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Kuwait's Amir condoles Qatar's Amir over Father Amir passing

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INTERIOR MINISTER WARNS AS KUWAIT SKIES COME UNDER THREAT



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

The world is asked to save the Iranian people from the rogue regime

IN a previous article, I wrote that the last resort for dealing with the Iranian regime is decisive action, which I called 'cauterization'. My view is based on historical evidence of the Iranian aggression against the Gulf states and the entire world since 1979 till date.

The aggressive policies of Iran are not limited to the arrogant statements made by its leaders, starting from Khomeini, Ali Khamenei (father and son), up to the lowest-ranking official. Strangely, some are supporting Iranian policies for personal gain or short-term regional interests.

The Tehran regime continues to escalate its threats, up to the point that they became the reality. Their impact on the international situation, particularly the economy, cannot be denied, especially the constant closure of the Strait of Hormuz since Feb 28, 2016. Recently, the proxy of Iran, the Houthi group, joined the escalation by threatening to close the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.

I previously warned against falling into the 'Munich trap', through which Hitler plunged the whole world into a major war. Global politics is replete with examples of traps used to ignite wars that lasted for years and claimed the lives of millions of innocent people.

Unfortunately, history repeats itself regularly, sometimes as tragedy, other times as farce. In both cases, ordinary people, the global economy and even some nations are the victims.

If the world has truly learned from the lessons of the past and does not wish to repeat the tragedies of nations, particularly those of the 20th century, then the anomalous Iranian situation must be brought to an end. What makes this stance even more imperative is that the global economy is currently reeling from recurring crises since 1970. Inflation rates are nearing their levels of 56 years ago, with increasing economic recession threatening many countries. These realities point to the worsening global crisis, coinciding with the closure of the Strait of Hormuz since the beginning of the war between the United States, Israel and Iran.

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@Ahmedaljarallah

Ahmed aljarallah

ahmed@aljarallah.com



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Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah arrives in the Kingdom of Bahrain on Tuesday for official talks focused on enhancing bilateral security cooperation.

Gulf States close ranks amid escalating attacks

US-Iran clash rekindles war risks

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah visited the injured security officer at the hospital on Tuesday to personally check his condition after he was stabbed while on duty in Ali Sabah Al-Salem.

During the visit, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef told the injured security officer "this is the price of working in the military sector, whether in the Army or Police. You are a hero and we have nothing to fear for you. Kuwait is built on your shoulders."

He also asked about the health condition of the officer and the medical team briefed him in this regard as well as the treatment plan. He wished the officer a speedy recovery and immediate return to duty.

He stressed that assaulting security personnel is a red line, indicating that anyone harming those performing their duty to protect the nation and uphold the law will not be tolerated. He warned that whoever attacks security personnel will face legal action, and that the Ministry of Interior will remain committed to supporting its staff, ensuring their protection, and enabling them to fulfill their national mission.

He also expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the medical team overseeing the officer's treatment, commending their care and attention to guarantee his stable condition.

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Security Media photo

First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah hands Kuwait's first 15-year Golden Residency permit to LuLu Group International Chairman Yusuf Ali M.A.

LuLu Group chairman receives Kuwait's 1st Golden Residency

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah presented Kuwait's first 15-year Golden Residency permit to LuLu Group International Chairman Yusuf Ali M.A., under the country's newly approved Golden Residency system.

The Ministry of Interior said in a statement that the ceremony was attended by Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Support Security Services Brig. Gen. Fawaz Al-Roumi, noting that the move comes as part of the government's efforts to support the national economy and enhance Kuwait's investment environment.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef said the

launch of the Golden Residency scheme represents a strategic step toward developing the country's residency system, attracting high-quality investments and capital, and strengthening Kuwait's position as an attractive economic hub in line with the state's development plans and future vision.

He added that granting the Golden Residency reflects the state's commitment to providing a stable and investment-friendly environment, enhancing confidence in Kuwait's administrative and legislative framework, and contributing to sustainable economic development.

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Iraq pledges state control over arms

WASHINGTON, July 14, (KUNA): Iraqi Prime Minister Ali Al-Zaidi affirmed Tuesday that the decision to restrict weapons to the authority of the state has been made, stressing that no party will be allowed to carry arms outside state control after the September 30 deadline.

Speaking alongside US President Donald Trump at the White House, Al-Zaidi said the issue of weapons is fundamentally tied to the authority of the state, describing it as "a decisive decision, not merely an option."

He said the Iraqi government has received weapons surrendered by various armed factions, adding that those who hand over their weapons will become civilians free to engage in political activity and "we will cooperate with them."

"After September 30, there will be no need for the existence of any faction. Armed factions were a temporary necessity, not a permanent profession," he said.

— Earlier Story Page 6



US President Donald Trump meets with Iraq's Prime Minister Ali Al-Zaidi in the Oval Office of the White House, Tuesday, July 14, 2026, in Washington. (AP)

Other Voices

No toll for Hormuz, No bill for the Gulf

By Nasser Al-Hajeri

The recent statements by US President Donald Trump about imposing fees on ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz and seeking reimbursement from Gulf countries for American protection will change the way many in the Gulf view the long standing partnership with the United States.

The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's most important waterways. As an international waterway, it is not owned by one country, nor should it be treated as a toll road. Millions of people around the world depend on the energy supplies that pass through it. Any new fee would not only affect Gulf countries. It could raise shipping costs, increase energy prices and place further pressure on consumers across the world.

Keeping the Strait open and safe is not a service provided only for the benefit of the Gulf. It is in the interest of the entire international community, including the United States. Stable energy markets support the global economy, while any disruption in the Strait can affect prices from Asia to Europe and North America. Protecting freedom of navigation is therefore a shared international responsibility, not a business opportunity.

The call for Gulf countries to reimburse the United States for their protection is also troubling. The relationship between the United States and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries has never been one sided. For decades,

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Day by Day

THE wise who understand the path of life say the value of horses cannot be determined until they enter the race. That is when their true worth is revealed.

They also say that a man's stature rises only through his actions, while a woman's value rises through the observation and appreciation of her modesty.

To God belongs all honor.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Counterfeiters in crosshairs as Kuwait steps up inspections

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry will launch an intensive monitoring campaign to regulate markets and combat commercial fraud and the sale of counterfeit products that violate intellectual property rights laws, following its extensive campaigns last week, say reliable sources.

Sources confirmed to the newspaper will conduct inspection tours to regulate markets and carry out commercial fraud operations, with the aim of eliminating counterfeit products and track down those violating intellectual property rights laws.

Sources said the ministry will focus on pre-

venting violation of the intellectual property rights of international companies, in addition to protecting the reputation and standing of Kuwait in international rankings related to combating commercial fraud.

Sources revealed that the most counterfeited products include watches with international brand names, clothing, shoes, car parts and many other products. They pointed out that the ministry is exercising its regulatory role in combating commercial fraud and counterfeit goods through the inspection teams assigned in all governorates, especially since possessing, displaying or selling counterfeit products are clear violations of intellectual property and trademark protection laws.

Moreover, the ministry asserted that trade-

mark infringement constitutes forgery and a violation of the law, indicating that this occurs when someone forges a registered trademark or uses a counterfeit mark with malicious intent to mislead the public, whether by imitating the name, logo or shape of the mark, thus, deceiving consumers and causing confusion.

It warned that the penalty for trademark infringement is severe, ranging from imprisonment for a period of one month to three years, or a fine of KD385 to KD77,000 depending on the nature of the offense or the imposition of one of these two penalties.

It stressed the need to distinguish between the two concepts that are often confusing for consumers and business owners. It clarified that a trade name is the official registered name

of a business establishment or institution, while a trademark is the logo, word or visual symbol that a business owner puts on the product to enable consumers to identify its quality and origin at a glance.

Meanwhile, economic advisor Abdullah Al-Gharib pointed out that the counterfeiting of products has become a global, cross-border crisis, citing the joint report issued by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), which revealed that the value of the global trade in counterfeit and pirated goods reached about \$467 billion two years ago.

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Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait awards KD 5,000 monthly salary for five years to winner of Alfouz semi-annual draw



Amal Al-Omar wins NBK Al-Jawhara monthly prize of KD 125,000



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:25 Asr 15:28
Sunrise .. 04:58 Maghrib .. 18:49
Zohr 11:54 Isha 20:19



HH the Kuwait Amir



HH the Qatar Amir

Kuwait's Amir condoles Qatar's Amir over Father Amir passing

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, held a telephone call with the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani Tuesday expressing his heartfelt condolences over the passing of Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani.

His Highness prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow His mercy and forgiveness upon the deceased, and bestows patience and solace upon Qatar's leadership, ruling family and people, and prayed for the continued security, progress and prosperity of the State of Qatar.



Photo by Samer Shaqair

Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and other envoys at the Qatar embassy to express condolences.

Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs condoles Qatar's envoy on passing of Father Amir

By Bassam Al-Qassas

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah expressed condolences to the Ambassador of the State of Qatar to Kuwait, while conveying the condolences of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, on the passing of HH the later Father Amir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad

bin Khalifa Al-Thani.

Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali affirmed that His Highness the Amir is deeply saddened by the death of Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, expressing his sincere condolences on this major loss.

He conveyed the condolences of His Highness the Crown Prince to the Qatari leadership and the brotherly Qatari people, imploring Allah Almighty to grant His abundant mercy to the deceased, and patience and solace to his family.

He affirmed the deep bond between Kuwait

and Qatar, indicating that the relationship between the two countries is based on a long history of love and solidarity. He stressed that Kuwaitis and Qataris are one people.

He added that such humanitarian gesture proves the strength of Gulf solidarity and reinforce the brotherly relations and unity of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

He said Kuwait stands with Qatar in this tragic moment, sharing with its leadership and people the feelings of sorrow and praying to Allah Almighty to have mercy on the deceased.



KUNA photo

Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jasem Al-Budaiwi (right) offered his condolences to the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, over the passing of the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani.

GCC Chief condoles Qatar Amir over Father Amir passing away

RIYADH, July 14, (KUNA): Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jasem Al-Budaiwi offered his condolences to the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, over the passing of the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani Monday.

The GCC Secretariat said in a statement that Al-Budaiwi expressed his sincere condolences and sympathy to the Qatari Amir, the ruling family, and the government and brotherly people of the State of Qatar, praying to Allah the Almighty to bestow His vast mercy and forgiveness upon the deceased and bestow patience and solace upon his family.

With the passing of the Father Amir, the State of Qatar and the Gulf community

have lost a leadership figure whose name was associated with a pivotal juncture in modern Qatari history, as he led an ambitious national journey that contributed to qualitative transformations, strengthening state capabilities, solidifying its institutions, broadening its development horizons, and anchoring its presence and standing on regional and international levels, stated Al-Budaiwi.

He added that the late Father Amir established valuable and firmly rooted foundational pillars for the nation's journey, which was reflected in the continuous progress and qualitative achievements realized by the State of Qatar, as well as its drive toward further development and prosperity.

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (KUNA): Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Undersecretary Awatif Al-Sanad announced Tuesday Kuwait plans the full Kuwaitization of judicial support positions by the end of 2026 as part of efforts to increase reliance on national talent within the justice system and ensure the sustainability of ministry operations.



Awatif Al-Sanad

Speaking to KUNA, Al-Sanad said the first phase of the plan covers support roles directly linked to court operations, judicial files, procedures and case data at Kuwait's main courts, including the Court of First Instance, Court of Appeal, Court of Cassation and Constitutional Court.

The positions targeted in this phase include court clerks, legal researchers and administrative coordinators, based on the operational needs of each department and the nature of their work, she added.

As part of the first phase, the ministry will terminate the contracts of 54 non-Kuwaiti employees starting in November after completing the training and qualification of Kuwaiti replacements to assume these duties, she stated.

Al-Sanad said the move implements direc-

tives issued by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Kuwaitize jobs in the judiciary and follows instructions from Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait.

She noted that over the past 18 months, the ministry has identified the targeted positions, assessed staffing needs in judicial support departments and trained the necessary national workforce to ensure the transition is based on genuine readiness rather than symbolic replacement.

The plan will be implemented in two phases to ensure a gradual and organized transition that maintains court operations and allows for a smooth transfer of responsibilities to Kuwaiti staff, with the second phase proceeding according to departmental readiness and operational requirements, Al-Sanad explained.

10 years after July 15 coup attempt: A lesson in vigilance, unity and democratic resilience

By Tuba Nur Sonmez

Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to the State of Kuwait

Ten years have passed since the failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016 – one of the most defining moments in the history of the Republic of Türkiye. July 15 was not only an attack against a democratically elected government; it was also an attack against the constitutional order, national sovereignty, and the democratic values embraced by the Turkish nation.

The organization behind this attempt, the Fetullahist Terrorist Organization (FETO), had spent decades building a secretive network that concealed its true intentions behind a carefully crafted public image of so called “educational movement and civil society organization”.

On 15 July 2016, members of the FETO within the armed forces attempted to overthrow the constitutional order through violence. An assassination attempt was launched against President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The Turkish Grand National Assembly, the very symbol of the nation's democratic will was bombed. Public institutions were attacked. Innocent civilians were fired upon. The putschists basically sought to impose the will of a clandestine organization upon a democratic nation.

What they failed to anticipate was the determination of the Turkish people.

In the face of this assault, millions of citizens from every segment of society went to streets and opposed putschists. They demonstrated remarkable courage. Regardless of political views or social backgrounds, they united around a common principle: the defense of democracy and the legitimate constitutional order.



Tuba Nur Sonmez

However, by morning, it was clear that the coup had failed, but at a heavy cost – 253 lives martyred, over 2,200 injured, buildings destroyed. The resilience demonstrated that night transcended the immediate defeat of the coup attempt and our citizens sent a powerful message: “The will is ours, the victory is ours!”. Through defending their will they reaffirmed a fundamental truth: democratic legitimacy derives solely from the will of the people and cannot be replaced through coercion, infiltration, or force.

The July 15 exposed not only a coup plot but the true nature of the FETO. What the Turkish people faced that night was the culmination of a decades-long effort by a clandestine network that had systematically infiltrated state institutions while concealing its real objectives behind the façade of education, charity, dialogue, and civil society activities.

Subsequent investigations and court rulings revealed that FETO functioned not as an ordinary religious or educational movement, but as a highly disciplined secret organization with its own chain of command, methods of recruitment, financial structures, and operational objectives.

Particularly significant are

the testimonies provided by former members who later expressed remorse and cooperated with the judicial authorities. Many of those prosecuted for their involvement in the organization openly acknowledged during court proceedings that the July 15 coup attempt was planned and executed by FETO.

They also revealed that FETO's members infiltrated state institutions through examination fraud, illegal surveillance, blackmail, intimidation, evidence fabrication, and other unlawful methods. Numerous judicial proceedings have also linked the organization to a broad range of criminal activities extending well beyond the coup attempt itself.

What makes FETO particularly dangerous is its ability to conceal its true intentions behind seemingly legitimate structures. FETO should not be viewed solely as a domestic threat. It is a transnational network whose activities and methods may present serious security risks wherever it operates.

For this reason, Türkiye continues to engage closely with other countries and international partners in raising awareness about the nature of FETO. The organization's operational methods, covert communications, and extensive international are concerning as FETO has cooperation with intelligence structures and external networks whose interests may not align with those of the countries in which the organization operates. These concerns should not be overlooked by the international community.

Moreover, the death of Fetullah Gulen in October 2024 should not be interpreted as the end of the threat posed by FETO. History demonstrates that clan-

destine organizations built over decades rarely disappear with the death of their founders. Networks, financial resources, institutional structures, and ideological mechanisms often survive long after leadership changes. For this reason, complacency would be a mistake.

The lesson of July 15 is therefore not only a lesson for Türkiye. It is a reminder to all nations that organizations operating under the banners of education, charity, dialogue, or civil society should be judged not by their carefully cultivated public image, but by their actual conduct and transparency. For years, FETO masqueraded itself as a movement committed to education, intercultural dialogue, and universal values; however, Turkish authorities and numerous critics argue that this image served to obscure institutional infiltration, opaque financial networks, and other illicit activities.

Every year, on July 15, we commemorate Democracy and National Unity Day. It is an occasion to honor our martyrs, pay tribute to our veterans, and reaffirm our unwavering commitment to democracy, constitutional order, and national unity.

At its 10th anniversary, the spirit of July 15 remains a source of strength and inspiration. It reminds us that democracy cannot be taken for granted and that the determined will of a nation is stronger than any conspiracy directed against it.

As we remember those who sacrificed their lives in defense of our Republic, we do so with profound gratitude and respect. May Allah have mercy on our martyrs, grant good health to our veterans, and preserve the unity, stability, and prosperity of our valiant nation.

The will is ours, the victory is ours!

