise people to stay hydrated and find places to cool off

Dangerous heat wave threatens oppressive temperatures in much of US

LOS ANGELES, July 12, (AP): A widespread and dangerous heat wave was building across the US on Saturday, with triple-digit highs expected in the Southwest and Great Plains this weekend before spreading eastward under a dome of high pressure that meteorologists say could trap oppressive temperatures for a week or more.

Forecasters advised people to stay hydrated and find places to cool off, warning of temperatures 15 to 25 degrees Fahrenheit (8 to 14 degrees Celsius) warmer than normal in many areas, including at night - especially bad for people’s health because their bodies won’t have a chance to recover. The heat dome was expected to affect as much as two-thirds of the continental United States.

“The heat doesn’t necessarily stop when it’s dark out,” said Josh Adam, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Bismarck, North Dakota, where temperatures will surpass 100 F (37 C) until Tuesday, a dramatic spike for a state where summer temperatures are typically in the 80s.

Tynika Smith of Bloomington, Minnesota, handed out frozen towels and wash cloths along with battery-operated fans at encampments of homeless people in nearby St. Paul and will continue next week, when temperatures are forecast to climb into the mid- to high 90s. The residents put the ice packs around their necks and on their heads.

“They can’t get into a car with air conditioning or go into a house,” said Smith, who also distributed water, freezer pops, food and hygiene supplies.

The encampments are so secluded that it’s difficult for the residents to walk or bicycle to cooling centers, she said. There also is little outside shade, while the temperature inside their tents gets even hotter than outdoors.

“I can only do so much,” Smith said, “but at least I can help them stay cool for a little bit.”

The National Weather Service predicted that more than 90 US local tem-



Visitors use fans as as they wait to enter the Washington Monument on July 1, in Washington. (AP)

perature records will be tied or broken through Wednesday - with two-thirds of those being overnight heat records. Temperatures were not forecast to drop below 80 F (27 C) at night in Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Miami; Tampa, Florida; Galveston, Texas; and Charleston, South Carolina.

The heat dome - formed when high pressure traps hot air while blocking cooling winds and rain - is one of the strongest to affect the Dakotas in 25 years, said Chad Merrill, a senior meteorologist with AccuWeather.

Record triple-digit highs were forecast for the weekend in Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, Montana and the Dakotas.

In Helena, Montana, where temperatures were expected to creep above 95 F (35 C), Last Chance Splash Waterpark & Pool was holding a swim meet for hundreds of swimmers.

The timing couldn’t be better, as it’s uncommon for Helena to get so hot, said Sean Swingley, assistant manager.

“It’s certainly a hot day, but the pool is nice and cool,” Swingley said. “Usually in the summer we have a couple 95 degree days, but it mostly hovers around 85 to 90 in June and July.”

Nevada, a state accustomed to hot weather, was even hotter than normal, said Andrew Gorelow, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Las Vegas. The temperature there was expected to hit 111 F (48 C) on Saturday, Gorelow said.

Hydrating and finding cool spaces is critical, experts said.

They also warned that the heat could spike fire risk in some parts of the country that already are dry, including the Rockies, where Merrill said dry thunderstorms could develop.

Climate change from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas is causing more intense and longer-lasting heat waves that cover larger areas, scientists say.

This year’s temperatures also are expected to be affected by El Nino, a natural warming of the equatorial Pacific that alters weather patterns and spikes temperatures across the globe.

The current El Nino - which formed last month and is too young to have affected this heat wave much - is expected to rank as among the most intense since the weather service began tracking the phenomena in 1950, experts said.

By fall it has an 81% chance of becoming “very strong” - the top category - according to the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Agenda nowhere to be found

EPA promises Make America Healthy Again

WASHINGTON, July 12, (AP): Last December, after Make America Healthy Again activists drew up a petition to get him fired, Environmental Protection Agency administrator Lee Zeldin pledged to release a formal agenda of MAHA priorities that his agency would pursue, including protections against harmful chemicals and other health concerns.

But eight months after its first mention and after repeated promises it was being drafted, the so-called MAHA agenda is nowhere to be found. When asked for a status update this week, an EPA spokesperson said MAHA is an ongoing effort, not a single report.

The apparent reversal on the release of a formal environmental health agenda is the latest in a cascade of disappointments for Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.’s MAHA movement, who say they’ve lost faith that the Trump administration will take any significant action on pesticides, chemicals or other issues they view as key to address America’s chronic disease epidemic. It also reflects the EPA’s relentless rollback of environmental regulations even in the face of pressure from an important voting bloc that has supported President Donald Trump.

“I had really hoped that there would be specific steps that were taken through a MAHA agenda,” said activist Kelly Ryerson, whose social media account “Glyphosate Girl” focuses on nontoxic food systems. “We haven’t had any of the wins that we were requesting.”

Many in the diverse coalition of MAHA activists that Trump credits for helping him win back the White House say they plan to vote on issues over party in November’s congressional elections, raising the political stakes of their increasingly public tensions with the Republican administration.

“People are done with the profits of corporations being prioritized over public health,” said Alexandra Muñoz, a molecular toxicologist who collaborates with activists on certain issues. “And I think that will have an important role in the midterms.”

“Trump’s EPA,” as Zeldin frequently calls the agency, has vigorously pursued a deregulatory agenda. Earlier this year, Zeldin proposed overturning the landmark finding that climate change is a threat to human health. He moved to roll back dozens of environmental regulations in what he called “the greatest day of deregulation our nation has seen,” froze billions of dollars for clean energy and upended agency research.

At the same time, Zeldin has touted multiple “MAHA wins,” some of which activists say are anything but. For example, he said the agency intends to regulate some chemicals



A blue rectangular piece of microplastic sits on the finger of a researcher with the University of Washington-Tacoma environmental science program, after it was found in debris collected from the Thea Foss Waterway, in Tacoma, Wash on May 19, 2010. (AP)

called phthalates for environmental and workplace risks, but didn’t address the thousands of consumer products that contain the ingredients.

This week, the EPA diverted from past assurances that the MAHA report was in its “final stages,” telling The Associated Press in an email that the EPA’s actions should speak for themselves.

“The notion that MAHA is a single document waiting to be unveiled fundamentally misrepresents how we operate,” an agency spokesperson said, adding that work on MAHA priorities is “active and expanding every day.”

Ryerson and other MAHA activists said they’ve engaged with agency officials about changes they’d like to see, and occasionally succeeded. Her network of farmers worked with the administration on a recent executive order to advance regenerative agriculture. But she said EPA then used the order to justify new proposed uses for various herbicides, a move she called a “slap in the face.”

The same week, the Supreme Court dealt another blow to the MAHA cause in siding with pesticide maker Bayer in a ruling related to its legal liability for alleged harm caused by its Roundup weedkiller. The Trump administration had backed the company in the case.

Environmental activists say the rise of Kennedy and his MAHA mission has rippled across the administration, raising the public’s awareness of pesticides - and expectations that Trump’s administration would act.

“If RFK and the MAHA movement hadn’t put that issue in the center of the public spotlight, no one would be scrutinizing this nearly as closely,” said Sarah Starman, a senior food and agriculture campaigner at the nonprofit Friends of the Earth.

In a well-publicized gesture aimed

in part at the MAHA movement, Zeldin in April included microplastics and pharmaceuticals on a list of contaminants that could be regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act. Activists had pressured Zeldin for months to crack down on microplastics and other environmental contaminants.

But in a reversal in late June, the EPA did not include microplastics or pharmaceuticals on a list of chemicals it plans to test for under a mandatory program used to collect information about concerning chemicals in drinking water that could be harming human health.

The move rendered the EPA’s earlier public health promises “functionally toothless,” said Betsy Southerland, a former senior official in EPA’s water office.

Zeldin said on social media that “the technology to test and treat for microplastics in drinking water is still in development.” The EPA said in a Federal Register notice that it was “not feasible to develop a drinking water analytical method within the statutory timeframe.”

After making “a big splash in the press” on microplastics, “EPA has quietly stalled that momentum,” said Southerland.

A White House Make America Healthy Again Report, released a few months into Trump’s second term, identified long-term exposure to environmental chemicals - including those widely found in plastics - as a leading cause of chronic disease in children.

Jeremy Symons, a senior adviser at the Environmental Protection Network, a group of former EPA employees and political appointees who are critical of the Trump administration, said Zeldin “pays lip service to MAHA, but sadly he is actually making Americans less safe from toxic chemicals.”

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

By Dan McGrath, Colorado State University; Ashlesha Khatiwada, Colorado State University, and Scott Hotaling, Utah State University

If you have ever hiked in the high peaks of Colorado, the Wasatch Range in Utah or the Tetons in Wyoming, you’ve almost certainly seen a rock glacier, perhaps without even knowing it.

Rock glaciers are slow-moving masses of rock debris and ice that flow downhill the same way that glaciers do, but they are covered by a thick layer of rock and boulders that can easily be mistaken for stable ground.

There are at least 1,500 active rock glaciers across the western U.S., and they’re important. That’s because while the icy white glaciers people typically picture have been shrinking and even disappearing, our new study shows that rock glaciers and their frozen water are remaining mostly stable despite rising temperatures.

The thick debris mantle shades the ice, keeping it colder, similar to how ski areas have started covering their slopes with reflective blankets in summer to stave off melting. The result is that rock glaciers continue to provide meltwater for streams in summer as they always have, but they aren’t disappearing.

We study glaciers around the world. In the new paper, we examine how different types of glaciers are changing beneath the soaring peaks of the Teton Range of Wyoming.

We found that the Tetons’ white, icy glaciers thinned by 2.75 feet per year (0.84 meters per year) between 2014 and 2022, about seven times faster than in the previous half-century. Rock glaciers, on the other hand, were close to stable, losing only about 0.16 feet (0.05 meters) per year in 2014-2022, with no change relative to the 1967-2014 period.

Every year, mountain glaciers partially melt and then rebuild again as snow falls in winter. But as temperatures rise, glaciers are losing more ice than they gain. The vast majority of glaciers in temperate mountain ranges like the Tetons are projected to melt away completely by the end of the century, meaning a critical source of water for mountain streams and lakes will disappear. However, where rock glaciers are present, their protected ice will continue to release meltwater into the streams below,

Cambodia confirms fifth human case of bird flu in 26’

PHNOM PENH, July 12, (Xinhua): A nine-month-old girl in Cambodia has tested positive for H5N1 avian influenza, marking the country’s fifth human case of 2026, the Ministry of Health said in a statement late on Saturday.

The infant, from Prek Takong village, Meanchey district, Phnom Penh, was confirmed positive for the virus on Thursday, the statement said.

A team of doctors is providing the patient with intensive care, it added.

Health authorities “are investigating the infection’s source and tracing contacts to prevent community transmission,” the statement said.

H5N1 avian influenza, which typically circulates among poultry, can infect humans and cause symptoms ranging from fever and cough to severe respiratory illness.

The statement said that bird flu still threatens public health, urging people to avoid consuming sick or dead poultry and cook all poultry thoroughly.

buffering the streams against warming temperatures and drying.

Because of this, streams fed by rock glaciers have emerged as potentially critical climate refugia - places likely to stay cooler while everything around them warms - for cold-water wildlife in high-mountain ecosystems.

A wide array of species already live in the cold meltwater that emerges from rock glaciers, from stoneflies to the bull trout that eat them. As glaciers fade, the ties between cold-water animals and rock glaciers will likely only become tighter.

For instance, the meltwater stonefly (Lednia tumana), an aquatic insect listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act in 2019 due to climate-related habitat loss, relies on the fading glaciers of Glacier National Park. But it can also be found downstream of rock glaciers, which are likely to give the stonefly a chance of survival as other glaciers disappear.

Our study showed that having a major ice source feeding a stream has limited the warming of that stream over the past decade.

We found that streams fed by rock glaciers warmed slowly, by about 1.1 degrees Fahrenheit (0.6 degrees Celsius) over the decade, while icy glaciers warmed by about 1.6 F (0.9 C). Streams that were fed by seasonal snowpack, small patches of ice and groundwater warmed more rapidly, by 6.1 F (3.4 C) over the same period. In one instance, the small snowfields feeding one of our long-term study sites largely disappeared, causing the stream below it to stop flowing by late summer.