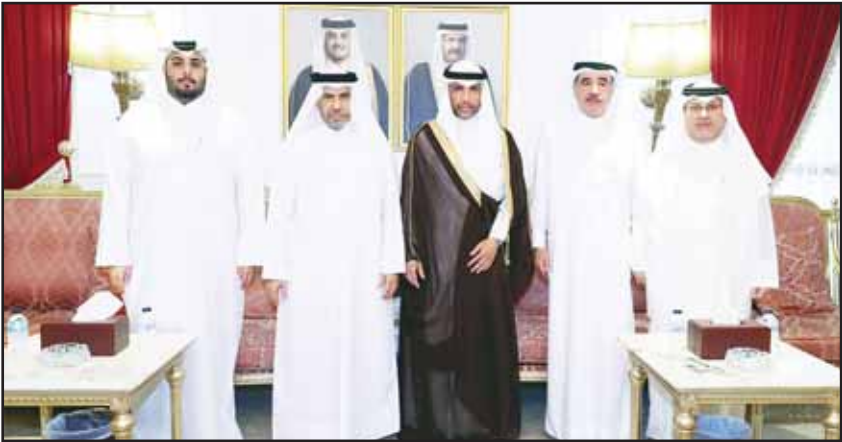


Photo by Samer Shaqair

Marzouq Al-Ghanim, Saud Al-Babtain, Bahrain and Qatar ambassadors at the embassy.

Kuwaiti figures flock to express condolences at Qatar Embassy

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: A number of Kuwaiti figures visited the Qatari Embassy on Tuesday to express their condolences on the death of the late Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, affirming that Qatar and the other Gulf states lost one of their prominent leaders who contributed to the development of the region and strengthened its unity.

Sheikha Suhaila Al-Sabah expressed her deepest condolences on the passing of the late Father Amir, praying that Allah Almighty will have mercy on him, and that He will grant patience and solace to everyone.

Businessman Saud Abdulaziz Al-Babtain said “the loss of Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani is immense and irreplaceable.” He also affirmed that His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani and his brothers are capable of continuing the path of development and progress.

Abdul Latif Al-Jassar emphasized that the late Father Amir was an exceptional leader who greatly contributed to his country and to the Arab and Islamic nations, leaving behind a political and developmental legacy that will stand as a testament to his achievements throughout history.

Ambassador Abdulaziz Al-Sharikh offered his deepest condolences to His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani and to the Qatari people, asserting that the late Father Amir was one of the prominent political figures in the Ara-

bian Gulf region and he contributed to strengthening Gulf unity and consolidating relations among the GCC countries.

Advisor Ali Al-Mutairi offered his sincere condolences to His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad and to the Qatari people, indicating that the deceased was an outstanding Arab figure who left significant marks and achievements at the local, Arab and international levels. He said the late Father Amir will forever be associated with the modern renaissance of the State of Qatar and its progress and development.

Sami Al-Nisf, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Al-Nahar newspaper, stressed that the wealth of nations lasts, but great men do not, they can be replaced. He expressed his sincere condolences to the political leadership and the Qatari people. He added that the deceased was the architect of modern Qatar's renaissance, pointing out that the newspaper interviewed the late Father Amir on several occasions and benefited from his insights.

Tunisian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohamed Boudali, offered his deepest condolences to the State of Qatar, emphasizing that the passing of the Father Amir is a great loss, given his indelible mark on Qatar's development and the strengthening of its position regionally and internationally.

He stated that the late Father Amir's contributions extended to the political, economic and diplomatic spheres, while highlighting the crucial role of the late Father Amir in building the State of Qatar at all levels. He then expressed his sincere condolences.

diwaniya

ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Mohammad bin Zayed: Symbol of most loyalty

“SHEIKH Mohammad bin Zayed’s visit to Kuwait had several significant implications. Most importantly, it came in the wake of the aggression the country suffered, making it a visit of solidarity rather than a routine protocol visit,” columnist Sheikh Eng. Fahad Dawood Al-Sabah wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.



Al-Sabah

“We are 100 percent sure that the people and leadership of the sisterly United Arab Emirates will always stand by Kuwait. The stance of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan (May God have mercy on him) during the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait is unforgettable. At that time, the UAE opened its hearts and borders to Kuwaitis.

“The UAE played a significant role in the liberation of Kuwait from the Iraqi invasion. Relations between Kuwait and the UAE are longstanding, deep-rooted, and built on friendship, cooperation, and honoring commitments. Therefore, the visit of His Highness the President of the UAE to his second home, Kuwait, came at a difficult time to reaffirm that the UAE stands with Kuwait, as Kuwait’s security is inseparable from the UAE’s security and their destinies are closely intertwined.

“I mean foundations and principles established long ago and cemented with blood. The UAE martyrs who fell on Kuwaiti soil during Operation Desert Storm were the truest expression of that.

“Regarding the exceptional relationship between the UAE and Kuwait, Kuwait will never forget the personal and direct participation of Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan, then a young officer, in the liberation of Kuwait in 1991 as part of the UAE Armed Forces’ contribution to the coalition operations.

“This participation means a great deal to Kuwaitis. Loyalty to Kuwait is not unusual for the UAE, its people, and its leaders. The celebration of “UAE and Kuwait... Brothers Forever” week during Kuwait’s national holidays was a profound expression of loyalty to Kuwait, which once stood as a pillar of support for Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Fujairah, Umm Al Quwain, and Ras Al-Khaimah. Today, these seven emirates shine brightly in the Gulf with their modernity, contemporary culture, and deep loyalty and affection for the peoples of the Gulf, especially Kuwaitis.

“Loyalty was the defining theme of His Highness Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed’s brief visit to Kuwait, while solidarity was its highest expression. The reception accorded to His Highness Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed and his accompanying delegation by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad, His Highness the Crown Prince, and the political leadership reflected the true sentiments of the Kuwaiti people.”

Also:

“The magazine of Kuwait’s Ministry of Interior is a unique media platform that not only reflects developments within the security establishment but also presents a broader vision of the modern concept of security, based on knowledge, communication, and mutual trust with the community,” Saudi writer **Hajer Al-Saleem** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“When we talk about security media, we are not referring only to news, statements, and reports but we are talking about the ability to connect meaningfully with people so that citizens and residents feel the security establishment is not distant from them, but works closely with them and cares about the details of their daily lives.

“The importance of the Ministry of Interior’s magazine lies in its ability to turn its pages into a window onto a world of efforts, stories, and achievements. Rather than presenting security in a rigid or traditional manner, it does so in a more accessible and engaging way. The magazine highlights aspects of the ministry’s work that are often unseen by the public. These include the planning, development, training, and sacrifices behind every security achievement. It takes readers beyond simply following events to understanding the full picture and the context behind it.

“The true success of any publication is not measured by the number of its pages, but by its ability to leave a lasting impression, convey ideas, and deliver a meaningful message. This is precisely what the Ministry of Interior’s magazine has achieved.

“The ministry has successfully transformed media from a mere channel of information into a partner in shaping public awareness. The magazine presents security knowledge in a way that promotes responsibility and reinforces the idea that maintaining security is not a one-man effort, but a shared societal responsibility that begins with awareness and grows through cooperation.

“The magazine reflects the modern evolution of security work and high-

lights the role of technology, training, and innovation in building a more efficient security system capable of meeting today’s demands. This approach reflects a deep understanding that security extends beyond protection to help build a more stable future.

“The most remarkable aspect of this media experience is its focus on the human side of the security officer. The magazine portrays security personnel not only in their professional roles but also as individuals with a sense of responsibility and a clear mission, working quietly to safeguard the well-being of others. This human dimension gives the magazine special value, bridging gaps between the public and the security establishment and making its message more meaningful and relevant.

“Today, the media has become an integral part of the strength of institutions. A magazine that combines credibility, thoughtful presentation, and a meaningful message is one that can endure and make a lasting impact. Therefore, the magazine stands as a model of media that understands its true role. It goes beyond simply providing information, helping readers understand the context behind events.

“The magazine is a living record of a journey in security and public service, where information is combined with purpose and achievement with storytelling. It affirms that when words are written with awareness and responsibility, they become an essential part of building the nation.”

□ □ □

“The masters of the future, driven by change, excellence, success, and distinction, have reaped the fruits of a journey built on perseverance and hard work within a supportive family environment, strengthened by social and academic foundations, and guided by effective time management aligned with their ambitions and aspirations,” columnist **Khaled Ahmad Al-Tarrah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“The outstanding high school graduates have embarked on a new phase towards a promising academic and professional future. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (May God protect and preserve him) shared in the joy of the outstanding high school students of the 2025/2026 academic year, offering sincere congratulations and best wishes as the father of all and the leader of the nation.

“His Highness extended his congratulations to his sons and daughters, both Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti students, in appreciation of the fruits of their efforts and their remarkable success. This is how knowledge and science are gained - from their true sources, not through social media or unreliable sources.

“Despite the exceptional circumstances that accompanied the academic year, including some inaccurate opinions and unwise statements, the students’ spirit of perseverance remained strong. Neither their morale nor that of their parents was affected. Instead, they persevered on their path towards excellence and innovation until they reaped the fruits of their hard work. Continuous hard work is the true path to success, not the noise of misconceptions or the repetition of narratives that serve only to inflate egos rather than address facts or acknowledge mistakes.

“Throughout the past academic year, we were challenged by the harshness of vague statements, ill-considered proposals, and legitimate questions. However, the diligent students overcame these difficulties, kept pace with educational challenges, and successfully navigated the complexities of curricula and academic requirements. High-achieving students benefited from what they learned through both the old and new curricula.

“Teachers and educators have every right to feel proud of their achievements without exaggerating their own abilities, as they understand that true success is the result of perseverance, not the noise of illusions.

“Successful and committed academics are not concerned with the allure of titles or the repetition of slogans. They do not seek to boast about their efforts because they are confident in their knowledge, their work, and their students’ success.

“True teachers and educators are not selfish and do not fall into the trap of narcissism or vanity. They do not seek praise or spend their time promoting unfulfilled promises by rushing to publish textbooks or announce the results of their work before it is complete.

“I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the outstanding students and their families, and wish them continued success and the realization of their dreams and aspirations amid rapidly evolving academic and professional challenges.”

– Compiled by Simi K.Kutty

KNG and Turkiye to bolster military ties



Undersecretary of Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas receives the outgoing and incoming Liaison Officers.

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (KUNA): Undersecretary of Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas received on Tuesday the Turkish Liaison Officer Colonel Zafer Cicek on the occasion of the completion of his as-

signment with the National Guard, accompanied by his successor, Colonel Cengiz Yilmaz, who will assume the liaison officer’s duties.

In a statement, the KNG said Lieutenant General Al-Barjas welcomed Colo-



KUNA photos

nel Yilmaz and wished him success in his new role, expressing hope that he would further strengthen cooperation between the KNG and the military and security authorities of the Republic of Turkiye.

Money-launderers hit abyss

Long-term jail , fine in millions for network members

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The State Security and Terrorism Crimes Court, chaired by Judge Nasser Al-Badr, with Judges Omar Al-Mulaifi, Abdullah Al-Faleh, and Salem Al-Zayed as members, issued verdicts in three cases related to money laundering and State Security crimes, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The verdicts included prison sentences, fines, deportation orders, company closures, and bans preventing convicted individuals from engaging in commercial activities.

The first case involved 12 Egyptian defendants and six companies operating in various sectors. The court convicted the defendants of managing a money laundering network that laundered KD 22.294 million through an alternative money transfer

system, using forged company accounts, deposit slips, and invoices for foreign financial transfers. The court acquitted the sixth and eleventh defendants.

The court sentenced the first through fifth defendants and the seventh through tenth defendants to ten-year imprisonment with hard labor and fined them KD 44.588 million. The court also imposed a fine of KD 22.294 million on the convicted companies.

The twelfth defendant was sentenced to five years in prison and fined KD 6,000 . All convicted individuals were prohibited from engaging in any commercial activity, their offices were ordered to be permanently closed, and they will be deported after serving their sentences.

In another case, the court sentenced an expatriate to five years in prison after convicting him of joining the ISIS terrorist organization and fined him KD 500 for the remaining charges . The court refrained from sentencing a Kuwaiti man and a Kuwaiti woman, placing them on bail of KD 500, and acquitted them of the charge of spreading false news.

In the third case, the court sentenced a Kuwaiti citizen to five years in prison after convicting him of insulting the Amir and violating

the National Unity Law. The court refrained from sentencing two citizens, placing them on bail of KD 500, and ordered the confiscation of the drone seized in the case.

□ □ □

Ex-wife acquitted: The Misdemeanor Court of Appeals upheld the ruling of a lower court, which acquitted the plaintiff’s ex-wife and her parents of public insult, intentional damage and trespassing with intent to commit a crime, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Attorney Inam Haidar represented the defendants in court.

The Public Prosecution charged the ex-wife with insulting her ex-husband’s current wife, damaging the glass door in the house of the victim’s father, and entering the property of the victim without the consent of the latter in order to commit a crime due to their dispute over the execution of the custody order.

The court based its decision on the lack of evidence in the case file to substantiate the charges, as well as the absence of eyewitnesses.

The court stressed that criminal judgments must be based on certainty and conviction, not on assumptions.

Check last Kuwait entry date on ‘Sahel’ app

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Ministry of Interior has launched a new electronic service through the Sahel application to allow residents currently outside Kuwait to inquire about their last permitted entry date, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the service enables guardians to check the status of their children or spouse through simple electronic steps.

Users can access the service by logging into the Sahel application, selecting “Ser-

vices,” then “Ministry of Interior,” followed by “Residency Services,” and finally “Residency Permit Proof Certificate.” The beneficiary’s name is then selected, whether it is the individual themselves or a family member, including a son, daughter, or spouse.

The system generates an electronic document containing a QR code showing the last permitted entry date for the resident outside Kuwait, helping them avoid any residency-related violations.

The sources said the launch of this service is part of the exceptional measures introduced by the Ministry of Interior to help residents who were unable to return to Kuwait due to prevailing regional circumstances.

As part of these measures, the ministry extended the validity of visit visas, granted additional grace periods for residents outside Kuwait, and implemented regulatory procedures to preserve residents’ legal status.

GTD ‘safety’ guidelines for vehicle breakdown

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The General Traffic Department has outlined four safety guidelines for vehicles that break down on the road, reports Al-Rai daily.

The department urged drivers to follow these steps in the event of a sudden vehicle breakdown:

1. Move the vehicle to the far right side of the road, as far away from moving traffic as possible.
2. Immediately activate the hazard lights to alert other road users.
3. Place a warning triangle at least 100 meters behind the vehicle.
4. Contact the Emergency No. 112 for assistance and provide the exact location.

The General Traffic Department also stressed the importance of regular vehicle maintenance, including checking tire condition and air pressure, particularly during the summer months, as high temperatures can increase the risk of tire damage or blowouts.

Police nab 113 persons in law-breaking issues

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The General Department of Emergency Police arrested 76 individuals wanted in various cases and judgments, as well as 37 residency law violators, during the period from July 5 to 11, reports Al-Anba daily.

The department’s weekly statistics showed that Emergency Police patrols seized 17 wanted vehicles and referred six individuals to the Drug Control General Department to complete the necessary legal procedures.

The patrols also issued 1,473 traffic violations and handled 148 traffic accidents during the same period.

Registration is open for female graduates: Mol

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Ministry of Interior announced that registration is now open for female graduates of all university degrees who intend to take the 16th Specialized Officer Cadets Course, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement on Tuesday, the ministry confirmed an amendment to the age requirement for applicants to the courses, along with the addition of university degrees. It disclosed that the amended age requirement applies to those who intend to take the 50th Officer Cadets Course, 34th Specialized Officer Cadets Course and the 16th Specialized Officer Cadets Course. It clarified that the age of the applicants will be calculated as of the registration opening date -- July 5, 2026.

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Chinese construction giant secures Kuwait's investment tower contract

55-story Sharq landmark set for completion in 2028

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (Xinhua): China State Construction Engineering Corporation Middle East (CSECE Middle East) has been awarded a contract to build the new headquarters of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority, according to a notice issued on Sunday.

The project will see the construction of a 275-meter, 55-story office tower with five underground parking levels in Kuwait City's Sharq district, a waterfront commercial area overlooking the Gulf. CSECE Middle East was selected as the project's main contractor following an international competitive bidding process, according to the tender announcement by Kuwait's Central Agency for Public Tenders.

The modern government complex will feature a one-stop investor center, admin offices, and conference facilities. It will also incorporate energy-efficient systems, including double-glazed curtain walls, smart building management technologies and landscaped sky gardens. Construction work is slated to last 24 months, targeting completion in the second quarter of 2028. Created to advance Kuwait Vision 2035, the Direct Investment

Promotion Authority is pivotal in driving economic diversification beyond the oil sector. It streamlines foreign investment by offering integrated services, from licensing and tax incentives to investor support. The award builds on CSECE Middle East's established presence in Kuwait, where it has previously delivered major public projects such as the Central Bank of Kuwait headquarters and key facilities at Kuwait University.