Rock glaciers will not replace the glaciers and snowfields that are disappearing. A recent study estimates that rock glaciers in the region hold the equivalent of 0.6 cubic miles (2.5 cubic kilometers) of water, about one-fifth the amount in mountain glaciers.

And climate projections show that even rock glaciers are not immune to a warming climate. Many could become ice-free by the end of the century under current warming projections.

Understanding how much ice is contained in rock glaciers and how fast they are likely to melt is vital to help natural resource and land managers plan for the landscapes they will be managing later this century.

Rock glaciers also offer unique analogs for studying what appear to be debris-covered glaciers on Mars. Research has sought to better understand these rock glacier-like features on Mars, as well as test technology, such as the use of drone-based radar systems to measure ice and debris thicknesses, here on Earth. (AP)



A worker grabs a chicken to slaughter inside a poultry store in New York on Feb 7, 2025. (AP)

Arabi faces Al Shatti dilemma

Qadsia announces major summer signings

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: Qadsia has completed the signings of three foreign players as part of its preparations for the 2026-27 season, adding Oman international striker Abdulrahman Al Mushaifri, Moroccan forward Hamza Khaba and Nigerian defender Gabriel Orok.

Al Mushaifri, 27, spent last season with Czech side Artis Brno, helping the club reach the promotion playoffs for the Czech First League. Brno, however, failed to earn promotion after losing both playoff matches to Slovácko.

Khaba returns to Kuwaiti football after a season with Moroccan giant AS FAR. The striker previously enjoyed a prolific spell with Arabi in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 campaigns, finishing as the league's top scorer before returning to Morocco.

Orok, 25, arrives from Libyan club Al Ahly Benghazi, where he played during the previous season.

Qadsia is expected to unveil more signings in the coming days before departing for a preseason training camp in Alexandria, Egypt, later this



Moroccan forward Hamza Khaba celebrates after scoring during a match.

month. The Yellow will represent Kuwait in this season's AFC Challenge League.

Uncertainty continues to surround the future of Arabi head coach Nasser Al Shatti, despite the fact that his contract runs through June 2028.

Sources indicate that relations between Al Shatti and the club's board have deteriorated, raising

doubts over whether he will remain in charge. Syrian coach Firas Al Khatib, who has led Fahaheel for the past three seasons, has emerged as the leading candidate to replace him.

On the playing front, Arabi has signed Ethiopian attacking midfielder and forward Kenan Maleko as it continues strengthening the squad for the new campaign.

The club has also confirmed the departure of Bahrain international Kamil Al Aswad, while management presses ahead with a comprehensive overhaul of both its domestic and foreign player roster.

Arabi has additionally recruited Talal Al Qaisi from Kazma and Ali Al Dukhi, formerly of Al Shabab and Fahaheel.

The Green faces an important continental test on Aug. 12 against India's East Bengal in the qualifying playoff for the AFC Champions League Two.

Kuwait Club has continued its summer recruitment by signing Kuwait international midfielder Abdullah Al Qarzai from Arabi.

Al Qarzai is the club's third domestic acquisition of the transfer window after defender Hassan Hamdan and striker Salman Al Awadhi, who also joined from Arabi.

Working alongside new Portuguese head coach Alexandre Santos, Kuwait's management is expected to complete further additions before the team begins preseason training ahead of its AFC Champions League Two campaign.

Kazma keeps Ristavetic

Kuwait Club appoints Tata as handball team coach

By Khaled Al Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 12: Kuwait Club have appointed Brazilian coach Marcos Oliveira "Tata" as head coach of its first handball team for the new season, as the club continue its preparations to challenge for domestic and international honors.

The club selected Oliveira after reviewing several coaching options, with the Brazilian earning the role thanks to his technical experience and coaching background. He will take charge of the team's preseason preparations ahead of the upcoming campaign.

Kuwait Club is also closing in on the signing of Bahrain international Mohammed Habib, with negotiations at an advanced stage. The final details are being completed before the deal is officially announced, which would make Habib the club's second foreign player after Montenegrin Vladan.

The White's latest moves reflect the club's strategy of strengthening the squad with quality additions as it looks to remain among the top contenders and compete for major trophies. The handball transfer market has been particularly active, setting the stage for a highly competitive season.

Meanwhile, Kazma has confirmed that French coach Slaviša Ristavetić will remain in charge of the first team for the 2026-27 season, with handball team manager and club secretary Omar Al Mulla emphasizing the



Kuwait Club handball head coach Marcos Oliveira 'Tata' gives instructions during a game.

importance of maintaining stability within the technical staff.

Ristavetić joined Kazma in February, but the suspension of sporting activities from Feb. 28 prevented him from fully carrying out his plans. The club has decided to allow him to implement his program from the beginning of the new season.

Kazma has also renewed the contract of Tunisian professional Anouar Ben Abdallah following his outstanding performances, with Al Mulla praising his contribution and highlighting his importance to the team's ambitions of competing strongly in local competitions.

The Kazma squad will begin preparations in early August, with players set to undergo an intensive physical and technical program that includes several friendly matches to ensure they are ready for the start of official competitions.

Late offense not enough

Holloway tops McGregor after injury-hit UFC return

LAS VEGAS, July 12, (AP): Conor McGregor's return against Max Holloway at UFC 329 ended unceremoniously at just 1:09 of the first round Saturday night because of a knee injury.

Fighting for the first time in more than five years, McGregor flew across the ring with a flying left roundhouse kick when the match started and landed awkwardly on his right knee.

After attempting to kick and strike Holloway (28-9-0) two more times, it was clear McGregor (22-7-0) couldn't finish the scheduled five-round welterweight bout.

"My head gasket is gone. Destroyed," McGregor said on social media. "I had no injury / injuries going into the fight. I was throwing kicks, planted and jumping, all throughout camp as well as backstage before the fight. This came out of nowhere. I am beyond dark here. I can only describe it as hell."

Asked if there may have been an existing injury, UFC President Dana White said there were no signs of it Friday at the ceremonial weigh-in.

"Five years off in this sport is rough," White said. "We're assuming a blown ACL. That's what I assumed when I saw it, and that's what the doctors think, too."

White added that with the millions of social-media views of McGregor rushing Holloway at the weigh-in, someone would have noticed if anyone was injured.

Holloway said he kept telling referee Mike Beltran to stop the fight because it was apparent McGregor was injured, but the former champion kept saying, "Fight!"

"During the fight, you could see his demeanor change," Holloway said. "When I saw him hurt, I said, 'Call this, he's hurt.'"

"I just hope for a speedy recovery."

Holloway closed a -300 favorite at Bet MGM Sportsbook, which means a bettor would have to lay \$300 to win \$100. McGregor was a +240 underdog, which means a bettor would win \$240 with a \$100 wager on the Irishman.

McGregor, who strolled to the ring to the sounds of Notorious B.I.G.'s "Hypnotize" and the roar of the sold-out crowd, last fought exactly five years and a day before Saturday night.

The fans were also treated to Indana Fever player Sophie Cunningham serving as a guest ring girl before the first round of the main event. White said it was decided eight minutes before she strolled around the cage in a black top and sequenced shorts, stopping occasionally to replicate her highly popular finger point from the recent game against the Phoenix Mercury.

To the delight of a frenzied audience just hours after his home country of England won its quarterfinal match over Norway in the World Cup, Liverpool's Paddy Pimblett (24-4-0) made quick work of Benoit Saint Denis (17-4-0) with a first-round TKO. Pimblett, who closed a +120 underdog, blocked a roundhouse kick, shot in and quickly applied a D'Arce Choke to put Saint Denis to sleep for the win in 52 seconds.

"Light work," Pimblett said with a smile at the post-fight press conference. "Mother (expletive) got slept."

In a bantamweight battle, Mario Bautista (18-3-0) defeated Cory Sandhagen (18-7-0) by unanimous decision, after taking advantage of a first-round leg kick and applying pressure in each round after. A flurry of punches in the third round secured the decision.

In a scheduled three-round flyweight bout, Brandon Royval (18-9-0) applied a rear-naked choke on Lone'er Kavanagh (10-2-0) to win by submission at the 3:40 mark of the final round.

In an absolute shocker to start the main card, a bloodied King Green (36-17-0) overcame a beating for nearly the entire first round before landing a right hand to the jaw of Terrance McKinney (18-9-0) with roughly 20 seconds left, and then finished him off for a TKO at the 4:59 mark.



Conor McGregor, right, jumps into the air for a kick as he fights Max Holloway in a welterweight fight at the UFC 329 mixed martial arts event in Las Vegas. (AP)

Gassiev maintains WBA title

MOSCOW, July 12, (AP): Murat Gassiev marked the first defense of his WBA world heavyweight title by stopping Peter Kadiru in the sixth round Saturday.

Kadiru's corner threw in the towel after a sustained attack by the champion, who took his career record to 34-2.

Gassiev was originally meant to face Tony Yoka for the WBA's secondary heavyweight crown but got an upgrade to the full title, and a new opponent, after unified champion Oleksandr Usyk vacated his belts last month.

Yoka pulled out with a back injury and Kadiru (23-2), a German with a record of fighting largely unheralded opponents, was made a surprise replacement challenger at short notice.

Argentina secures first Nations Champ'ship win

Springboks withstand Scotland in thriller



South Africa's Grant Williams, center, is tackled by Scotland's Ben White during the Nations Championship Test rugby match between South Africa and Scotland, in Pretoria. (AP)

SAN JUAN, Argentina, July 12, (AP): Argentina bounced back from a first round loss to beat Wales 35-21 Saturday for its opening win in rugby's Nations Championship.

After two rounds of the North-South tournament, South Africa and New Zealand are unbeaten in the southern conference and Ireland is unbeaten in the northern.

Argentina joined France, Scotland, England, Wales and Japan with one win from two matches while Australia, Fiji and Italy have yet to win a match. The Pumas lost to Scotland 47-38 in their opening match while Wales beat Fiji 39-24.

Argentina led 28-14, four tries to two, after a first half Saturday which presented a sharp contrast in styles.

The Pumas used the length of their backline at every opportunity. They took advantage of the strength of Justo Piccardo and Lucio Cinti in midfield and the skills with ball in hand and in the air of winger Bautista Delguy.

Wales kicked for field position, then relied on its tight forwards to wrestle the ball over the line. It scored first in the fourth minute through hooker and captain Dewi Lake who drove over from a maul after a penalty and attacking lineout.

Argentina responded two minutes later with a try to backrower Joaquin Oviedo after Delguy buckled the defense. Oviedo ran a good line from depth to take the pass from scrum-half Gonzalo Garcia to score.

Argentina took the lead after 15 minutes with a try to Piccardo after Delguy brilliantly won the ball in the air. The ball traveled the length of the Pumas backline to Delguy who turned a pass inside for Piccardo to cross.

Wales leveled the score at 14-14 in the 23rd minute. After a try to

backrower Jac Morgan was disallowed, Wales used a penalty advantage to tap the ball and prop Rhys Carre crashed over.

Argentina built its lead with tries in the last five minutes of the first half to backrower Marcos Kremer and fullback Santiago Carreras. Kremer scored after a lineout drive, and Carreras after a Pumas maul was stopped on the goal line. Argentina went to the backs and Delguy threw a long pass to the fullback who crossed untouched.

Wales was forced to make more than 100 tackles in the first half and missed 23.

Oviedo had his double when he scored the first try of the second half in the eighth minute. After several

phases, Argentina went to the left edge where Piccardo ran strongly, then turned the ball infield to Oviedo who scored in a jubilant dive.

Meanwhile, World champion South Africa survived an impressively resilient Scotland 42-28 in a thrilling Nations Championship contest at Loftus Versfeld.

The Springboks led 14-0 and 35-14 but had to withstand relentless attacks by a Scotland side which has taken down England, France and Argentina this year.

South Africa missed a remarkable 46 tackles but Scotland lacked a clinical touch to fully take advantage.

Scotland fought back brilliantly to tie the match 14-14 by halftime

and close to 35-28 with 10 minutes remaining. It had a four-try bonus point, its most points against South Africa since the 1999 Rugby World Cup, and was within another converted try.