Amir congratulates French President on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a congratulatory cable to the President of France Emmanuel Macron on his country's national day. His Highness the Amir wished President Macron lasting health and the people of France progress and prosperity. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a congratulatory cable to the President of France Emmanuel Macron on his country national day. His Highness the Crown Prince wished President Macron lasting health and the people of France progress and prosperity, Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a congratulatory cable to the President of France Emmanuel Macron on his country national day.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

— See Also Page 6

UNDP and AmCham convene private sector dialogue on innovative financing for Kuwait's economic diversification

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Kuwait's private sector is playing an increasingly important role in advancing the country's economic diversification and long-term development ambitions. As global capital markets evolve, companies are facing growing expectations from investors, customers and financial institutions to combine strong financial performance with sustainable business practices. These trends are creating new opportunities for businesses to strengthen competitiveness while contributing to Kuwait's long-term economic development. To help businesses better understand these opportunities, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Kuwait, in partnership with the American Business Council in Kuwait (AmCham Kuwait), hosted an introductory session on "Corporate Thematic Bonds, Sukuk and Sustainability-Linked Financing". The session brought together representatives from businesses across Kuwait to explore how thematic bonds, sukuk and sustainability-linked financing can support long-term investment, strengthen business competitiveness and contribute to Kuwait Vision 2035. Drawing on UNDP's global experience in sustainable finance, participants explored regional and international examples of how businesses are using innovative financing to support expansion, strengthen resilience and unlock new opportunities. Across more than 40 countries, UNDP has helped mobilize over USD 30 billion through sustainable



Participants and organizers gather for a group photo during a session highlighting innovative financing solutions and sustainable investment opportunities for Kuwait's private sector.

financing solutions, supporting governments, financial institutions and businesses in aligning financing with national priorities and sustainable development objectives. "A stronger private sector means more than stronger businesses. It means more innovation, better jobs and a more resilient economy. As Kuwait advances its Vision 2035 ambitions, supporting businesses to prepare for the future is an

investment in the country's long-term sustainable development." Said Ms. Emma Morley, UNDP Resident Representative in Kuwait. The session also provided a platform for businesses to exchange perspectives on emerging market trends and explore how innovative financing can strengthen competitiveness, support long-term investment decisions

and explore the role the private sector can play in advancing Kuwait Vision 2035. "Sustainable finance is becoming a major aspect of the global financial ecosystem, creating new opportunities for businesses, investors, and financial institutions alike. By introducing these concepts to Kuwait's private sector, we hope to encourage actionable dialogue around financing mechanisms that can support long-term business growth while contributing to Kuwait's broader economic transformation and sustainable development objectives. We are proud to partner with UNDP Kuwait in bringing this critical discussion to our members and the wider business community." Said Dr. Arezou Harraf, Chair of the Board of Directors, AmCham Kuwait. By bringing together businesses, financial institutions and international expertise, UNDP and AmCham Kuwait are fostering dialogue on how innovative financing can strengthen private sector competitiveness while supporting Kuwait's long-term development priorities. The introductory session forms part of a broader series of strategic collaborations supporting the development of deep and resilient domestic capital markets, mobilizing private capital for sustainable investments, and advancing economic diversification and sustainable growth in Kuwait, in line with Kuwait Vision 2035.



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Al-Mashaan urges stronger partnership

Kuwait calls for firm response to Iranian attacks at GCC-EU forum

BRUSSELS, July 14, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan participated in the Third High-Level Forum on Regional Security and Cooperation between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the European Union, held in Brussels. According to a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Monday, Al-Mashaan said in his address that the forum builds on the outcomes of its second edition, which was hosted by Kuwait in October 2025. He stressed that the recent Iranian attacks targeting Kuwait and other GCC member states require a firm international response to such violations, expressing appreciation for the European Union and its member states' solidarity with the GCC countries.



MoFA photo Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan during his participation in the forum's proceedings.

Al-Mashaan also voiced hope for advancing the strategic partnership between the GCC and the European Union, praising the EU's role as a strategic partner in supporting regional security and stability.

Kuwaiti envoy attends 2-day meeting

OIC Ministerial Conference convene to advance women's development

ISLAMABAD, July 14, (KUNA): The two-day 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Women was held in Islamabad on Monday to discuss the socio-economic development of women, with Kuwaiti Ambassador to Pakistan Nassar Al-Mutairi attending. The first day of the conference witnessed different technical sessions during which the agenda of the conference was approved and progress on the implementation of the OIC Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women was reviewed. The Chair of the 8th OIC Ministerial Conference, Egyptian Minister of Social Solidarity Dr. Maya Morsy briefed the participants on the progress made under the OIC framework since the previous conference to advance women's empowerment. Reports prepared by various institutions on women's development were also presented during the sessions. The visiting delegations expressed confidence in Pakistan as it prepares to assume the chairmanship of the OIC Ministerial Conference on Women for the next two years. They also reaffirmed their commitment to working closely with Pakistan to promote women's empowerment, family welfare, social protection, and human rights. The participants held detailed discussions on the challenges facing women across the Muslim world, including their social, economic, and political empowerment, education, healthcare,

economic opportunities, financial inclusion, effective participation in decision-making, and greater representation in technology and digital sectors. Chairman Senate and former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Syed Gilani urged the OIC-member countries to move beyond declarations and translate their commitments into concrete action for socio-economic empowerment of women. In his address in the conference, he called on OIC member countries to adopt measurable targets for girls' education, women's leadership, entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, and protection against gender-based violence. He said Pakistan remains firmly committed to advancing women's empowerment through education, digital inclusion, entrepreneurship, financial access and decent employment opportunities. He further said that women constitute nearly half of the population of OIC countries, and no nation can achieve inclusive growth while excluding half of its human capital from economic and political participation. He paid tribute to the contributions of Muslim women to education, governance, science, diplomacy, business, and public service. The conference is expected to conclude with the adoption of the "Islamabad Declaration" and several important resolutions aimed at promoting the development and empowerment of women on Tuesday.

Wafra power back after fault repair

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy announced the restoration of power to Wafra after repairing the technical fault that caused the Wafra - A main substation to go offline, reports Al-Seyassah daily. Earlier on Tuesday, the ministry had announced a power outage affecting a limited area of the Al-Wafra agricultural region due to the fault. It confirmed that emergency teams were deployed to the site and they successfully restored electricity.

LOCAL



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting on Tuesday.



KPC photo
Oil Minister Tareq Al-Roumi visits Al-Adan Hospital to check on the condition of injured oil worker Mohammad Suleiman.

Minister visits offshore attack victim, stresses worker safety

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (KUNA): Oil Minister Tareq Al-Roumi visited Al-Adan Hospital on Tuesday to check on the condition of Mohammad Suleiman, an employee of a company providing oilfield services to Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), who was injured in Sunday's attack targeting one of the company's offshore drilling platforms.

In a statement to KUNA, the KPC said Acting KPC Chief Executive Officer Bader Al-Attar, KOC Chief Ex-

ecutive Officer Ahmad Al-Eidan and KPC Deputy Managing Director for Human Resources and Corporate Services Hisham Al-Rifaei accompanied the minister.

During the visit, Al-Roumi wished the injured worker a speedy recovery and prayed for his full recovery.

He also renewed his condemnation of the attack on the offshore platform, describing it as part of the recent hostile attacks targeting Kuwait.

Crown Prince discusses investment co-op with Franklin Templeton CEO

Kuwait expands global investment partnerships

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Chief Executive Officer of Franklin Templeton Jenny Johnson and the company officials on Tuesday on the occasion of their visit to Kuwait.

The meeting reviewed aspects of cooperation and the latest investment developments in Kuwait. Discussions also covered ways to strengthen partnerships with global investment institutions in support of economic development efforts and investment diversification.

The meeting was attended by Head of the Diwan of His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Director General of Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Dr. Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Managing Director of the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) Sheikh Saud Salem Abdulaziz Al-Sabah, and other senior officials.



Crown Prince Diwan photo
His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives the CEO of Franklin Templeton and company officials on the occasion of their visit to Kuwait.

Municipal proposal seeks simpler, cheaper permits

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Municipal Council member Abdullah Al-Enezi on Tuesday submitted a proposal to reorganize the procedures for issuing permits for setting up sunshades and home

gardens in private and model residential areas in order to simplify procedures and ease the financial burdens of citizens, while preserving the technical role of licensed engineering offices.

Al-Enezi explained that the cost of issuing permits for sunshades and home gardens has become a fi-

nancial burden for a large number of citizens due to the requirement to submit applications through the licensed engineering offices. He added that these projects are generally subject to standardized technical requirements, and in most cases, do not require special designs.

He pointed out that the proposal does not aim to eliminate the role of engineering offices or diminish their technical responsibilities, but to reorganize procedures to guarantee balance between service quality, easing the financial burdens of citizens and shortening the processing period.

Continued from Page 1

The world

In this conflict, the Tehran regime is engaging in political and economic blackmail, blatantly disregarding international law and agreements that guarantee freedom of navigation in international straits, including the Strait of Hormuz, through which about 20 percent of the world's oil passes, in addition to other essential goods.

The international community's failure to hold the Iranian regime accountable indicates that several countries are treating the matter as a minor issue, not a matter of national survival.

This situation compels us to recall the events between World War I and World War II, which prompted Hitler's Germany to believe it could conquer nations and realize the Nazi dream of world domination. The inaction of other nations in terms of thwarting Nazi ambitions gave Hitler the illusion that he was close to achieving his goals. However, the countries that fell into the 'Munich trap' eventually returned to confront the German project, but it was too late.

Undoubtedly, current events resemble those that preceded the outbreak of World War II, and they will escalate if the world does not act decisively to stop the Iranian project. History may repeat itself, transforming the issue into a major global crisis, similar to that of the 1920s, which culminated in the outbreak of war, but this time, it will be far more dangerous and horrific than before.

Thus, the issue is not just about the Gulf Arab states. It is linked to the global economy as a whole. The international community must take a collective stance to stop Iran. This goal can only be achieved through international military action. It should not be limited to securing navigation in the Strait of Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb Strait, but also by liberating the Iranian people and the world from a pariah terrorist regime that is causing disruption and destabilizing the global economy. If history is to repeat itself once again, the crisis this time, will be much devastating than ever.

No toll

Gulf countries have hosted American military forces, provided access to important facilities and built strong defence and security ties with Washington. They have also purchased large amounts of American military equipment and supported efforts aimed at maintaining regional stability.

Of course, security comes at a cost, and fair discussions about sharing responsibilities are reasonable. However, there is a difference between discussing shared costs among allies and publicly presenting protection as a service that requires repayment.

The Gulf countries are not simply wealthy states waiting for another country to defend them. They are long standing partners that have worked closely with the United States for decades to support regional security, stability and cooperation. These relationships were built over

many years because both sides benefited from them.

Recent attacks have also shown that Gulf countries are not watching regional events from a safe distance. Their people, cities, economies and infrastructure face real risks. They have already carried a heavy burden because of instability in the region.

Strong alliances are based on trust, respect and shared interests. They should not be reduced to fees, invoices or demands for reimbursement. The Strait of Hormuz is not a toll road, and the Gulf is not a paying customer.

LuLu Group

The minister said the Ministry of Interior, in coordination with the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) and the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI), had developed an integrated Golden Residency framework based on clear standards and criteria that align with international best practices while maintaining legal and regulatory safeguards.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef reaffirmed the ministry's commitment to continuously developing its services and providing qualitative facilities for investors in a manner that reflects Kuwait's modern image, strengthens confidence and stability, and serves the country's higher interests.

He added that the Golden Residency program underscores the state's commitment to supporting partnerships with the investment sector and enabling investors to conduct their business in a secure and stable environment, stressing that efforts will continue to modernize relevant systems and procedures in line with evolving economic and development needs.

Counterfeiters in

Al-Gharib predicted that the volume of this illicit trade will jump globally to nearly \$600 billion due to the current geopolitical tension. He said the military unrest and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz directly contributed to the resurgence of smuggling networks and the flourishing of counterfeit goods markets as an informal alternative amidst disruptions to global supply chains. He pointed out that the greatest danger lies in the increasing number of counterfeit medicines and cosmetics due to their impact on consumer health and safety. He said Kuwaiti companies and original distributors incur enormous financial and operational losses annually due to the proliferation of counterfeit goods and brands in local markets.

He expressed his satisfaction over the recent campaign launched by regulatory authorities against several shops selling counterfeit versions of international brands. He asserted that those promoting counterfeit goods reap millions of Kuwaiti dinars from this trade, which is criminalized by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and prohibited by international economic organizations.

He explained that these damages are not limited to a decline in sales, but also extend to harming

the intangible assets of companies. He said the losses incurred by Kuwaiti companies due to trademark counterfeiting are clearly reflected in the declining revenues and reduced market share. "The majority of sales go to counterfeiters due to the huge price difference, leading to a decrease in net profits for the original companies. This, in turn, diminishes the market value of their products and destroys brand identity, negatively impacting the advertising sector. Furthermore, companies bear the additional costs of filing lawsuits to protect their products from commercial fraud," he added.

He then called on the regulatory authorities to intensify their campaigns against markets that violate intellectual property rights and sell counterfeit perfumes, watches copied from the originals, and imitations of international clothing brands.

Gulf States

Meanwhile, Kuwait's armed forces are currently intercepting hostile aerial targets inside the country's airspace, the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army announced Tuesday.

It also noted that any explosions heard are the result of air defense systems intercepting the hostile attacks.

The General Staff urged the public to adhere to safety and security instructions issued by the relevant authorities.

Kuwait's armed forces are responding to and intercepting ongoing hostile attacks targeting the country, the Defense Ministry's official spokesperson, Col. Saud Abdulaziz Al-Atwan, said Tuesday.

He urged citizens and residents not to approach, touch or photograph any missile or drone debris, or publish images or videos of damaged sites or interception remnants on social media, and to report them immediately by calling the Emergency No. (112).

He affirmed that the armed forces continue to carry out their duties with full readiness to safeguard the country's security and the safety of citizens and residents.

Earlier, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah discussed Tuesday with Bahrain's Interior Minister Lt. Gen. Sheikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al-Khalifa enhancing bilateral security cooperation and the latest regional and international developments.

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior said in a statement that the meeting took place on the sidelines of Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef's visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain as part of ongoing security coordination and cooperation between the two countries.

During the meeting, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef reaffirmed Kuwait's pride in the deep-rooted fraternal relations with Bahrain and stressed Kuwait's support for all measures taken by Bahrain to safeguard its security and stability, reiterating Kuwait's solidarity with the Kingdom against any threats to its security.

In turn, Sheikh Rashid said the visit reflects the longstanding historical and fraternal ties between the two countries, as well as their

close cooperation and shared visions across various fields.

He also expressed Bahrain's appreciation for Kuwait's supportive positions and its commitment to further strengthening bilateral cooperation in a manner that serves the security and stability of both countries and their peoples.

The ministry added that Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef returned to Kuwait later Tuesday and was received at Kuwait International Airport by several senior security officials.

Meanwhile, Gulf countries united in condemning a series of regional attacks that further heightened tensions across the region.

Kuwait strongly condemned the Iranian attack on two Emirati oil tankers transiting the Strait of Hormuz, describing it as a blatant violation of international law, UN Security Council Resolution 2817, and a direct threat to maritime security and global energy supplies. The attack killed one crew member and injured several others.

The Foreign Ministry reaffirmed Kuwait's full solidarity with the United Arab Emirates and called for an immediate end to all escalatory actions while stressing the importance of safeguarding freedom of navigation.

Bahrain issued a similar condemnation, describing the strike on the tankers as a dangerous escalation and a serious breach of international law. It renewed its support for the UAE and urged the UN Security Council to take firm action to prevent further attacks and ensure the safe passage of commercial vessels through the Strait of Hormuz.

Qatar also denounced the attack, calling it a grave violation of international maritime safety and warning that continued attacks threaten regional stability, international navigation and global energy supplies. Doha urged Iran to cease actions that endanger maritime security and comply fully with international law and UN resolutions.

GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi condemned the attack as a blatant violation of international law and freedom of navigation, reaffirming the GCC's unwavering support for the UAE and calling on the international community to hold those responsible accountable.

Arab Parliament President Mohammed Al-Yamahi likewise condemned the attack, describing it as a hostile act that threatens international shipping lanes and reaffirming the Arab Parliament's full solidarity with the UAE.

Separately, Kuwait strongly condemned ballistic missile attacks launched by the Houthis militia against southern Saudi Arabia, describing them as a flagrant violation of Saudi sovereignty, international law and international humanitarian law.

The Foreign Ministry reaffirmed Kuwait's unwavering support for Saudi Arabia and all measures taken by the Kingdom to protect its sovereignty, security and citizens.

Bahrain, Qatar and Oman also denounced the attacks, while the GCC, the Council of Arab Interior Ministers and the Arab Parliament issued separate statements condemning the missile strikes, praising the effectiveness of Saudi air defenses and

reiterating their full support for the Kingdom's security and stability.

In latest development, the U.S. launched strikes on Iran early Tuesday, hours after President Donald Trump vowed to reinstate an American blockade of Iranian ports and charge ships for safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz. Iran responded with attacks on Middle East allies of the U.S.

The latest exchange of fire leaves in tatters an interim deal meant to pause the fighting, reopen a waterway that is key to world energy supplies and give negotiators time to hammer out a permanent end to the war. Instead, fighting has once again engulfed the region, threatened the global economy and brought warnings to commercial airlines. Unless a diplomatic solution is found quickly, it could intensify into all-out war.

The focus of the conflict now is the strait, through which a fifth of all traded crude oil and natural gas passed in peacetime. Iran effectively shut the passage during the war by attacking and threatening ships - a tactic that proved its greatest strategic advantage. It sent the price of oil, fertilizer and other goods soaring at a time when world leaders were already struggling to address rising costs.

The interim deal was supposed to reopen the waterway, but Iran has attacked ships moving through the strait on a route overseen by the U.S. military that is outside Tehran's control.

The U.S. has now threatened to reopen the strait by force - but experts say that will require a much bigger armada if not tens of thousands of American ground troops. It's possible Trump will back down, as he has previously.

The U.S. military's Central Command said it struck several areas in Iran, targeting "coastal defense systems, missile and drone sites and maritime capabilities." Iran acknowledged the strikes but provided no immediate casualty or damage assessments.