Then another Scot was suddenly running into space, Magnus Bradbury. Tom Jordan lobbed a kickpass toward the right touchline but wing Kyle Steyn spilled it under pressure.

It took two old stagers to secure the Springboks victory in the 77th minute.andre Pollard's grubber was scooped up by center Jesse Kriel, who bumped off two Scots to score.

The Boks are two for two in the championship with Wales coming next weekend.

Sooryavanshi's debut plan goes wrong

England's sweep rocks India's T20 blueprint

SOUTHAMPTON, July 12, (AP): England has emphatically dismantled Twenty20 cricket's traditional powerhouse, delivering India a sobering reality check as it begins the two-year task of building a team capable of reclaiming the T20 World Cup.

The two-time T20 world champions in blue were listless in all facets of the format as England sealed a 4-0 series win after India conceded over 250 runs for the first time in a T20 at Southampton in the final game on Saturday.

England not only dominated all the Indian Premier League big hitters like Abhishek Sharma, Ishan Kishan and the newly crowned captain Shreyas Iyer, but Harry Brook's men also shattered the confidence of 15-year-old prodigy Vaibhav Sooryavanshi.

The selectors' road map for Sooryavanshi's international debut after a bumper IPL season this year backfired big time. The left-hander was twice bounced out by his Rajasthan Royals teammate Jofra Archer and could manage only a combined score of 42 runs in three games.

The shortcomings in this Indian team -- without Jasprit Bumrah, Hardik Pandya and axed world cup



Tilak Varma of India during the international T20 Cricket match between England and India in Southampton, England. (AP)

winning captain Suryakumar Yadav - was quite evident when Ireland shocked them for a dream 2-0 win at home prior to the whitewash in England. The selectors left out Gujarat Titans skipper Shubman Gill, who could now come into the reckoning for the next T20 World Cup in Australia and New Zealand.

The aftermath of the series whitewash leaves India with some un-

wanted records: They had never lost six T20 games in a row; they were unbeaten in 16 T20 series and against England it was first time ever that they have been blanked in a bilateral series featuring more than two games.

While India's three openers struggled throughout the series, the middle-order seemed to lack clarity with constant shuffling between numbers

five to eight in the batting lineup. Left-handed Tilak Varma, who had scored prolifically in Asian conditions made only 104 and that included a half century in the final game.

"I guess we have spoken so much about adaptability, but I think it's got to the point now where you actually have to unpack that suitcase," India assistant coach Ryan 10 Doeschate had said after India lost the fourth game at Bristol.

"It's easy to say we need to adapt. We need to assess and adapt. Every coach from under-nine cricket says that about every department of the game. It's got to a point now where we actually have to really unpack what that means and understand the process that's needed to be able to make those adaptations, so to speak."

The batting coach said India has to accept the fact that the team is under-achieving in foreign conditions and needs to have the mentality to make adjustments how to excel in different conditions.

"Do we want to be a team that smashes 250 in India and looks great when you hit 80-meter sixes at Eden Gardens? Or do we want to come to places like this and places like Manchester and places like Southampton where things are slightly different?"



France should fear Spain ahead of showdown: Yamal

‘We are capable of winning this game’

INGLEWOOD, Calif., July 12, (AP): Lamine Yamal thinks France should be afraid of Spain with the European giants headed to a World Cup semifinal showdown on Tuesday.

“I believe if France has to fear anyone, it should be us, in my opinion,” the teenage sensation told broadcast reporters after Spain beat Belgium 2-1 to secure its first semifinal berth since 2010. “We were the ones who knocked them out before.”

Spain beat France in the 2024 European Championship semifinals and again in Nations League play last year. Yamal became the youngest player to score in the continental competition.

The powerhouses meet again at the home stadium of the Dallas Cowboys next week for a spot in the final.

“We don’t fear anyone,” said Yamal, who was named the man of the match against Belgium. “It’s clear that we are two great teams, world-class national teams, and for me they are one of the best. We’ll see what happens.”

Spain advanced on a winning goal by substitute Mikel Merino in the 88th minute of the quarterfinals at SoFi Stadium. La Roja conceded its only goal of the entire World Cup late in the first half against Belgium, while France has piled up 16 goals in its six World Cup matches.

France has made the past two World Cup finals, winning it all in 2018. Spain has made only one World Cup final in its history, but the current team is unbeaten in 37 consecutive competitive matches since March 2023 - a stretch that also includes a loss on penalties to Portugal in the Nations League final last year.

Spain coach Luis de la Fuente has been asked by the international media about this potential showdown with France throughout the tournament, but particularly since the start of the knockout rounds two weeks ago. He has been uniformly complimentary of Les Bleus while echoing his own players’ confidence.

“Let me be clear: We are not finished,” de la Fuente said. “We are pleased to be in the semifinals, but we want more. ... We are capable of winning this game, and not just now, but I would have said this a few weeks ago as well.”

Yamal, who turns 19 on Monday, has only one goal and no assists while putting 10 shots on target in his first World Cup, but his playmaking and activity down the right side of Spain’s attack have been noticeable in almost every match. He started the sequence that led to Spain’s first goal against Belgium in a two-man game with Pedro Porro, eventually leading to Fabián Ruiz’s rebound goal off Dani Olmo’s shot.

Yamal said his modest statistics don’t bother him, noting that he also scored only one goal (with four assists) while Spain won the European Championship two years ago.

Although Spain needed a late goal from Merino to win for the second straight match, Yamal believes his team is ready for the challenge of the World



Belgium goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois (1) blocks a shot by Spain’s Lamine Yamal (19) during the World Cup quarterfinal soccer match between Spain and Belgium in Inglewood, Calif., near Los Angeles. (AP)

Cup’s dominant team so far. Yamal cited Spain’s acumen in ball possession - a stat they’ve repeatedly dominated during this World Cup - as a way to take France out of its preferred style of play.

“I think we were much better, (than Belgium),” Yamal said. “It seems like

we’re playing very beautiful football, but in reality, there isn’t a team that plays against us on equal footing. Everyone drops back, and that makes it more difficult. Nobody has gone toe-to-toe with us. But in the end, we secured the win.”

Fan Zone



Fans rally behind their teams as the quarterfinal action unfolds. (AP)

Senegal sacks coach Thiaw after elimination

Egypt’s president honors national team for WC achievement

CAIRO, July 12, (Agencies): Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi honored the national football team and its coaching and administrative staff for their historic performance at the 2026 FIFA World Cup, the Egyptian presidency said in a statement.

During a meeting in New Alamein City, Sisi awarded the players and staff the Merit Cup and honorary decorations in recognition of their “heroic performance and outstanding technical level,” as well as the determination, perseverance and discipline they displayed during the tournament.

“Sport is not merely about winning and losing; more importantly, the national team earned the respect of people who valued the team’s performance even more than victory itself,” Sisi said.

Egypt reached the World Cup round of 16 for the first time after beating Australia 4-2 on penalties in the round of 32. The 2026 edition also saw Egypt record its first World Cup victory, a 3-1 win over New Zealand in the group stage.

Egypt’s campaign ended on July 7 with a dramatic 3-2 defeat to defending champion Argentina in Atlanta. Egypt led 2-0 before Argentina scored three late goals, including a stoppage-time winner.

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Senegal fired its men’s football coach Pape Thiaw, according to a statement issued by the national federation.

The Senegalese Football Federation added that Thiaw’s technical staff were also dismissed.

The decision followed Senegal’s elimination in the round of 16 at the ongoing World Cup.

“After an evaluation of the per-



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)

formance of the national team and its prospects, the Executive Committee believes that a change is necessary in the interest of Senegalese football,” the federation said.

Thiaw, 45, was appointed in 2024 and led the West African nation to a disputed continental title in Morocco earlier this year before the victory was overturned by the Confederation of African Football. Senegal has approached the Court of Arbitration about appealing the decision.

Senegal was eliminated from the World Cup by Belgium despite leading 2-0 until the 83rd minute. The team also came close to elimination in the group stage after losses to France and Norway.

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The Colombian soccer federation condemned death threats directed at midfielder Jaminton Campaz and his family following the national

team’s elimination from the World Cup.

Colombia’s tournament ended in a penalty shootout loss to Switzerland in the round of 16. During extra time, Campaz - who plays for Argentine club Rosario Central - missed a critical scoring opportunity when his shot went wide.

After the match, the player’s social media accounts were flooded with negative comments and threats. He decided to limit comments on his social media and, as a precaution, did not take the return flight to his home country with his teammates.

“No athlete, nor any member of their inner circle, should be subjected to intimidation for representing their country in a sporting arena,” the federation said in a statement.

On Instagram, Campaz shared a photo of himself covering his face in frustration, alongside a plea for respect.

Haaland’s coolest World Cup trip puts Norway on the map

MIAMI, United States, July 12, (Xinhua): Erling Haaland’s World Cup campaign ended in quiet frustration.

Replaced 15 minutes before the final whistle, the Norway star striker could only watch from the sidelines as Norway crashed out, finding himself grounded by a resilient England defense.

Norway’s historic 2026 World Cup journey ended with a 2-1 quarterfinal defeat to England, but for Haaland, the tournament represented a breakthrough that was more than just a game of football.

“These have been the coolest six weeks I’ve had in my entire life,” the 25-year-old said. “It was completely crazy. These are memories for life. It’s the most fun thing I’ve been a part of.” The quarterfinal was a grueling physical test. Despite visible exhaustion after 70 minutes of play in the stifling Miami heat, Haaland fought through the regulation time and into extra time.

Although he was kept off the

scoresheet by England, Haaland finished his first World Cup with seven goals, placing him among the tournament’s top scorers.

“It was tough. It was quite special to play in that humidity,” Haaland said. “I don’t want to make any excuses. Quarterfinals are decided by small details, and we had some situations go against us.” One such detail was a disallowed goal following a VAR review for a Haaland foul on England’s Elliot Anderson. “I felt like I was being pulled the whole way, and I think it was a soft decision,” Haaland said. “If that’s a free kick, then I should have a free kick in almost every duel in every single match.” Off the pitch, “Haaland mania” and “Viking row” took over the internet. Norway fans have been performing the chant -- for the first time at this World Cup -- in each of their games, as well as across host cities. The “Viking Row” sees them sit down in a Viking longboat formation, uniformly rowing to the beat of a drum.



Norway’s Erling Haaland (9) challenges for the ball with England’s Marc Guehi (6) during the World Cup quarterfinal soccer match between Norway and England in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)

Obituary

Argentina loses a World Cup legend

BUENOS AIRES, July 12, (AP): Argentine Antonio Rattín, a former Boca Juniors player whose act of defiance while representing Argentina at the 1966 World Cup helped lead to the introduction of yellow and red cards, has died, the country’s football federation said Saturday. He was 84.

Rattín died in Buenos Aires, according to the Argentine Football Association, or AFA, which expressed its “deepest sorrow at the passing of a historic symbol of Boca Juniors and the national team,” with whom he played in two World Cups.

A defensive midfielder known for his physical, hard-tackling style, Rattín won six Argentine league titles with Boca Juniors and was a Copa Libertadores runner-up in 1963.

“Rattín was one of us and loved these colours so much that they were the only ones he chose to defend throughout his 14-year career. A leader, an Argentine and forever a Bostero,” the club said.

With Argentina, Rattín played at the 1962 World Cup in Chile and the 1966 tournament in England, and also finished runner-up in the Copa América twice.

In the quarterfinals of the 1966 World Cup, Argentina faced England at Wembley Stadium. In the 36th minute, Rattín protested a foul and was sent off for “verbal dissent.” At the time, referees did not use cards but instead verbally informed players that they had been dismissed.

As he left the pitch, Rattín crumpled one of the corner flags, which featured the design of the English flag. He then sat down on the red carpet reserved for the late Queen Elizabeth II.

The two acts of protest sparked a barrage of objects thrown at him by fans from the stands.

In the wake of the confusing incident, and amid growing concern over the increasingly violent nature of the game, FIFA’s refereeing authorities concluded that a practical, universally understood system was needed to communicate cautions and dismissals.

Kenneth George Aston, who headed FIFA’s refereeing committee, took inspiration from traffic lights and, in 1967, introduced the yellow and red cards that are still used today.