"These strikes will continue imposing a heavy cost on Iranian forces and degrade their ability to attack innocent civilians and commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz," the U.S. military said.

Iran responded with attacks targeting Bahrain, Jordan and three tankers that traveled through the strait.

Two of the ships were associated with the United Arab Emirates and were set ablaze for a time. The Emirati Defense Ministry said the attack on the tankers Mombasa and Al Bahiyah killed one mariner and wounded eight others. The Emirates threatened to retaliate.

Dutch shipping firm Stolt Tankers said that one of its ships came under attack. The attack on the Stolt Magnesium off Oman sparked a fire in the engine room, but the company said all the mariners were safe.

Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard said the Mombasa and Al Bahiyah "ignored repeated warnings." Iran has targeted ships that use a route through the strait that passes near Oman outside of its territorial waters.

Hours after the U.S. said it ended its campaign of strikes, the Iranian city of Bushehr on the Arabian Gulf

was hit in at least four locations, the state-run IRNA news agency reported. It again raised the possibility that Gulf Arab states were attacking Iran in retaliation.

Bahrain, home to the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet, sounded its missile alert sirens three times early Tuesday. Jordan's military said it intercepted four missiles from Iran. Jordan hosts U.S. forces and has come under attack by Tehran in recent days.

The European Union Aviation Safety Agency warned airlines against operating in the airspace of Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, as well as over the Gulf of Oman.

It said in a bulletin that "unpredictable military developments, combined with the possible use of missiles, drones, combat aircraft and air-defense systems, create a high risk to civil flights."

Exchanges of fire in recent days had already cast doubt on the interim peace deal - now almost halfway through the 60-day period in which negotiators were supposed to agree to a final accord, which also was meant to address Iran's disputed nuclear program and other issues.

But Trump's vow to impose a blockade further imperils it. Washington lifted a blockade it imposed in mid-April as part of the deal. The U.S. military said it will resume it at midnight Wednesday in Dubai.

"We are reinstating the THE IRANIAN BLOCKADE," Trump said on social media Monday.

He said the U.S. would impose a fee for protecting other ships: 20% of the value of cargo to help cover "any and all costs necessary to do the job of providing safety and security."

That's a change to longstanding U.S. policy. The U.S. Navy has fought for freedom of navigation on the seas since the Barbary Wars in the early 19th century and the War of 1812. It's also a departure from recent U.S. promises that the strait would remain open to all without tolls - recently offered by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio on a trip to the region.

Under the interim deal, Iran agreed that passage through the strait would remain free of charge for 60 days - but the agreement left open what would happen after. Iran asserts it has the right to manage traffic through the strait and potentially charge fees. The U.S. has disputed that.

Any attempt by the U.S. or Iran to charge fees would violate global norms on freedom of navigation and raise tensions, likely causing further economic disruption far beyond the region.

The price of Brent crude oil, the international standard, rose to a one-month high of over \$87 in trading Tuesday, still well below the nearly \$120 reached at the height of the war but threatening to raise costs everywhere.

Regional mediators are still trying to get the United States and Iran back to the negotiating table, according to two regional officials.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the delicate diplomatic process, said Pakistan-led mediation was working around the clock to reactivate the ceasefire.

America

Illinois mass shooting kills 5: Five people were killed in a “targeted mass shooting” against a family in southwestern Illinois, police said.

Two more people were wounded, and two teenagers, ages 15 and 16, were in custody, police said.

The shootings occurred primarily Sunday at three locations in East St. Louis, including a park. East St. Louis, population 17,500, is across the Mississippi River from St. Louis. It had 15 homicides in 2025, down from 34 in 2020, records show.

“It’s terrible. It’s evil. But it will not keep this city down,” Illinois State Police Director Brendan Kelly told reporters Sunday, referring to the shootings. “The progress we have made will not be lost.”

Troopers stopped a vehicle and arrested two teens, including one who is suspected of having a direct role in the shootings, Kelly said.

A motive remained under investigation, he said. The victims who died were 74 years old, 49, 25, 24 and 21. Kelly did not detail the relationship between the victims but said the shooter also had a family connection.

A decision about criminal charges could come by Tuesday, St. Clair County State’s Attorney James Gomric said.

“This feels like something that would happen on ‘The First 48,’ not right across from you,” said Keveon Johnson, referring to the true-crime TV series. He lives in a public housing development where one of the shootings occurred.

City council member Courtney Hoffman said it was not a random act of violence.

“This is not a mass shooting where you have to worry about going to the grocery store and someone opening fire,” Hoffman told KTVI-TV. (AP)

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‘ICE officer fears for public safety’: An Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent fatally shot a motorist in Maine on Monday, the second time in a week that ICE has used deadly force and at least the ninth death since President Donald Trump began his



A vehicle is transported away from the scene of a shooting involving U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement on July 13, in Biddeford, Maine. (AP)

immigration crackdown.

Immigrant rights groups identified the man who was killed in Biddeford as a 26-year-old native of Colombia. The Colombian Embassy said it was in contact with U.S. authorities about the Colombian national’s death and “is providing the necessary consular assistance to his family.”

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security, which includes ICE, said in a post on X that agents were surveilling an address for a person with a final order of removal from the country. When ICE tried to stop a vehicle driven by someone coming from that address, the “vehicle attempted to flee the scene and, fearing for public safety, an officer discharged his weapon,” the department said.

Prior to the brief ICE statement on the incident, Maine U.S. Sen. Angus King said Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin told him the officer opened fire after the man tried to use his vehicle as a weapon against ICE agents in Biddeford, a coastal city roughly 15 miles (24 kilometers) southwest of Portland. The agents involved didn’t have body cameras, he said.

When asked about the contrasting statements, King told CNN that that’s what the investigation is all about. (AP)

Nordone, sister of Graham, chosen to fulfill remainder of his US Senate term

COLUMBIA, S.C., July 14, (AP): Lindsey Graham’s sister, Darline Graham Nordone, has been named as her late brother’s temporary replacement in the U.S. Senate after his unexpected death over the weekend.

South Carolina Gov Henry McMaster announced at a news conference at the Statehouse on Monday that Nordone would serve the remaining months on Graham’s current term, which expires in January. Senate Majority Leader John Thune said afterward that she will be sworn in Tuesday afternoon.

Nordone will be the first woman to represent the state in the Senate.

“It is such an honor,” she said, as dozens of Graham staffers and campaign advisers stood behind her, some with eyes glassy from welling tears. “Lindsey has always been there for me. And now, I will be there for him.”

Graham died on Saturday night at age 71. He never married or had a family of his own, but Nordone was often by her brother’s side for the political touch points of his career, speaking at events and appearing in some of his campaign ads.

After their parents died at a young age, Graham was left to raise his sister, for whom he later became legal guardian. They were very close, and she was there as he filed reelection paperwork earlier this year, along with her children and grandchildren.

“To Lindsey, I miss you more than



Newly appointed US interim Senator, Darline Graham Nordone, with South Carolina Gov Henry McMaster, (right), and Sen Tim Scott (R-SC), (left), speaks to members of the press after being appointed of to fill the vacancy created by the passing of her brother, US Senator Lindsey Graham, at the statehouse on July 13 in Columbia, SC. (AP)

I can even put into words,” Nordone said, emotion rising in her voice. “But I’m going to do this. I got it.”

Introducing Nordone, McMaster said the two had spoken in “in the wee hours of Sunday morning” after Graham’s death, and he asked her to serve.

“I had wondered what you would say, and I was humbled by your quickness to see the duty that you had to serve,” McMaster said. He added that President Donald Trump

“thought it was a great idea” when he later told him of his pick. Trump announced his support for Nordone to fill the seat earlier Monday.

Nordone has worked as an optician and at various state agencies, including the South Carolina Commission for the Blind and the Department of Employment and Workforce. She lives in Lexington, is a graduate of the College of Charleston and has a master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling.

US president says to address nation on Thursday

Trump rolls out White House welcome mat for new Iraqi PM Ali al-Zaidi

WASHINGTON, July 14, (Agencies): US President Donald Trump is welcoming Iraq’s new prime minister to the White House on Tuesday after strongly backing the political neophyte in his bid for office.

Ali al-Zaidi, a businessman with no political background, emerged as a consensus candidate in Iraq after months of deadlock over the premiership following last year’s parliamentary elections. When al-Zaidi was formally installed as prime minister-designate in April, Trump said in a social media post that it was the “beginning of a tremendous new chapter between our Nations - Prosperity, Stability, and Success like never seen before.”

But Trump’s interest and involvement in the next leadership in Iraq began long before that statement.

Iraq’s dominant parliamentary bloc, the Coordination Framework, a coalition of Shiite parties allied with Iran, initially said it would back former prime minister Nouri al-Maliki, whom the Trump administration views as too close to Tehran. The Republican president publicly announced his opposition to al-Maliki and threatened to cut off aid to Iraq if he was appointed, adding that “if we are there to help, Iraq has ZERO chance of Success, Prosperity, or Freedom.”

The issue of Iran is likely to loom large in the discussions Tuesday. Iraq has been under pressure to disarm a network of Iran-backed militias operating in the country, some of which launched attacks on US bases and diplomatic facilities after the US and Israel launched their war against Iran in February. Officially, the Iraqi government has given non-state armed groups until the end of September to disarm, but some of the most powerful militias have said they have no intention of doing so.

A Trump administration official said ahead of the Oval Office meeting that the US will make “informed” decisions based on Iraq’s efforts to disarm Iranian-backed militias inside its borders. The official was granted anonymity to



Iraq’s Prime Minister-designate Ali al-Zaidi arrives at the Iraqi parliament to attend the voting of his government in Baghdad, Iraq on May 14. (AP)

discuss the administration’s strategy ahead of al-Zaidi’s visit.

Renad Mansour, director of the Iraq Initiative at the Chatham House think tank, said he expects that “the US will put significant pressure on al-Zaidi” to move ahead with disarmament during his Washington visit “and Zaidi will respond by saying, ‘But I need support - intelligence support, technical sup-

port, armed support.’”

“There is a scenario in which, if the Iraqi government starts going after these groups, they will also go after the government,” Mansour said. “And this is a scenario that I think that the Iraqi government is apprehensive about.”

Al-Zaidi received Trump’s blessing, despite the fact that he was chairman of a bank, Al-Janoob Islamic Bank, that was among the financial institutions banned by Iraq’s central bank in 2024 from dealing in dollars amid pressure from the Us to crack down on money laundering and funneling of funds to Iran.

Since taking office, al-Zaidi has made a public show of cracking down on corruption. His government has conducted raids and arrested dozens of current and former lawmakers and government officials accused of corruption, including some affiliated with former Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani.

The Iraqi premier’s delegation to Washington includes a number of Iraqi businessmen and government officials, and al-Zaidi’s office said in a statement that the aim of the visit is to “strengthen economic and development partnerships, attract investment, and expand the role of US companies in implementing infrastructure projects” and to further develop the oil-rich country’s energy sector.

Also:

WASHINGTON: US President **Donald Trump** said on Monday that he would address the nation on Thursday evening.

“President Trump will be making a Speech to the Nation on Thursday evening, at 9 P.M. Eastern (0100 GMT Friday). Thank you for your attention to this matter!” Trump wrote in a social media post.

Trump did not reveal the topic of the address.



Jets from the acrobatic Patrouille de France fly during the Bastille Day military parade on the Champs-Élysées avenue in Paris on July 14. (AP)

European troops and warplanes join Paris Bastille Day parade in show of unity for Ukraine

PARIS, July 14, (AP): Ukrainian fighter pilots and troops took pride of place in France’s national Bastille Day celebrations Tuesday as a massive parade showcased support for Ukraine and symbolically flexed European military muscle.

On President Emmanuel Macron’s last Bastille Day as president, he hosted around 30 other leaders for an event that appeared aimed at showing both Russian President Vladimir Putin and U.S. President Donald Trump that Europe is united and stepping up to defend itself.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was given an ovation from the assembled European leaders as he arrived and his country’s troops got the biggest cheers of the day from crowds on the tree-lined Champs-Élysées avenue. Zelenskyy and Macron shared repeated hugs at the end of the parade.

France’s biggest national holiday coincided with raging forest fires and a red-alert heat wave that forced the cancellation of traditional fireworks and firefighters’



French President Emmanuel Macron greets guests during the annual Bastille Day military parade in Paris, France on July 14. (AP)

balls.

Here’s what to know about Bastille Day this year.

It’s celebrated on July 14 because that’s the day Parisians stormed the Bastille fortress and prison in 1789, helping spark the French Revolution that overthrew

the monarchy and sent King Louis XVI and his queen Marie-Antoinette to the guillotine.

Bastille Day holiday is central to the French calendar and national identity. Presidents use it to vaunt France’s accomplishments, mayors across the country host village festivals and families gather for holiday meals.

The centerpiece is the Paris parade beneath the Napoleon-era Arc de Triomphe and along the Champs-Élysées avenue, which inspired Trump to stage his own parade last year.

A huge French tricolor flag hanging below the monumental arch rippled in the wind as a military band on horseback rode down the tree-lined avenue followed by Macron standing in an open military vehicle to kick off the parade.

Spectators wore hats and brandished small fans to fend off the heat as a formation of air force planes roared overhead trailing red, white and blue smoke.

Zelenskyy joined Macron along with some 30 other heads of state or government in the special viewing area for the parade.

Ukrainian troops marched along the cobblestoned avenue, and Ukrainian co-pilots trained in France were on board two Mirage 2000B fighter jets alongside French air force pilots.

Hungary passes constitutional amendment to remove president

BUDAPEST, Hungary, July 14, (AP): Hungary’s Parliament voted Monday to pass a constitutional amendment to remove President Tamás Sulyok from office and make some political reforms aimed at dismantling the political system of autocratic former Prime Minister Viktor Orbán.

After winning in a landslide election in April, current Prime Minister Péter Magyar and his pro-European, center-right Tiszsa party hold a two-thirds majority in Parliament, allowing them to make constitutional changes and roll back many of the policies Orbán implemented during his 16 years in power.

The constitutional amendment, which had the stated purpose of “restoring rule-of-law democracy,” passed with 139 votes for



Hungarian Prime Minister Peter Magyar, (center left), and Foreign Minister Anita Orbán, (center right), vote on the 17th amendment to the Fundamental Law at the plenary session of the parliament in Budapest, Hungary on July 13. (AP)

and six against in the 199-member Parliament. Tiszsa lawmakers held a standing ovation after the vote, while lawmakers from Orbán’s far-right Fidesz party boycotted the parliamentary session.

Ukraine downs 5 Russian ballistic missiles as Kyiv looks to harden air defenses

KYIV, Ukraine, July 14, (AP): Ukrainian air defenses intercepted five ballistic missiles launched by Russia in a raft of overnight attacks, Ukraine’s air force said Tuesday, though other missiles and drones got through and hit the capital Kyiv.

It was the first time in almost two weeks that Ukraine claimed to have downed Russian ballistic missiles, which are harder to stop than drones or cruise missiles.

Ukrainian air defenses likely used the US-made Patriot surface-to-air guided missile system that is the most effective way of countering ballistic missiles, but ammunition for it has been in short supply amid the Iran war.

In Kyiv, the attack caused fires at two warehouses, while a school was also damaged, Mayor Vitali Klitschko said.

The Russian Defense Ministry said in a statement that the attack targeted military manufacturing facilities in the Ukrainian capital that produce long-range missiles and drones.



This photo released by Moscow Region Governor Andrei Vorobyev’s official telegram channel shows firefighters working to extinguish a fire at a house burning after being damaged during a Ukrainian drone attack in Moscow region of Russia, on July 13. (AP)

Moscow wants to choke off Ukrainian strikes on oil facilities deep inside Russia that have caused critical fuel shortages, frustrating the public and, Western analysts say, hindering the Russian army’s advance on the front line inside Ukraine.

Shenyang issues red flood alert

Over 170,000 people evacuated as Typhoon Bavi hits northeast China

SHENYANG, July 14, (Xinhua): By 6 am on Monday, more than 170,000 people had been relocated to safe places in northeast China's Liaoning Province, with most of them from the city of Fushun, as the northward-moving Typhoon Bavi brought extreme downpours to this province.

From 8 pm on Sunday to Monday noon, parts of central and northern Liaoning experienced heavy to torrential rain, with some areas of Shenyang, the provincial capital, recording extraordinary downpours and severe waterlogging. The rain expected to persist from Monday noon through Tuesday daytime, with extreme downpours in certain areas, according to the provincial meteorological observatory.

Five prefecture-level cities in the province suspended work, school and business activities on Monday. In Shenyang, all schools, kindergartens and training institutions have been ordered to suspend classes, with outdoor group events and large gatherings banned, construction sites shut down, and scenic spots and night markets closed.

Affected by the continuous rainfall, water levels in major rivers including the Liaohe, Hunhe, Taizi and Puhe rose significantly due to the downpours.

The provincial flood control and drought relief headquarters is coordinating disaster response efforts via video conferences, taking preventive measures along rivers, reservoirs and potential hazard sites. It has also called for intensified inspections of rivers and reservoirs where water levels are forecast to exceed warning thresholds, adequate stockpiling of emergency supplies, and full readiness for rescue and evacuation.

Meanwhile, the provincial water resources department held meetings on reservoir and river channel defense, set up expert teams for water inflow analysis, rolled out flood discharge capacity assessments and flood forecasting, and stepped up monitoring, forecasting and early warnings.

Shenyang issued a red flood alert and raised its flood control emergency response to the highest level on Monday morning.

The municipal meteorological service forecast that rain from Bavi would



Steel frames are installed along a road where guardrails were blown down by strong winds in Yuhuan of Taizhou City, east China's Zhejiang Province on July 12. (Xinhua)

continue lashing Shenyang through Tuesday, with cumulative rainfall of 60 to 160 millimeters.

In Shenyang, intense rainfall caused waterlogging on roads in many urban districts, while several metro station entrances were temporarily closed for safety reasons.

China Railway Shenyang Group Co., Ltd. adjusted train schedules and

suspended many services between 8 p.m. on Sunday and 10 a.m. on Monday to ensure safety. Passengers are advised to check for updates via station broadcasts or the official 12306 ticketing platform. Tickets for canceled trains, notably, can be refunded free of charge within 30 days of the travel date.

A storm surge of 40 to 80 cm and waves of up to 4.0 meters are expected along the coast of Dalian in Liaoning and the northern Yellow Sea from Monday afternoon to Tuesday afternoon. Dalian has raised its marine emergency response to Level II, with the city banning all fishing vessels from going out to sea while ordering offshore aquaculture workers ashore and instructing that fishing boats be secured.

In neighboring Jilin Province, also in the northeast, multiple cities suspended school attendance and transport services from Monday morning after heavy rain hit central and eastern areas. Transport restrictions have been widely implemented in the province.

Railway services in this region are also affected. At Jilin City's railway station, operated by the same group as in Shenyang, high-speed train services are set to resume on Thursday, while other regular trains will be gradually restored at a later stage.

Also, parts of northwest China's Gansu Province are bracing for more heavy rain from Monday afternoon through Tuesday. Local meteorological authorities predict downpours in the provincial capital Lanzhou and Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture, with local accumulations of 60 to 100 millimeters.

The new round of rainfall will increase risks of flash floods, geological disasters and urban waterlogging. Local authorities have issued a blue flood risk warning and a yellow geological disaster warning.

China uses a four-tier color-coded weather warning system, with red indicating the most severe conditions, followed by orange, yellow and blue.

Asia

Thailand closes over 351,000 mule accounts: Thai authorities have closed over 351,000 "mule" bank accounts and frozen assets linked to criminal activity worth over 3.6 billion baht (about 107.74 million U.S. dollars) as part of a crackdown on the financial networks behind online scams and other economic crimes, the government said on Monday.



Ratchada

From October 2025 through June 2026, Thailand's government also reported the arrest of more than 29,000 scam suspects and the issuance of arrest warrants for over 70 ringleaders, resulting in the assistance of 862 victims and the prevention of losses exceeding 82 million baht (about 2.45 million dollars).

Government spokesperson **Ratchada Thana-direk** said the account closures and asset freezes reflect a wider strategy that goes beyond arresting individual offenders to dismantling the capital base and financial trails of criminal networks.

In a statement, Ratchada said the Thai central bank will further tighten controls on risky transactions starting in October, expanding reporting requirements to cover cash deposits exceeding 5 million baht, which must be accompanied by a declaration of the source of funds.

She said the new rules would also require justification for large currency exchanges, for instance, converting 1,000-baht notes worth 10 million baht into smaller denominations. (Xinhua)

5.0-magnitude quake hits Philippines: An earthquake with a magnitude of 5.0 jolted Mindanao, Philippines at 1744 GMT on Monday, the GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences said.

The epicenter, with a depth of 10 km, was initially determined to be at 5.66 degrees north latitude and 125.64 degrees east longitude. (Xinhua)

Death toll from Bangkok music bar fire rises to 30 and dozens remain in hospital: officials

BANGKOK, July 14, (AP): The death toll from a huge fire in a Bangkok music bar has increased to 30, officials said Tuesday.

More than 70 people were injured, with 24 of them still in critical condition, according to a statement by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

The blaze at the bar, the city's deadliest in 17 years, broke out late Sunday in a northern part of the Thai capital. Firefighters needed half an hour to bring it under control.

The bar claimed to accommodate as many as 600 customers. It was not clear how many were present Sunday night.

An investigation into the cause of the fire and whether the bar was following safety regulations is ongoing. Most of the people who were killed were found trapped in windowless bathrooms where they may have sought to escape the flames, police said.

Bangkok Gov. Chadchart Sittipunt said Tuesday he has ordered



A relative of a victim in a music bar fire cries while receiving the victim's body at a police hospital in Bangkok, Thailand on July 14. (AP)

the city's administration to conduct a sweeping survey of such establishments to assess risks. The city will also step up enforcement of existing laws to improve safety standards, he said.

Former patrons of the bar and other mourners visited the site Tuesday, adding to the growing pile of flowers leaning on the guardrails cordon-

ing off the location of the blaze.

Handwritten messages in Thai and other languages, including Korean, were left alongside white flowers, expressing condolences to the victims.

Debris from the bar - like melted musical instruments and blackened chairs - lay scattered along the sidewalk, moved there Monday by Thai officials investigating the cause of the fire.

University student Thanakon Phokklang said he was passing by and wanted to pay his respects, calling the loss regrettable.

On Monday, the president of the Thailand Structural Engineers Association, Amorn Pimannas, told reporters outside the bar that, while he had not inspected the venue, he observed some risk factors that could worsen fire hazards.

He said the building is enclosed, has low ceilings and may have used foam as decorative materials, without adequate flame-retardant treatment.

El Salvador's ruling party clears way for President Bukele's third term

SAN SALVADOR, July 14, (AP): El Salvador's ruling party on Monday ratified President Nayib Bukele's candidacy for February 2027 presidential elections, paving the way for a third consecutive term that has been highly criticized by lawyers and human rights advocates.

Bukele's party Nuevas Ideas, which holds a supermajority in the legislative assembly, held its internal elections Sunday and announced the results on Twitter on Monday. Vice President Félix Ulloa will once again be Bukele's running mate.

Bukele, 44, took office in June 2019 as the region's youngest president and has continued to enjoy high approval ratings.

His February 2024 reelection - with nearly 85% of the valid votes - was highly criticized by constitutional scholars for violating a ban on consecutive reelection. They accuse Bukele of illegally replacing the country's constitutional Court judges and attorney general to concentrate his power.

"Remaining in power is to avoid accountability for grave acts of corruption and crimes against humanity," said Ingrid Escobar, lawyer and director of Salvadoran group Humanitarian Legal Aid, who called seeking a third term unconstitutional.

A September 2021 ruling by the



El Salvador's President Nayib Bukele speaks at the National Palace as he hosts a meeting with US congress people in San Salvador, El Salvador on Jan 19. (AP)

constitutional Court allowed presidential reelection "for one term only."

The ruling-party controlled Legislative Assembly then approved a constitutional reform in July 2025 to allow indefinite presidential reelection. The reform eliminated the penalty of loss of citizenship rights for those who promoted presidential reelection and the ban on presidential candidacy for those who had served as president in the previous term.

This constitutional reform also

extended the presidential term from five to six years and moved up the presidential elections to 2027. The constitution previously allowed reelection of a past president after 10 years out of office.

The president has defended the constitutional reforms approved by the legislative assembly.

Bukele stated that "90% of developed countries allow the indefinite reelection of their head of government and nobody bats an eye." He added that when a small, poor country like El Salvador tries to do the same, "it suddenly becomes the end of democracy."

Salvadorans credit the president's security policies, including a four-year state of emergency that has imprisoned more than 90,000 Salvadorans, for drastically reducing homicide rates and making them feel safer in the country.

In 2015, El Salvador registered one of its most violent years, with 6,656 murders and a homicide rate of 106 per 100,000 inhabitants.

The country ended 2025 with a record low in homicides - 82 cases - according to government statistics.

More than 500 people have died in prison since the state of emergency, mainly for health reasons but some related to violence, according to human rights organizations.



An aerial drone photo taken on July 12, 2026 shows a flood-affected area in Bandarban, Bangladesh. Floods that have swept parts of Bangladesh for about a week have killed 51 people, said a senior official on Sunday. (Xinhua)

Bangladesh on highest health alert for flood-hit districts: minister

The Bangladeshi government has stepped up emergency healthcare preparations in 11 flood-hit districts to ensure medical services continue uninterrupted, a minister said on Monday.

"Adequate stocks of medicines, saline and antivenom were ready, and additional medical teams would be deployed from the central level if needed," Bangladeshi Health and Family Welfare Minister Sardar Md Sakhawat Hossain told a press briefing in Dhaka.

Leave for healthcare workers in the flood-hit districts had been canceled to ensure uninterrupted services, he said, adding that the health ministry is running a round-the-clock control room to coordinate the response and collect field data.

Authorities are coordinating with district administrations, civil surgeons and hospital authorities to monitor the situation, said the minister.

Special instructions have been issued to ensure healthcare for pregnant women, children and remote communities, he said, urging people to take snakebite victims to hospitals, not traditional healers, during floods.

Quoting the latest daily disaster situation report released by the country's Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, a senior official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told Xinhua that three more flood-related deaths were reported in Bangladesh on Monday, raising the toll from the current flooding to 54. (Xinhua)

2 police personnel dead, 2 injured in blast

Pakistan heavy rain collapses roof, kills 11

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, July 14, (Agencies): Eleven people were killed overnight when heavy rain caused the roof of a mud-brick house to collapse in northwest Pakistan, police and rescue officials said Tuesday.

The accident occurred in Kohat district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, according to Bilal Faizi of the provincial emergency service.

Rescuers recovered 11 bodies, mostly women and children, and handed them over to relatives for burial, Faizi said.

Heavy monsoon rains also lashed the Gilgit-Baltistan region on Monday, triggering landslides that blocked several roads and damaged homes, according to a statement from regional emergency services.

The government advised tourists to avoid travel to northern Pakistan because of the risk of landslides and flash flooding.

Pakistan experiences heavy monsoon rains every year and the down-



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

pours frequently trigger floods and landslides that cause deaths and widespread damage.

In 2022, unprecedented monsoon

rains and flooding submerged nearly a third of the country, killing 1,739 people and causing an estimated \$30 billion in damage.

Africa

Airstrikes kill 26 al-Shabaab militants: The Somali National Army, supported by international partners, killed 26 al-Shabaab militants in a series of airstrikes targeting three locations in the Middle Shabelle region of southern Somalia.

In a statement issued Sunday, the defense ministry said that the operation also destroyed an armored vehicle and a fuel tanker used by the militants to launch attacks in Cadow Jilib, Geyfo, and Qordheere locations. (Xinhua)

Cote d'Ivoire bus accident kills 24: Twenty-four people were killed and 36 others injured after an intercity bus plunged into the Bafing River on Monday morning along the Toubia-Biankouma road in northwestern Cote d'Ivoire, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Transport and Maritime Affairs.

The bus was carrying 69 passengers and crew members from Odienne to Yamoussoukro when it veered off the road and plunged into the river, the statement said. (Xinhua)

Several injured in S.Africa wall collapse: Several



Armed al-Shabab fighters ride on pickup trucks as they prepare to travel into the city, just outside the capital Mogadishu, in Somalia on Dec 8, 2008. (AP)

people were injured and others were feared trapped after a retaining wall collapsed during a church gathering in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal Province, local media reported on Monday.

Eight people were rescued and taken to hospital following the collapse at eBuhleni Village in Inanda, north of the coastal city of Durban, according to the South African Broadcasting Corporation. (Xinhua)

Announcing 12 new winners in the biggest draw program of its kind in Kuwait

Amal Al-Omar wins NBK Al-Jawhara monthly prize of KD 125,000

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: National Bank of Kuwait announced the names of 12 new winners in the Al Jawhara and Al Jawhara Junior draws, during a special event held at its headquarters and attended by several bank officials. The draws were broadcast live via the Bank’s social media platforms, underscoring its commitment to the highest standards of transparency and continuous engagement with customers.

The event was filled with excitement and anticipation, reflecting the esteemed status of the Al Jawhara draw as one of Kuwait’s premier savings initiatives, through which the Bank continues to offer a distinctive banking experience that combines the benefits of saving with the opportunity to win substantial cash prizes.

The draw result saw an NBK customer Amal Naser Mohammed Al-Omar win the July monthly Al Jawhara account prize of KD 125,000, while four other customers won cash prizes of KD 20,000 each in the weekly draw.

The monthly draw for the Al Jawhara Junior draw was also held, resulting in seven winners: three receiving cash prizes of KD 1,000 each and four receiving prizes of KD 500 each. These draws reflect the Bank’s efforts to promote a culture of saving and foster financial awareness among the younger generation.

All draws were conducted in the presence and under the supervision of representatives from the global audit firms Deloitte and Grant Thornton, ensuring the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and credibility throughout the process.

Commenting on the occasion, Hisham Al-Nusif, Chief, Consumer Banking at NBK said: “The Al Jawhara draw program continues to offer a comprehensive model that combines promoting the growth of savings with rewarding customers through exceptional opportunities to win substantial cash prizes throughout the year. Over the years, the program has cemented its position as one of the most successful and trusted savings schemes, helping to realize the dreams of thousands of customers and turning their financial aspirations into tangible reality”.

Al-Nusif added: “The value of Al-Jawhara extends beyond prizes to play a pivotal role in promoting a culture of saving that builds a more stable financial future. This is why we continue to enhance our savings products and solutions and deliver a comprehensive banking experi-



Representatives of the auditing firms Deloitte and Grant Thornton during the draw.



Hisham Al Nusif

Al-Nusif: Al Jawhara program promotes the growth of savings and combines it with rewarding customers through chances to win substantial cash prizes.

■ NBK continues to enhance its products and savings solutions to provide comprehensive banking experience that meets customer aspirations

■ We are committed to upholding the highest standards of fairness and equal opportunity in conducting the draws.

ence that meets the aspirations of diverse customer segments and provides added value beyond traditional banking services.” Moreover, Al-Nusif emphasized the Bank’s commitment to upholding the highest standards of fairness and equal opportunity across all draws through independent oversight by global auditing firms and the implementation of precise mechanisms designed to distribute winning opportunities among the widest possible customer base; winners are ineligible to participate in new draws for 90 business days, while those who win prizes of KD 50,000 or more are excluded for a full year from the date of the most recent win.

Al-Nusif concluded: “At NBK, we view our customers’ success as an integral part of our own. We therefore continue to invest in developing programs and initiatives that enhance their financial well-being and provide them with genuine opportunities to realize their aspirations, in line with our vision of building long-term relation-

ships founded on trust and added value”.

It is worth noting that the total value of the Al Jawhara account prizes amounts is KD 5 million annually. This includes weekly prizes of KD 20,000, a monthly prize of KD 125,000, and a grand prize of KD 1 million, for which the draw is held three times a year.

Through Al Jawhara program, NBK con-

tinues to deliver added value to its customers by offering innovative banking solutions that promote saving accompanied by the chance to win exceptional prizes. This reinforces its position as a trusted banking partner that meets customer aspirations and provides a comprehensive banking experience aligned with the highest global standards.

Winner	Draw	Prize
MANAL ALI MOHD ALKHRENAJ	Al Jawhara Weekly Draw	KD 20,000
JASSIM MOHAMMAD ALI ALSAQER	Al Jawhara Weekly Draw	KD 20,000
HESSAH FAHAD MOHAMMAD ALRASHED	Al Jawhara Weekly Draw	KD 20,000
FATEMAH NASER GHULOUM MOHAMMAD	Al Jawhara Weekly Draw	KD 20,000
AMAL NASER MOHD ALOMAR	Al Jawhara Monthly Draw	KD 125,000
SALEM ABDULRAZZAQ FAHAD ALSALEM	Al Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 1000
HAMAD KHALED MESHARI ALZAIID ALKHALED	Al Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 1000
TALAL MOHAMMAD HUSSAIN JAMAL	Al Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 1000
YUSEEF YAQOUB YUSEEF HAJJI SABZALI	Al Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 500
JASSIM MOHAMMAD JASSEM ALSABBAGH	Al Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 500
ALIA KHALID REDHA	Al Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 500
LAILA MAHDI ALI HAIDAR	Al Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 500

Index dips 0.24%

Boursa Kuwait closes lower

KUWAIT CITY, July 14, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Tuesday’s session lower, with the general index falling 20.68 points, or 0.24 percent, to close at 8,658.52 points. Trading activity saw 270.6 million shares change hands across 19,324 transactions, with a total value of KD 63.9 million (USD 208 million).

The main market index recorded the steepest decline, dropping 66.12 points, or 0.75 percent, to 8,795.57 points. Trading volume reached 175.2 million shares

through 11,322 transactions, valued at KD 28.6 million (USD 93.1 million).

The premier market index edged down 12.08 points, or 0.13 percent, to settle at 9,078.73 points, with 95.3 million shares traded in 8,002 deals worth KD 35.2 million (USD 114.5 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index slipped by 0.46 points to 10,165.63 points, as 145.7 million shares were traded through 7,485 transactions, totaling KD 23.7 million (USD 77.1 million).

Cairo targets faster trade flows

Egypt launches Arab trade corridors linking Gulf & EU

CAIRO, July 14, (KUNA): Egyptian Minister of Transport Kamel Al-Wazir said Monday that Egypt has begun establishing the northern and southern Arab Trade Corridors linking Gulf countries and Europe, alongside implementing eight integrated international logistics corridors.