Rattín’s defiant gesture at Wembley also marked the beginning of the football rivalry between Argentina and England. It reached its most iconic chapter in the quarterfinals of the 1986 World Cup in Mexico, when Argentina won thanks to Diego Maradona’s unforgettable goals - one scored with his hand, unnoticed by the referee, and the other after a brilliant solo run.



Jude Bellingham celebrates England's victory over Norway in a World Cup quarterfinal soccer match in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)

Sports

Haaland held scoreless by Three Lions

Bellingham brace sinks Norway as England continue World Cup push

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla., July 12, (AP): Jude Bellingham locked arms with teammate Harry Kane as England fans belted out the Beatles' "Hey Jude."

Bellingham certainly earned the serenade. He scored twice on Saturday - an equalizer in the first half and the go-ahead goal in the third minute of extra time - to lift England past Norway 2-1 and into the World Cup semifinals for the first time since 2018.

The Real Madrid star has now matched Kane with six goals in this tournament, two behind France's Kylian Mbappé and Argentina's Lionel Messi and one shy of Norway's Erling Haaland, who was held scoreless by England. Bellingham also scored twice in the round of 16 as England beat co-host Mexico.

England, winner of the 1966 World Cup and facing pressure to return to the title match, is now one win away from getting there. The Three Lions will face Argentina in the semifinals.

"The game is split into loads of different facets. Some of it is technical, tactical," Bellingham said. "For me, the biggest one is psychological and how you can manage setbacks, how you can manage adversity. This team showed yet again that they can do it and that's a really valuable skill and trait to have."

Not everyone was thrilled with England's performance.

"We made life very, very difficult for ourselves today," coach Thomas Tuchel said in a contentious interview with Fox Sports. "The result is fantastic. We're in the last four. It's amazing, but not happy with the performance ... in every sense."

Tuchel clarified in his news conference that he was "proud and happy" with how his squad has overcome adversity, but added, "I'm also a football coach and I also have demands. ... I think we can play faster. I think we can play more clinical."

Bellingham seemed to disagree with his coach's critique after England prevailed in the heat and humidity of South Florida, with temperatures reaching 92 degrees Fahrenheit (33 Celsius) at the start of warmups.



England's Djed Spence, right, and Norway's Oscar Bobb compete for the ball during a World Cup quarterfinal soccer match in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)

"Well, whatever," Bellingham said, shaking his head. "It's difficult out there. It's a tough shift. My thoughts and appreciation goes to the players out there who put in a great shift."

Andreas Schjelderup scored in the 36th minute for Norway, a squad that reached its first quarterfinals and took the internet by storm with its "Viking row" and the charisma of Haaland, their fearsome 6-foot-5 striker.

Haaland was kept off the scoresheet for the first time in this World Cup. The Manchester City star sat dejectedly on the bench after he was subbed out for Jorgen Strand Larsen in the second half of extra time.

"It was not a tough decision to take him out," Norway coach Ståle Solbakken said. "He was finished. Maybe I should have taken him out 10 minutes before. ... He also got a dead leg in the second half, so that combined with the fatigue. He did everything he could."

Norway nearly went ahead 2-1 in the 56th minute when Torbjørn Heggem put a rebound past goalkeeper Jordan Pickford after a corner kick. Following a video review, the goal was disallowed because of a foul by Haaland in the box. Haaland was also denied by Pickford on a point-blank header in the first half.

Schjelderup, making just his second start of the tournament, fired a shot that caromed off the right post and into the net to stun an England team that had dominated possession to that point. Bellingham's equalizer from close range elicited a roar from that crowd that included Mick Jagger and England great David Beckham.

Schjelderup, who set up both of Haaland's goals in Norway's round of 16 win over Brazil, celebrated by stretching his arms wide and looking at the crowd as his teammates lifted him onto their shoulders. Meanwhile, Kane sat near midfield, grabbing his leg and looking toward the officials. No foul was called.

Moments before Bellingham evened the score, a Norway goal kick resulted in the ball appearing to make contact with an aerial camera cable before landing at the feet of England's Elliot Anderson. The ball was eventually played to Bellingham, who beat Ørjan Nyland with a low shot to the far post. By rule, if the ball had been noticed hitting the cable, play would have stopped and a drop ball would have been utilized to determine possession. FIFA later said the sensor in the ball indicated it did not touch the cable.

There was a brief moment of silence before the match in honor of Jayden Adams, the 25-year-old midfielder for South Africa whose death was announced earlier Saturday.

Pogacar keeps lead

Van der Poel powers to victory on 9th stage of Tour de France

USSEL, France, July 12, (AP): Mathieu van der Poel timed his attack perfectly to win the hilly ninth stage of the Tour de France in a sprint finish, while defending champion Tadej Pogacar kept the race leader's yellow jersey on Sunday.

Van der Poel was in a group of four contesting the victory. He accelerated with about 200 meters to go, then held off Norwegian rider Tobias Johannessen and Britain's Tom Pidcock before spreading his arms as he crossed the line. All three were timed at 3 hours, 27 minutes, 51 seconds.

It was a third career Tour stage win for the 31-year-old Dutchman, whose vast pedigree includes multiple victories in one day classics and Cyclo-cross world championship titles. He is also a former world road race champion, and cycling runs through his veins.

His maternal grandfather was French cyclist Raymond Poulidor, who raced in the 1960s and '70s, finishing second on the Tour three times and third five times. Nicknamed "Poupou" and "The Eternal Runner-up" he was adored by French fans.

Four-time Tour champion Pogacar finished six seconds behind Van der Poel in a group including two-time champion Jonas Vingegaard.

Pogacar maintained his overall lead of 2 minutes, 42 seconds over second-placed Vingegaard, his main rival. Pogacar's teammate Isaac del Toro is 3:27 back in third.

The 154.6-kilometer trek (96-mile) from Malemort to Ussel in central

France was shortened by about 30 kilometers due to extreme heat. Organizers took the decision because the local department was placed on red alert by French weather forecasters.

The undulating stage favored all-rounders, known in cycling jargon as "baroudeurs" (scrappers) because of their hard-riding, yet versatile, style. An early breakaway group of five featured French veteran Julian Alaphilippe - a two-time world road race champion - but they were soon caught.