Al-Wazir made the remarks during the signing of a guarantee agreement between the Egyptian Customs Authority and the Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce under the United Nations’ Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR).

He said the Southern Arab Trade Corridor will connect Europe with Gulf countries through Egypt via integrated logistics corridors leading to Safage Port, from where cargo will be transported by Egyptian national shipping fleets to Saudi Arabia’s Neom Port (formerly Doha Port) before continuing to other Gulf states.

The minister added that the Northern Arab Trade Corridor will link Europe with the Levant countries -- Jordan, Iraq and Syria -- through integrated logistics corridors, primar-

ily the Arish-Taba corridor, and the Arab Bridge Maritime Company’s fleet.

Al-Wazir said Egypt has also launched the implementation of eight integrated international logistics corridors linking Red Sea and Mediterranean ports, as well as the Suez Canal corridor, with dry ports and industrial, agricultural and mining zones through a modern network of railways, high-speed electric trains and highways, providing efficient freight transport routes.

He stressed that Egypt is steadily adopting international best practices to facilitate trade, simplify procedures and enhance the smooth movement of goods across borders in line with evolving global trade and supply chain requirements.

Al-Wazir also highlighted the importance of the TIR system, describing it as an effective international mechanism that helps reduce customs clearance times, lower transport costs, simplify customs procedures and enhance the security and safety of cargo movement, thereby improving efficiency and competitiveness.

Reinforcing its commitment to responsible growth & strong governance

Markaz publishes fifth Sustainability Report for 2024-2025

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Kuwait Financial Centre “Markaz” announced the publication of its fifth Sustainability Report, titled “A Legacy of Trust, A Future of Responsibility”, covering the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025. Prepared in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards, the report outlines the Company’s environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance and demonstrates its continued commitment to transparency, accountability and sustainable value creation.

The report is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), New Kuwait Vision 2035, and Boursa Kuwait ESG disclosure requirements, reflecting Markaz’s belief that sustainable business practices are fundamental to long-term growth and resilience.

Advancing Transparency and Sustainable Value Creation

Sustainability reporting is a deliberate commitment to transparency and long-term value creation. As one of the MENA region’s leading asset management and investment banking institutions, Markaz recognizes that its role in the financial ecosystem carries a responsibility that extends beyond investment returns. By integrating ESG principles into its operations, governance, and community engagement, the Company aims to deliver value that is durable, inclusive, and aligned with the priorities of Kuwait and the broader GCC.

Embedding Sustainability into Strategy and Long-Term Performance

Commenting on the publication of the report, **Sondos Saad**, Senior Vice President and Head of Corporate Communications at Markaz, said: “The publication of our fifth Sustainability Report reflects the steady progress Markaz continues to make in integrating ESG principles across our business, governance framework and stakeholder engagement efforts. Sustainability is embedded in how we manage risk, pursue opportunities and create long-term value. As we celebrated 50 years of operations in 2024, we remained focused on strengthening governance, supporting responsible investment practices and delivering sustainable growth that benefits our clients, shareholders, employees and the wider community. Our performance during the reporting period demonstrates that strong governance, disciplined execution and sustainable business practices go hand in hand. We remain committed to advancing our ESG priorities while contributing to Kuwait’s economic development objectives and supporting a more resilient financial sector.

Creating Meaningful Impact Through Stakeholder Engagement

She added: “At Markaz, sustainability extends beyond reporting and encompasses how we engage with our people, clients, partners and communities. During the reporting period, we continued to invest in youth development, financial literacy, employee wellbeing, digital transformation and strategic community partnerships that create measurable and lasting impact. This report demonstrates our commitment to transparency and stakeholder engagement while highlighting the initiatives that support our vision of responsible growth and long-term value creation.”

Driving Excellence Through Strong Governance and Accountability

On the governance front, the report highlights continued progress across governance and responsible business practices. During the reporting period, Markaz received 15 regional and international industry awards across investment banking, asset management, real estate in-



Sondos Saad, Senior Vice President and Head of Corporate Communications

vestment, advisory services and digital innovation. The Company also maintained a strong compliance culture, achieving 100% completion rates for AML and data privacy training, while recording zero customer data breaches throughout the reporting period. Supporting local economic development remained a priority, with procurement spending directed to local suppliers reaching 87.74% in 2024 and increasing to 89.65% in 2025.

Investing in People, Talent Development and Workplace Wellbeing

Across the social dimension, Markaz continued to invest in its people and contribute to human capital development. The Company’s Kuwaitization rate increased from 51.33% in 2024 to 52.25% in 2025, while female representation in the workforce remained broadly stable at approximately 33.5%. Markaz delivered 7,816 employee training hours across 2024 and 2025 and conducted performance and career development reviews for the majority of employees. The Company maintained a 100% retention rate following parental leave in both

years and recorded zero work-related injuries or fatalities across the entire reporting period. Through the Markaz Graduate Development Program (MGDP), the Company continued to support young professionals in building practical experience and preparing for careers in the financial sector.

Enhancing Environmental Performance Through Operational Efficiency

On the environmental front, Markaz continued implementing initiatives aimed at reducing its operational footprint and improving resource efficiency. Paper consumption declined by 20% from 2024 to 2025, reflecting Markaz’s continued transition toward digital processes and paperless governance. A key milestone during the reporting period was the achievement of LEED v4.1 Gold Certification by Al Nada Tower, part of the Markaz Real Estate Fund portfolio, making it the first property within Markaz’s MENA real estate portfolio to obtain this certification. The report also outlines Markaz’s greenhouse gas emissions performance and ongoing efforts to strengthen environmental data management and identify opportunities for further reductions.

Delivering Sustainable Growth and Long-Term Economic Value

The reporting period also reflected solid financial performance, with revenues rising from KD 20.3 million in 2024 to KD 28.6 million in 2025, representing an increase of over 40%. Economic value generated and distributed increased significantly during the same period, demonstrating the Company’s ability to create sustainable value for stakeholders while maintaining disciplined growth.

Creating Lasting Community Impact Through Strategic Partnerships

Markaz’s community engagement during the reporting period spanned youth capability-building, financial literacy, humanitarian support, and women’s empowerment. Partnerships and donations supported local and international organizations including LOYAC, UN-HCR, UNICEF, the Kuwait Association for the Care of Children in Hospital, the Children’s Cancer Center Lebanon, and the Kuwait Society for the Handicapped, among others.

Building Sustainable Value for Future Generations

As one of the region’s leading financial institutions for more than 50 years, Markaz remains focused on embedding ESG considerations into its strategy and operations while contributing to Kuwait’s national development priorities and creating long-term value for clients, shareholders, employees and society.

Alfouz draw highlights ABK’s customer engagement drive

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait awards KD 5,000 monthly salary for five years to winner of Alfouz semi-annual draw



Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait's Alfouz semi-annual draw.



Announcing the winner of Alfouz semi-annual draw.



Part of the winners announcement.



Various competitions during the event.



Bank representatives and auditing firms during the announcement.



Diverse opportunities with a winning account.

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced the winner of its Alfouz semi-annual draw, which was conducted on 13 July 2026, under the supervision of representatives from the Deloitte and Grant Thornton.

The grand prize of a KD 5,000 monthly salary for 5 years was awarded to AHMED MOHAMED AFIFI who emerged as the lucky winner among eligible Alfouz account holders.

Three additional customers were also announced as winners of the weekly draws: Abdullah Mohammad Alqataifei, Ahmed Talaat Yehia and Afrah Abdullah Alsalem, with each winner receiving a monthly salary of KD 1,000 for 12 months.

The draw, which was broadcast live on ABK’s official YouTube channel, witnessed strong engagement from both ABK customers and the public. The event also featured a range of activities and competitions, with prizes including gold bars, iPhone 17 pro max devices, and shopping vouchers.

This reflects the Bank’s ongoing commitment to rewarding its customers for their loyalty and trust, while encouraging them to choose ABK as their preferred bank for all their financial needs.

The Alfouz account continues to offer customers exceptional opportunities to win through a comprehensive rewards program featuring weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, and annual draws. This initiative contributes to promoting financial stability, supporting customers’ future aspirations, and encouraging a culture of saving.

As part of its commitment to strengthening customer engagement, ABK contacted the winners of both the semi-annual and weekly draws to congratulate them on their win and share in their excitement at receiving these valuable prizes. This initiative underscores the Bank’s continued dedication to understanding and meeting customer expectations while delivering an exceptional banking experience that reflects the highest standards of service excellence.



Johair Marafi, General Manager - Retail Banking.

To further enhance audience engagement, the live broadcast featured a series of interactive questions that gave viewers the opportunity to learn more about ABK and the benefits of the Alfouz account. Winners of these competitions were announced live during the

draw.

Furthermore, as part of the continuous development of the Alfouz account, ABK has introduced an enhanced prize structure, increasing the value of rewards across all draw categories.

The updated prizes include KD 1,000 per month for one year for weekly draw winners, KD 2,000 per month for one year for monthly draw winners, KD 3,000 per month for three years for quarterly draw winners, KD 5,000 per month for five years for the semi-annual draw winner and KD 5,000 per month for ten years for the annual grand prize winner.

Commenting on the occasion, Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, said, “We extend our sincere congratulations to the winner of the Alfouz semi-annual draw and the weekly draw winners and thank all our customers for their continued trust in ABK.”

She reaffirmed her commitment to delivering innovative banking products and rewarding banking experienc-

es that meet the evolving needs of its customers. The Bank also highlighted that customers can qualify for upcoming Alfouz draws by maintaining a KD 200 minimum balance in their accounts, ensuring ongoing opportunities to win valuable cash prizes throughout the year.

Marafi extended her appreciation to everyone who contributed to the successful organization of the first semi-annual Alfouz draw and commended the spirit of teamwork demonstrated across the Bank and the dedication shown in ensuring every aspect of the event was executed with the highest level of professionalism, ultimately delivering an exceptional customer experience.

In closing, Marafi encouraged customers and the public to visit ABK’s official website, follow the Bank’s social media channels, and use the ABK mobile application to stay up to date with the latest banking solutions, products, special offers, and promotional campaigns introduced throughout the year.

Fourth season of the Innovation Nation Summer Camp launched at Assima Mall

Zain Kuwait, SACGC kick-off a summer of STEM discovery for young innovators

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The fourth season of the Innovation Nation Summer Camp has officially kicked-off under strategic partnership between Zain Kuwait and Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SACGC), a Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) center. Through the initiative, both organizations continue their joint efforts to empower children and young people, nurture their passion for technology and innovation, and help them develop the skills they need to thrive in the digital future.

The event was inaugurated at Assima Mall, joined by Corporate Relations & Communications Director at Zain Kuwait Hamad Al-Musaibeeh and SACGC General Manager Neda Al-Dehani. The Summer Camp runs daily at Assima Mall until 21 July, before moving to The Avenues from 1 to 10 August.

Zain believes that meaningful investment begins with empowering future generations through the knowledge and skills needed to shape what comes next. Its role extends beyond delivering advanced technology solutions to supporting educational initiatives that foster creativity, innovation, and problem-solving, while encouraging young people to explore emerging technologies. Through these efforts, Zain helps develop national talent capable of advancing Kuwait's digital future and knowledge-based economy.

Designed for children aged 7 to 14, the summer camp offers an interactive educational experience



The initiative runs daily at Assima Mall, Ground Floor, until 21 July, from 1:00 PM to 9:00 PM.



The summer camp offers children the opportunity to learn through hands-on activities, experimentation, and exploration.



Hamad Al-Musaibeeh and Neda Al-Dehani with team members from Zain and SACGC.

The summer campaign with Visa until 20 July

KFH launches summer travel campaign with discounts of up to 25% & up to 6% cashback

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has launched an exclusive offer in collaboration with Visa and the Wego app, offering Visa cardholders discounts of up to 25% on flight and hotel bookings.

The initiative reflects KFH's commitment to delivering added value and exclusive benefits to its customers, enhancing their banking experience while meeting their diverse needs. It also makes summer travel more affordable, convenient, and rewarding. The promotion allows customers to enjoy a seamless travel experience that combines quality, flexibility, and savings.

Deputy General Manager Cards at KFH, Talal AlArbeed, said that the special offer, in cooperation with the Wego app, is part of a summer travel package designed to enhance customers' travel experience and provide integrated banking services that meet their expectations. He added that it also aims to encourage the use of KFH cards, which offer multiple advantages and added value, ensuring a more cost-effective and flexible travel experience.

AlArbeed noted that the offer provides greater flexibility, as there is no minimum booking requirement, allowing customers to benefit regardless of booking value. He explained that the discount is capped at KD 100 per category, whether for flight tickets or hotel bookings, and



Talal AlArbeed

can be redeemed once per category throughout the campaign period, which runs until 20 July, 2026.

He added that the offer is available exclusively to holders of KFH-issued Visa debit, credit, and prepaid cards. Customers can redeem the discount by entering the promo code KFH100 on the dedicated offers page within the Wego app and must manually enter their card details at checkout.

Cashback up to 6%

AlArbeed also announced that KFH has launched a new promotional campaign for Visa cardholders, offering them KFH Rewards Points of up to 6% cashback on their total international spending, with a maximum of KD 180 during the campaign period.



He explained that the offer applies to all eligible KFH-issued Visa debit, credit, and prepaid cards, excluding the Visa Signature card, which already provides up to 6% cashback, as well as foreign currency prepaid cards. Cardholders can benefit from this offer when making purchases abroad or shopping online in foreign currencies.

The campaign will run for two months starting July 8, 2026. According to the campaign's terms and conditions, cashback will be calculated based on total card usage during the campaign period, and the amount earned will be credited to customers' accounts after the campaign ends.

AlArbeed further noted that this initiative is part of KFH's ongoing

efforts to enhance the digital payments experience and deliver added value for international transactions, reflecting the Bank's commitment to innovative banking solutions and competitive benefits that meet customers' expectations inside and outside Kuwait.

KFH remains dedicated to putting customers first, ensuring every service and innovation is built around their needs. The Bank provides premium banking experience through cutting-edge solutions and strategic partnerships that offer exclusive, real-world value. Designed to match modern lifestyles, KFH's integrated services combine quality, flexibility, and competitiveness to consistently elevate customer satisfaction.

Boosting again by market volatility

JPMorgan Chase profit hits \$16.9 billion in Q2

WASHINGTON, July 14, (AP): JPMorgan Chase said Tuesday that it logged \$16.9 billion in second-quarter profit as its equities trading division again took advantage of market volatility triggered by the war in Iran.

The nation's largest bank by asset size, JPMorgan said that revenue in every line of its business hit record levels in the quarter, including its markets division, where revenue grew 35% over the same period last year. Revenue in its equity markets division skyrocketed 86%.

JPMorgan earned \$6.14 per share in the period, beating analyst estimates of \$5.59 per share and 2025's \$5.24. Managed revenue came in at \$58 billion, also topping the estimates of analysts surveyed by FactSet.

JPMorgan shares were down 2.4% before the opening bell.

CEO Jamie Dimon said that revenue from the New York bank's investment banking division rose 30%, accelerating to the highest level since 2021 as the thirst for initial public offerings and mergers and acquisitions remained strong.

According to investment research analysts, both merger and acquisitions and initial public offerings are expected to continue at a blistering pace through 2026.

Global M&A activity accelerated in the second quarter of 2026, with announcements up 64% year-over-year and closings up 33%, according to Morgan Stanley. It was the sixth straight quarter that the volume of deals grew on a year-over-year basis.

The jump in M&A volumes were driven by deals of \$10 billion or more, which accounted for 43% of the quarter's announced volumes, the most in more than six years, Morgan Stanley said. The bank's research arm forecast that 2026 global M&A announcements will reach \$6.4 trillion, topping 2021's \$6.1 trillion.

The story was similar in the IPO market, where 48 IPOs raised a quarterly record of nearly \$105 billion, according to Renaissance Capital. The bulk of the proceeds came from SpaceX's offering, which brought in \$75 billion, more than all U.S. IPOs combined in 2024 and 2025, Renaissance said.

Renaissance expects the IPO market to extend its hot streak into the second half of this year, also driven by larger deals such as Korean memory chip giant SK Hynix's "mega-listing" on Friday that raised \$26.5 billion.

Markets have been swinging wildly up and down since the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran in late February, with military strikes from both sides interspersed with pauses in fighting and vague temporary truces.

Investors' concerns that the war will last a long time has triggered high volumes of selling in financial markets, while hopes for a resolution and a freer flow of crude oil has inspired optimism and buying.

Though volatile markets can cause anxiety for individual investors, high-speed Wall Street trading desks can take advantage of the wild gyrations. Big swings in markets tend to increase activity on trading desks, leading to higher commissions and fee revenue for the banks.

Wells Fargo also reported its second-quarter results on Tuesday, posting a 22% jump in net income over the same period last year. Wells said it earned \$6.4 billion in the period, or \$2 per share, up from \$5.5 billion a year ago. Revenue of \$22.6 billion also topped estimates.

Wells CEO Charlie Scharf said the San Francisco bank was benefiting from a strong economy and its newly unleashed ability to invest after years of government oversight. Wells' said its investment banking revenue grew 20% from last year and markets revenue was up 24%.

"After years of not being on a level playing field with our competitors because we couldn't grow our balance sheet, we are carefully deploying capital to grow and support our clients by taking risks that we think are prudent through economic cycles, not just the strong environment we see today," Scharf said.

Shares of Wells Fargo fell 1.9% in premarket.

New York investment bank Goldman Sachs and commercial banking giant Bank of America also posted strong second quarter results, both beating Wall Street expectations.

Goldman earned \$6.6 billion in the period, or \$20.98 per share, on \$20.3 billion in revenue. Its shares rose 4% before the opening bell.

Bank of America's profit rose to \$9.1 billion in the April-June period, up 27% from a year ago when it posted \$7.2 billion in profit. Bank of America's shares lost 1.3% in early trading.

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US tightens banking rules on undocumented migrants

WASHINGTON, July 14, (AP): The Trump administration is taking additional steps to prevent people living in the U.S. illegally from using the nation's banking system, cracking down on financial institutions that are lending money to them.

On Monday, a group of financial regulators is set to issue guidance intended to remind banks and other financial institutions of their know-your-customer requirements with respect to credit risk management, particularly as it relates to borrowers who are not authorized to work in the U.S.

The newest warning is one of several measures the Trump administration has taken to discourage people in the U.S. illegally from interacting with the larger U.S. financial system. The measures, over the last nine months, are designed to strongly

encourage banks to remove them as customers while not expressly mandating that the banks do so.

The joint announcement is planned from three of the nation's bank regulators: the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and the National Credit Union Association. The agencies said that banks should take into account that people in the U.S. illegally may not be able to repay a loan because of deportation. In short, they say, people working in the U.S. illegally pose overall risk to the financial system.

There is limited data on how many people in the U.S. illegally have bank accounts and have loans through the banks.

This comes as part of President Donald Trump's executive order signed in May that requires banks and other financial institutions to take a closer look at the citizenship of their customers. That order started the most recent wave of banking regulation changes, ordering bank regulators and government departments to look for signs that people without legal status are opening accounts or obtaining loans or credit cards.

Among other things, the guidance being issued Monday advises financial institutions to "identify, measure, monitor, and control these risks through safe and sound underwriting practices that assess a borrower's willingness and capacity to repay according to the terms of the credit obligation" according to a news release.

AI boom drives strong demand

China's June exports surge 27% from a year earlier

HONG KONG, July 14, (AP): China's exports accelerated in June, jumping 27% from a year earlier thanks partly to the boom in artificial intelligence, the customs agency said Tuesday.

The increase in exports in June was much better than economists had expected. Exports rose 19.4% year-on-year in May.

Imports in June surged 36%, better than May's 27.4% year-on-year growth, with analysts attributing the expansion in part due to the Iran war driving up import costs.

China recorded a trade surplus of \$125.6 billion in June, widening from \$105.4 billion in the previous month.

"With the rapid growth of AI, our imports and export of products in this field are robust," Wang Jun, vice minister of China's General Administration of Customs, said at a news conference in Beijing.

He said trade in electronic components, computer spare parts, and other computing hardware jumped nearly 57% to 5.1 trillion yuan (\$760 billion) in the first half of the year. Other products such as AI glasses, AI translating devices, powered exoskeletons and other smart products are also evolving.

"Trade values took another big leg up in June," Julian Evans-Pritchard, head of China Economics at Capital Economics, wrote in a note Tuesday.

day. "This predominantly reflects the recent surge in semiconductor prices on the back of the AI boom. But even putting that aside, foreign demand for Chinese goods remains robust."

China's exports of vehicles, especially EVs, and other tech-related products have boomed as rapid adoption of AI increases the need for semiconductors and other electronic equipment.

The strength in export manufacturing has helped to offset prolonged weakness in domestic spending and investment due to a prolonged downturn in the property industry.

In January-June, China's exports climbed 17.6% from a year earlier, while imports jumped 26.6%, according to the customs data.

Policymakers including those in the U.S. and in Europe have express alarm over rising trade deficits with China. In order to bypass barriers such as higher tariffs, Chinese businesses have been moving factories to regions like Europe. China has also been exporting more to Southeast Asia, Latin America and Africa.

Wang, the customs official, acknowledged the threat from rising trade barriers.

"We still face serious risks and challenges in the second half of the year," he said.

While China's export growth is likely to continue, it is becoming increasingly fragile, said Wei Li, head of Multi-Asset Investments at BNP

Paribas Securities (China). Robust shipments in autos and AI-related items will remain dependent on global demand and regulatory barriers, he said.

Exports to Southeast Asia in June surged nearly 35% from a year ago, while those to the European Union and Latin America increased more than 18% and 28%, respectively.

Exports to the United States climbed almost 14% from a year earlier. China's shipments to the U.S. have risen in recent months, partly due to declines in shipments a year earlier after President Donald Trump returned to office last year and implemented higher tariffs.

China is set to announce its economic growth data for the April-June quarter on Wednesday. Chinese leaders have set an annual growth target of 4.5% to 5% for this year, slightly lower than the 5% growth in 2025.

Last week, the International Monetary Fund raised China's annual growth forecast by 0.2 percentage point to 4.6%. But it said it expects China's economy to expand just 4.1% in 2027.

Chinese leaders have sought to boost consumer spending through various initiatives, including trade-in subsidies for autos and home appliances. But many ordinary Chinese have been feeling the pressure from a slowing economy and avoiding big-ticket purchases.



In this Monday, Oct. 21, 2013 file photo, the JPMorgan Chase & Co. logo is displayed at their headquarters in New York. (AP)

Intimate drama bucks the trend of spectacle-driven box office hits

How ‘Dear You’ challenges China’s blockbuster formula

BEIJING, July 14, (Xinhua): A low-budget, regional-dialect film with no movie stars, no franchise backing, and no major marketing push has become one of the biggest surprises in China’s film industry in years -- and it is forcing studios and investors to question a formula long regarded as the safest route to box-office success.

“Dear You,” directed by Lan Hongchun, a Chaoshan-region filmmaker from southern China’s Guangdong Province, grossed just 3.77 million yuan (about 554,500 U.S. dollars) on its opening day, April 30. Made on a reported budget of just 14 million yuan and shot entirely in the Chaoshan (Teochew) dialect, the film featured a cast led by first-time actors. Its lead role went to a 20-year-old finance student with no prior acting experience. The film had none of the ingredients that Chinese studios have long deemed essential to box-office success: star power, large production budgets or commercially proven genres.

Word of mouth changed that. The film’s rating on review platform Douban opened at 9.0 and rose to 9.3, the highest score for a Chinese film in the past decade. Box office receipts, powered almost entirely by audience recommendations rather than star-driven promotion, have climbed toward 2 billion yuan. That translates into a return of more than 50 times its production cost for investors, based on the studios’ share of box-office revenue -- among the highest return-on-investment ratios in Chinese film history.

The story draws on the history of “qiaoqi” -- the letters and remittances sent home by earlier generations of overseas Chinese. While well-known in Chaoshan and other regions with deep migration traditions, it represents an important yet lesser-known chapter in China’s migration history. UNESCO added the “qiaoqi” archives to its Memory of the World Register in 2013.

In the film, Zheng Musheng leaves Chaoshan during wartime and later works in Thailand, while his wife, Ye Shurou, remains in China raising their children. After Zheng dies overseas, Xie Nanzhi, a woman of Chaoshan descent living in Thailand who had befriended him, chooses not to tell Ye immediately, instead continuing to send letters and money to Ye in his name. Over nearly two decades, the two women, though strangers separated by the sea, become quietly connected through correspondence and care.

Yet what began as a story rooted in one region has become a national phenomenon, resonating far beyond the communities whose history it depicts. **“This time it’s completely different”**

For an industry accustomed to breakout hits appearing every couple of years, film critics say what sets “Dear You” apart is not that it succeeded, but how it succeeded.

“We really need a work like ‘Dear You’ to give more audiences confidence. This film will change the shape of the entire film market,” said Yu Baimei, a prominent Chinese director, in an interview with Xinhua.

He noted that previous “dark horse” hits in Chinese cinema still relied on a more conventional production scale -- none broke through the 1-billion-yuan



Cast members of the film “Dear You” communicate with foreign guests at a screening of the film in Beijing, capital of China, July 6, 2026. (Xinhua)

mark with an unknown cast, a niche dialect, and a limited budget. “This kind of success is revolutionary in a sense we haven’t seen in over a decade,” he said.

Rao Shuguang, president of the China Film Critics Association, framed the film’s success as evidence of a broader structural shift. “‘Dear You’ proves that the old creative model -- simple genre packaging built around star power -- is over,” he told Xinhua.

The Chinese film industry is undergoing “an irreversible structural adjustment,” he said, pointing to competition from short-form videos and other forms of entertainment. In that environment, he argued, the market needs more mid- and small-budget films capable of drawing audiences back to theaters.

Speaking at an industry discussion during the Cannes Film Festival in May, Yin Hong, vice chairman of the China Film Association and a professor at Tsinghua University, attributed the film’s success to its originality, emotional resonance, and “organic word-of-mouth.”

Yin said the film’s rise also reflected a growing ability among ordinary moviegoers to determine which films succeed. Social media platforms and review sites have weakened the industry’s traditional gatekeepers, he said, to the point where a single blogger’s video can now influence ticket-buying decisions more than a traditional critical review. The result, he argued, is that “audiences are increasingly reclaiming the power to judge a film’s worth for

themselves.”

Betting on conviction over calculation

Few have observed that transformation more closely than Li Jie, president of Damai Entertainment, one of the film’s production backers. Damai first invested in Lan’s work in 2021, backing “Back to Love,” the second installment of what has become known as Lan’s “Chaoshan family trilogy,” on little more than a hunch. That film performed well enough to convince Damai to back Lan’s next project without hesitation.

“Over the past decade, I’ve come to realize that audience taste changes faster than creators can track it,” Li said. “We used to believe genre and budget were a recipe for success. But nearly every time a good film breaks through, it proves that formula wrong.”

He said his studio now weighs a director’s creative conviction and long-term consistency above genre, budget, or star power when deciding what to back -- pointing out that Lan has never lost investors’ money across three low-budget features.

In a recent interview with China Movie Channel, veteran director Derek Yee cautioned against reading too much into star power either way. “If the script is good and the film is well-made, a star can add polish. But if the script isn’t there, the star does nothing -- there are plenty of precedents involving big stars and big productions that collapsed anyway,” he said.

Ultimately, Yee argued, filmmakers can only focus on telling stories that move them first, trusting that a sincere story will eventually find its audience.

A method that resists replication

Lan’s own account of his process suggests Li’s assessment was not simply an investor’s intuition after the fact.

Speaking at a cultural forum in Shenzhen, he said his team approaches filmmaking as a craft, much like traditional Chaoshan artisans who spend years refining wood carvings and embroidery. For them, patience, attention to detail and a long-term commitment to the work are essential to creating something lasting.

Lan recounted conducting nearly 300 interviews with overseas Chinese families across Southeast Asia, Europe and North America, and roughly six months of additional field research -- down to verifying the price of a movie ticket and the licensing rules for tricycle taxis in Bangkok a century ago -- before shooting began. “We try to make sure every plot point, every detail, every object has a documented basis,” he said. “Authenticity is the lifeline of our work.”

Whether the success of “Dear You” signals a lasting change in audience preferences remains uncertain. What is clear is that “Dear You” has unsettled assumptions that once appeared foundational to China’s film business.

As producers search for the next “Dear You,” Rao offers a caution: the film’s success “cannot simply be replicated.” Its biggest takeaway may be precisely that there is no new formula waiting to be copied.

Light Chaser brings China’s legendary era to the big screen

Chinese animated epic revives Three Kingdoms

BEIJING, July 14, (Xinhua): The opening of Light Chaser Animation’s Three Kingdoms: The Beginning in cinemas on Friday marked a further push by domestic studios, long dominated by live-action productions, into historical epics.

The epic feature film re-imagines one of the most storied eras in Chinese history. The Three Kingdoms period (220-280) holds a preeminent place in Chinese cultural memory, with broad cultural and literary narratives about the era often beginning in the final decades of the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220), when warfare, political intrigue and personal ambition reshaped the country.

The turbulence gave rise to numerous legendary figures whose stories remain widely known across China and other parts of East Asia. Their power plays and rivalries have inspired generations of historical accounts, novels, operas, games, films and television productions.

The film centers on the early careers of two men whose eventual clash would have deep historical ramifications: Cao Cao, a fiery junior official from a less prestigious family, and Yuan Shao, a scion of one of the most powerful aristocratic clans of the age.

Song Yiyi, the feature’s producer, said that the characters in the film were not born legends and that their triumphs and failures came from personal courage, resolve and ambition. What the film seeks to portray is how these historical figures experienced uncertainty, made decisive choices at critical moments and gradually grew into the heroes remembered today, Song added.

The late Eastern Han Dynasty was plagued by strife between eunuchs and imperial in-laws, and the lack of competent emperors led to an erosion of the court’s credibility. Following intense court conflicts, a massive peasant uprising and warlord confrontations, the dynasty’s grip on the country



Poster of Three Kingdoms: The Beginning. (Xinhua)

effectively collapsed.

“Historical and cultural subjects are by no means easy to bring to the screen,” said director Xie Junwei. While audiences are familiar with the major figures and events of the Three Kingdoms, gaps in the historical record leave room for care-

fully considered artistic interpretation. The appeal of the project lay in the tension between the familiar and the unknown, Xie said.

To capture the texture of daily life in the late Eastern Han Dynasty, the production team conducted field research at several historical and archaeological sites, including the ruins of the imperial palace of the Eastern Han Dynasty in Luoyang, in central China’s Henan Province.

In the film, Cao Cao’s armor and accessory were modeled on artifacts unearthed from his tomb. The dance sequences drew inspiration from carved stone reliefs in the collection of the Henan Museum.

Stories set in the Three Kingdoms have also attracted considerable attention from international audiences. Social media users from countries including the United States, Kuwait and Japan have expressed keen anticipation of the film’s release.

Yu Zhou, president of Light Chaser Animation, said that the global distribution of “Three Kingdoms: The Beginning” is progressing steadily and that the film will be released to overseas audiences as soon as possible.

“China’s rich historical and cultural heritage provides an inexhaustible source of inspiration for Chinese animated films,” Yu said.

He said Light Chaser has continued to explore new possibilities for Chinese animation.

Over the past decade, Light Chaser’s productions have been released in cinemas and on streaming platforms in dozens of countries and regions, reaching more than 50 million viewers, according to the studio.

“Through animation, we hope to bring a wider range of Chinese stories, told in more diverse forms, to audiences around the world,” he told Xinhua.

Variety

NEW YORK: Anya Taylor-Joy finds herself in a familiar setting this summer: In the desert, fighting to stay alive.

She did it in “Furiosa” and the upcoming “Dune: Part Three.” Now she’s under the blazing California sun for “Lucky,” a propulsive Apple TV crime thriller that has her trading blows with goons, bloodying her otherworldly face.

“Listen, I’ve been to the desert so many times at this point it’s kind of unreal. I don’t look like a desert creature, and yet I’m always there and I love it,” says the actor. “People like to see me struggle, and they like me to survive. And, luckily, I enjoy doing it, too, so it works out.”

Taylor-Joy plays the title character in an adaptation of Marissa Stapley’s novel about a con artist who wakes up in a hotel room and realizes she’s been betrayed by a close ally and is forced on the run.

Lucky is soon pursued by both the FBI and a ruthless crime boss over a missing \$10 million. Her widowed father isn’t much help: He raised her to be a criminal but is now behind bars, only helping from a phone call.

“She’s at an inflection point when we meet her in the book

and in the show where she’s got to chart her own course. She’s got to take things into her own hands, and she’s got to really decide how she wants to live her life,” says Lauren Neustadter, an executive producer.

The seven-episode series premieres Wednesday, and even in the first episode, Lucky has to fight her way out the closed trunk of a car and slam a screwdriver into the neck of a bad guy, finding herself alone in the desert. “How can someone so small cause so much trouble?” a goon asks. (AP)

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NEW YORK: Twelve states sued to block Paramount’s takeover of Warner Bros. Discovery on Monday, arguing that the \$81 billion merger would “extinguish competition” in Hollywood and lead to fewer choices for consumers across the U.S.

“Audiences on every sofa and in every movie (theater) seat would feel the impact of this unlawful merger,” California Attorney General Rob Bonta, who is leading the case, said in a news conference from Los Angeles. He said the deal would result in higher prices, fewer movies and TV shows and lower quality of content overall.

A Paramount-Warner combo would bring together two of Hollywood’s last five legacy studios. It would also mean putting Warner’s HBO Max, libraries filled with fan favorites like “Harry Potter” and even CNN under the same roof of Paramount-owned CBS and the Paramount+ streaming service. (AP)

The Conversation

AI and art collide in this engineering course that puts human creativity first

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

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By Francesco Fedele

Georgia Institute of Technology

I see many students viewing artificial intelligence as humanlike simply because it can write essays, do complex math or answer questions. AI can mimic human behavior but lacks meaningful engagement with the world.

This disconnect inspired my course “Art and Generative AI,” which was shaped by the ideas of 20th-century German philosopher Martin Heidegger.

His work highlights how we are deeply connected and present in the world. We find meaning through action, care and relationships. Human creativity and mastery come from this intuitive connection with the world. Modern AI, by contrast, simulates intelligence by processing symbols and patterns without understanding or care.

In this course, we reject the illusion that machines fully master everything and put student expression first. In doing so, we value uncertainty, mistakes and imperfection as essential to the creative process.