Some of the best "baroudeurs" are also strong in the classics, such as Van der Poel and Filippo Ganna.

Van der Poel, two-time Olympic mountain bike champion Tom Pidcock and Ganna formed part of a eight-strong breakaway group with 80 kilometers left.

Lurking behind was Pogacar, whose renowned ability to attack from anywhere made him a threat even though he had no need to contest the stage win given none of the breakaway group were considered contenders for overall victory.

But it was Van der Poel who attacked with 25 kilometers remaining and the lead group was quickly slashed to four, with Ganna among those dropped.

Van der Poel's superior power told in the dash to the line.

Monday is the first of two rest days in the three-week race.

It resumes Tuesday with a hard mountain trek on stage 10, and concludes with its traditional finish in Paris on July 26.



Netherland's Mathieu van der Poel celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the ninth stage of the Tour de France cycling race with start in Malemort and finish in Ussel, France. (AP)

FIFA eyes 64-team World Cup expansion for the 2030 edition

ZURICH, Switzerland, July 12: Following the expansion of the current World Cup from 32 to 48 teams, with the tournament also increasing to 104 matches, FIFA's proposal to further enlarge the competition to 64 nations is gaining momentum and moving beyond the stage of a simple suggestion.

The idea, put forward by FIFA President Gianni Infantino, is part of the governing body's broader strategy to maximize the financial and commercial potential of the World Cup following the expected success of the 2026 tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

FIFA aims to turn the World Cup into the world's biggest sporting and entertainment event, with plans to set new records in broadcasting revenue, sponsor-

ship income and hospitality sales.

The 2026 World Cup is projected to generate record revenues of nearly \$9 billion, around \$2 billion more than the 2022 tournament in Qatar. Bloomberg described the competition as a "gold mine" for FIFA due to its growing global commercial value.

Swiss outlet Blue Sport quoted Infantino as defending the expansion idea, saying:

"The whole world should be allowed to dream of the World Cup, not just Europe and South America."

The potential 64-team format for the 2030 World Cup remains under discussion, but FIFA sees a larger tournament as an opportunity to increase global participation and further boost the event's worldwide appeal.

Argentina breaks Swiss resistance to reach semis; Messi streak ends



Argentina's Julian Alvarez (9) celebrates scoring their second goal against Switzerland during the World Cup quarterfinal soccer match in Kansas City, Mo. (AP)

Alvarez's extra-time heroics lift La Albiceleste

KANSAS CITY, Mo., July 12, (AP): Perhaps it is in Argentina's character that the reigning World Cup champion always finds a way to win.

Perhaps it is simply its ability to suffer.

Whether it was tiny Cape Verde taking them to extra time, or Egypt burying them in a two-goal hole late in their match, Lionel Messi and La Albiceleste have always been able to survive. And that was the case once more, when Julián Alvarez's long-range strike in the 112th minute and Lautaro Martínez's finish later in extra time sent them back to the semifinals with a thrilling 3-1 victory over Switzerland at raucous Arrowhead Stadium.

"We're among the best four," Alvarez said, "so we're meeting our objectives, and we knew it wasn't going to be easy. The whole match was hard, and we would have loved to have the win earlier, but we tried to get the win however we could."

"It seems like if there's no suffering, it doesn't count," Argentina's Leandro Paredes added, "but as long as the results come through."

Alexis Mac Allister had the other goal off a corner kick from Messi for La Albiceleste, helping to send them into a showdown with England on Wednesday in Atlanta. The Three Lions beat Norway 2-1 earlier in the day.

Messi's nine-game World Cup scoring streak ended, but his pursuit of a second World Cup title continues. With Argentina and England joining France and Spain in the semifinals, it's the first time the top four teams in the FIFA rankings have advanced that far.

"A match is coming up," Paredes said, "that every kid dreams of playing."

The game against Switzerland swung on a call



Argentina's Lionel Messi (10) and Switzerland's Ardon Jashari (14) battle for the ball during the World Cup quarterfinal soccer match between Argentina and Switzerland in Kansas City, Mo. (AP)

sure to rile up those who think Argentina has been favored by World Cup officials.

The Swiss had just tied the game on Dan Ndoye's goal in the 67th minute when Paredes was shown a yellow card for a tackle on Breel Embolo. But video showed the Swiss player falling before the Argentina midfielder made contact with him, and since Embolo received a yellow card earlier in the match, he was sent off, and Switzerland was left to defend with 10 players.

It was the second time a yellow card has been overturned using the "mistaken identity" protocol at the World Cup. The rule allows the video assistant referee to intervene when an incorrect player is shown a yellow or red card.

"We were punished because of a rule that in my opinion is completely unacceptable," Switzerland coach Murat Yakin said. "I don't understand. It's very painful that we were eliminated that way. I don't think we deserve that today, in my opinion."

It was a maddening end to the Swiss' first World Cup quarterfinal appearance since 1954. They still have never made a semifinal, nor have they beaten Argentina in eight meetings - three of those in the tournament that matters the most.

"It was just a disaster," Switzerland's Remo Freuler said of the red card.

Argentina has made its base for the past month in Kansas City, training at the home of Major League Soccer club Sporting Kansas City while winning over thousands of new fans. And on Saturday night, they filled Arrowhead Stadium for the second time this tournament, hoping to see Messi make more magic after his hat trick against Algeria in the same building a few weeks ago.

It was brutally hot and humid throughout the day, but the temperatures began to fall with the setting sun, producing a picturesque setting for the 100th match of an expanded World Cup, and the final match of the quarterfinal round.

The defensive-minded Swiss had only conceded three goals in five games, and they dominated the ball in the opening minutes. But leave it to Messi, whose eight goals in the tournament are tied for the most with France's Kylian Mbappé, to send a jolt through that heavily pro-Argentina crowd which included Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes.

He helped to earn an early corner kick with some nifty footwork, then delivered the ball that Mac Allister turned into a 1-0 lead.

For most of the match, the Swiss struggled to break down an Argentina back line that had conceded two goals apiece in its last two games. And it didn't help their cause that they were playing without Johan Manzabi, one of their best goal-scorers, who remained out with a knee injury after missing their round of 16 penalty shootout win over Colombia.