This vision expands beyond the classroom. In the 2025-26 academic year, the course will include a new community-based learning collaboration with Atlanta’s art communities. Local artists will co-teach with me to integrate artistic practice and AI.



A Georgia Institute of Technology course links art and artificial intelligence. (The Conversation/AP)

The course builds on my 2018 class, Art and Geometry, which I co-taught with local artists. The course explored Picasso’s cubism, which depicted reality as fractured from multiple perspectives; it also looked at Einstein’s relativity, the idea that time and space are not absolute and distinct but part of the same fabric.

We begin with exploring the first mathematical model of a neuron, the perceptron. Then, we study the Hopfield network, which mimics how our brain can remember a song from just listening to a few notes by filling in the rest.

Next, we look at Hinton’s Boltzmann Machine, a generative model that can also imagine and create new, similar songs. Finally, we study today’s deep neural networks and transformers, AI models that

mimic how the brain learns to recognize images, speech or text. Transformers are especially well suited for understanding sentences and conversations, and they power technologies such as ChatGPT.

In addition to AI, we integrate artistic practice into the coursework. This approach broadens students’ perspectives on science and engineering through the lens of an artist. The first offering of the course in spring 2025 was co-taught with Mark Leibert, an artist and professor of the practice at Georgia Tech.

His expertise is in art, AI and digital technologies. He taught students fundamentals of various artistic media, including charcoal drawing and oil painting. Students used these principles to create art using AI ethically and creatively.

They critically examined the source of training data and ensured that their work respects authorship and originality.

Students also learn to record brain activity using electroencephalography - EEG - headsets. Through AI models, they then learn to transform neural signals into music, images and storytelling. This work inspired performances where dancers improvised in response to AI-generated music.

AI entered our lives so rapidly that many people don’t fully grasp how it works, why it works, when it fails or what its mission is.

In creating this course, the aim is to empower students by filling that gap. Whether they are new to AI or not, the goal is to make its inner algorithms clear, approachable and honest. We focus on what these tools actually do and how

they can go wrong.

We place students and their creativity first. We reject the illusion of a perfect machine, but we provoke the AI algorithm to confuse and hallucinate, when it generates inaccurate or nonsensical responses. To do so, we deliberately use a small dataset, reduce the model size or limit training. It’s in these flawed states of AI that students step in as conscious co-creators. The students are the missing algorithm that takes back control of the creative process. Their creations do not obey AI but reimagine it by the human hand. The artwork is rescued from automation.

Students learn to recognize AI’s limitations and harness its failures to reclaim creative authorship. The artwork isn’t generated by AI, but it’s reimagined by students.

Students learn chatbot queries have an environmental cost because large AI models use a lot of power. They avoid unnecessary iterations when designing prompts or using AI. This helps reducing carbon emissions.

The course prepares students to think like artists. Through abstraction and imagination they gain the confidence to tackle the engineering challenges of the 21st century. These include protecting the environment, building resilient cities and improving health.

Students also realize that while AI has vast engineering and scientific applications, ethical implementation is crucial. Understanding the type and quality of training data that AI uses is essential. Without it, AI systems risk producing biased or flawed predictions. (AP)

Music

Melody carries a message of life in times of crisis

Music offers psychological relief to Gaza children

GAZA, July 14, (Xinhua): Sixteen-year-old Maram Ahmed gently cradled her oud as she rehearsed a traditional Palestinian melody inside a hall at Gaza College in war-ravaged Gaza City, where the strains of strings and guitars offered a rare break.

For Maram, music has become more than a hobby. After more than two years of displacement and deprivation, playing the oud had become her way to cope with the psychological toll of the conflict.

“We try to transform this difficult reality into a space that gives us hope and happiness,” Maram told Xinhua. “We cannot stop the bombing and death, but we can play music for peace, life and love.”

She is particularly keen to perform traditional Palestinian songs.

“The war destroyed archaeological sites and tried to erase part of our culture, but we can preserve our musical and folkloric heritage through music,” she said.

Nearby, 12-year-old Hanan Ghazal carefully followed her instructor during a music lesson. She said she joined the conservatory’s classes to find a sense of safety amid the conflict.

“I wanted to escape the atmosphere of fear and insecurity, so I turned to music as a refuge that gives me comfort,” Hanan told Xinhua.

Maram and Hanan were among dozens of children participating in a music event organized by the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music, which blended performances and training to help children process trauma, keeping music education alive amid Gaza’s harsh conditions.

Ahmed Abu Amsha, a guitar teacher at the conservatory, told Xinhua many children were deeply affected after seeing bombardment and destruction during the Gaza war, prompting the institute to use music as a way to help them express their emotions.

“Many children stopped speaking or interacting with others because of what they had experienced. After participating in music sessions, their psychological condition gradually began to improve,” he said.

Music also helped teachers deal with the psychological pressures, Amsha said. “Music is a message of life under the current circumstances. It makes us feel that we are still alive, we are still playing and singing, and there is still hope.”

The program has been undermined by repeated displacement and the conservatory’s destruction, said Fouad Khader, activities coordinator at the institute.

“I was personally displaced more than 25 times, and this greatly affected the music program,” he said. “All the instructors and students were displaced, making it difficult to keep contact with them and continue classes.”

The conservatory’s main headquarters was destroyed by the Israeli army in October 2023, along with a number of musical instruments.

Despite the damage, teachers resumed educational activities whenever circumstances permitted.

“All we thought about was making the children happy and putting smiles on their faces. We heal the children with music, and we heal ourselves as well,” Amsha said.

Another participant, 12-year-old Zeina Saad El-Din, expressed hope that one day they would enjoy lives free from fear. “We hope to live in safety and be able to go and come back without fear,” she told Xinhua.

‘Daughter from Hell’ brings a bold new sound

Abrams finds power in Shadows

NEW YORK, July 14, (AP): Crises loom across singer-songwriter Gracie Abrams’ third album, “Daughter from Hell,” out Friday.

A knife - stabbed in the heart or stuck in her side - appears as a repeated motif. “Hell” takes on different forms; it’s an insult thrown in “Sober” and a place she breaks away from in the title track. The project finds Abrams in a darker place than her previous two records. But by employing a broader array of instruments and production styles, the resulting 16 tracks live up to the bigger arenas she now fills, even if many of the songs feel like a return to her introspective form.

Electric guitar opens the title track, where Abrams’ layered voice longs for the traits of her mother: “And I want your patience / I want your grace / I want your sugar,” she sings. Aaron Dessner, a collaborator on Abrams’ previous projects, cowrites and produces across the album. Here, his touch is felt in the guitar riffs that build toward the song’s midpoint, and the shaker and tambourine that fill them out.

The pair flex across the tracks; Abrams’ poetic language only sometimes tripping on itself. On the acoustic guitar and piano-set ballad “Death Wish,” she reflects on a fractured relationship. “How long will you give me?” she pleads before the pace picks up. “‘Til you twist the knife with a smile while you kill me?”

“The Knife,” a highlight, immediately follows as Abrams examines her own affinity for recklessness. Her voice, occasionally lowered to a bedroom-pop whisper (fans of her early work will be drawn to the lilting “Good Reason” and the sweet and synth “Afflictions”), has strengthened since her restrained debut, 2023’s “Good Riddance.” As the track builds - starting as a stripped back piano ballad, before turning itself over to drums, electric guitar and a 21-piece orchestra - so does her confidence. The influence of Phoebe Bridgers is felt in that second-half surge.

The anxious “Look at My Life” (co-



This album cover image released by Interscope Records shows ‘Daughter from Hell’ by Gracie Abrams. (AP)

produced by Dan Nigro) carries some of the same fast-paced energy of her song “Risk.” This time the focus is on her mental health, and the disassociation required of her only-growing fame, rather than the more universal thrill of a new crush.

“Mini Bar,” written with friend and “Sue Me” hitmaker Audrey Hobert, offers some levity, both with its buoyant sound and cheeky lyrics. Backing vocals from Bon Iver’s Justin Vernon add dimension to a few tracks, including “Broke My Heart,” while a feature from Marcus Mumford fills out “What if it’s right?” Actor Paul Mescal, Abrams’ boyfriend, cowrites “Imaginary Friend.”

Lyricaly, the beautiful “Humming” is the album’s most ambitious. Abrams is confronted with the heavy realities of the world that’s raising her. “Do we stay numb?/But you can’t when you’ve seen/How they all get off on our grieving,” she sings, her words chosen carefully. As they always have been.

“Daughter from Hell” by Gracie Abrams

Four stars out of five.

On Repeat: “The Knife,” “Men Like You,” “Humming”

Skip it: “Sober”

For fans of: Ballads, rainy afternoons

Food

Vivian Howard's recipe turns okra skeptics into fans

Southern chef gives okra a crispy makeover

NEW YORK, July 14, (AP): If the South had a mascot, it would be okra. You love, hate or have an unfounded fear of okra - and the same is true of the South.

There’s no vegetable more polarizing than this poor little pod. And it’s only one part of okra that tends to bother people: the slimy seeds. Now I seek okra out.

I want to cook with it. I want to change people’s minds about it. I’m not going to print myself an “I Love Okra” T-shirt or name my next child after it, but I understand and respect it just as much as I do every other vegetable.

These fritters from my cookbook “Deep Run Roots” capitalize on okra’s slime like nothing else. They’re sort of a cross between a scallion pancake and fried okra, and their pillowy texture and vegetal flavor, coupled with the sweet pop of corn, is pleasing and addictive.

Choose large mature pods, and use only their fat midsections. The swollen seeds hiding in there will actually do a lot to hold the fritter batter together. I like to eat these fritters right out of the frying pan over stewed tomatoes, but they’re also nice at room temperature as a scoop for hummus.

Serves 4

1 cup okra, caps and tips removed, midsections minced

½ cup fresh corn, cut off the cob

¼ cup squash or zucchini, grated on a box grater or in a food processor

3 tablespoons minced scallion

1 teaspoon salt, divided

2 tablespoons cornmeal

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

2 tablespoons buttermilk



This image released by Voracious shows a recipe for summer vegetable scallion pancakes from the cookbook ‘Deep Run Roots’ by Vivian Howard. (AP)

1 egg

¼ teaspoon hot sauce

¼ to ½ cup vegetable oil

Preheat your oven to 200°F. In a medium bowl, stir together the minced okra, corn, squash, scallion, and ½ teaspoon of the salt. Let that sit for about 5 minutes. The salt will leach out the moisture in the squash. That moisture will activate the slime in the okra and bring the veggies together in kind of a gooey-looking mass.

Stir in the cornmeal and flour to incorporate. Whisk together the buttermilk, egg and hot sauce, and stir it into the dry, slimy mass. Mix this up a few times and let it sit at least 3 minutes and up to 1 hour before you get ready to cook

the fritters.

In a 10- to 12-inch skillet or cast-iron pan, add the oil over medium heat. If you want larger fritters, spoon about 2 tablespoons of the batter into the preheated oil and press down on each dollop to flatten it slightly. The fritters should be about ¼ inch thick. If you’d like smaller fritters, start with 1 tablespoon of batter.

Carefully continue dropping dollops of batter into the hot oil, making sure the fritters don’t touch. Cook the fritters over medium heat on each side till they are chestnut-colored in some spots and golden in others. Transfer the fritters to a paper-towel-lined plate to drain and season them while hot with the remaining salt. Keep them



This image released by Voracious shows the cookbook ‘Deep Run Roots’ by Vivian Howard. (AP)

warm in your oven while you fry the next batch.

Serve warm.

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Vivian Howard is the chef and owner of the acclaimed Chef and the Farmer restaurant in Kinston, North Carolina. The first woman since Julia Child to win a Peabody Award for a cooking program, she co-created and stars in the PBS series “A Chef’s Life.”

Excerpted from “Deep Run Roots” by Vivian Howard. Copyright (copyright) 2016 by Vivian Howard. Used with permission of Voracious, an imprint of Little, Brown and Company. New York, NY. All rights reserved.

Hollywood mourns Neill as co-stars honor his legacy

WELLINGTON, July 14, (AP): Fellow actors and fans of Sam Neill mourned his passing after the New Zealand actor died Monday following a diagnosis of a rare type of non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

Neill achieved his highest level of fame in “Jurassic Park” playing paleontologist Alan Grant, who is summoned to an island off Costa Rica where a theme park has been built to house herds of cloned dinosaurs. He co-starred alongside Laura Dern, Jeff Goldblum and Richard Attenborough.

Neill earned an Emmy nomination for his performance in the title role of the 1998 miniseries “Merlin” and another as narrator of 2017’s “Wild New Zealand.” Neill also earned three Golden Globe nods - for “Merlin,” “One Against the Wind” and “Reilly: Ace of Spies.”

Some notable reactions:

“Sam was exceptionally collaborative. It was a stretch for him to play a character who acted as though children were messy and smelly because this was the opposite of the loving father he was to his children. I adored making all the Jurassic movies with him. Along with Laura Dern and Jeff Goldblum, we will always have our Jurassic family and Sam will never be forgotten by us or his many millions of fans around the world.” - in a statement.

“Sam was my beloved lifetime friend... He showed me the depths of loyalty, protectiveness, and love, always with the driest of wit. He was a true and noble gentleman, wrapped up in my dream leading man. I will love you forever, Dr. Alan Grant.” - via Instagram.

“Knew @samneillthetrop for 3 decades and finally worked with him on ‘PALM BEACH’ in 2018. An officer and a Gentleman in the truest sense. Guided and helped me through a very difficult time in my Life ... Sail on, kind Sir. - via Instagram.

“Like everyone who knew and worked with Sam, I admired him and adored him in equal measure. He was one of the kindest, funniest and gentlest people, and one of the finest actors ... RIP.” - in a statement.

“Sam was one of the greats, a joy to be around,” she said. “We met when I was just 18 and he took me under his wing and we stayed friends for life. He was charming, kind, funny and intelligent. He will be greatly missed, and my heart goes out to his family.” - in a statement to the Sydney Morning Herald.

The Conversation

AI & the future of thinking: A philosophical debate

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

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By Ryan Leack

USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences

In my writing and rhetoric courses, students have plenty of opinions on whether AI is intelligent: how well it can assess, analyze, evaluate and communicate information.

When I ask whether artificial intelligence can “think,” however, I often look upon a sea of blank faces. What is “thinking,” and how is it the same or different from “intelligence”?

We might treat the two as more or less synonymous, but philosophers have marked nuances for millennia. Greek philosophers may not have known about 21st-century technology, but their ideas about intellect and thinking can help us understand what’s at stake with AI today.

Although the English words “intellect” and “thinking” do not have direct counterparts in the ancient Greek, looking at ancient texts offers useful comparisons.

In “Republic,” for example, Plato uses the analogy of a “divided line” separating higher and lower forms of understanding.

Plato, who taught in the fourth century BCE, argued that each person has an intuitive capacity to recognize the truth. He called this the highest form of understanding: “noesis.” Noesis enables apprehension beyond reason, belief or sensory perception. It’s one form of “knowing” something - but in Plato’s view, it’s also a property of the soul.

Lower down, but still above his “dividing line,” is “dianoia,” or reason, which relies on argumentation. Below the line, his lower forms of understanding are “pistis,” or belief, and “eika-

sia,” imagination.

Pistis is belief influenced by experience and sensory perception: input that someone can critically examine and reason about. Plato defines eikasias, meanwhile, as baseless opinion rooted in false perception.

In Plato’s hierarchy of mental capacities, direct, intuitive understanding is at the top, and moment-to-moment physical input toward the bottom. The top of the hierarchy leads to true and absolute knowledge, while the bottom lends itself to false impressions and beliefs. But intuition, according to Plato, is part of the soul, and embodied in human form. Perceiving reality transcends the body - but still needs one.

So, while Plato does not differentiate “intelligence” and “thinking,” I would argue that his distinctions can help us think about AI. Without being embodied, AI may not “think” or “understand” the way humans do. Eikasias - the lowest form of comprehension, based on false perceptions - may be similar to AI’s frequent “hallucinations,” when it makes up information that seems plausible but is actually inaccurate.

Aristotle, Plato’s student, sheds more light on intelligence and thinking.

In “On the Soul,” Aristotle distinguishes “active” from “passive” intellect. Active intellect, which he called “nous,” is immaterial. It makes meaning from experience, but transcends bodily perception. Passive intellect is bodily, receiving sensory impressions without reasoning.

We could say that these active and passive processes, put together, constitute “thinking.” Today, the word “intelligence” holds a logical quality that AI’s calculations may conceivably replicate. Aristotle, however, like Plato, suggests that to “think” requires an embodied form and goes beyond reason alone.

Aristotle’s views on rhetoric also show that deliberation and judgment require a body, feeling and experience. We might think of rhetoric as per-

suation, but it is actually more about observation: observing and evaluating how evidence, emotion and character shape people’s thinking and decisions. Facts matter, but emotions and people move us - and it seems questionable whether AI utilizes rhetoric in this way.

Finally, Aristotle’s concept of “phronesis” sheds further light on AI’s capacity to think. In “Nicomachean Ethics,” he defines phronesis as “practical wisdom” or “prudence.” “Phronesis” involves lived experience that determines not only right thought, but also how to apply those thoughts to “good ends,” or virtuous actions. AI may analyze large datasets to reach its conclusions, but “phronesis” goes beyond information to consult wisdom and moral insight.

Today, AI takes on many physical forms, from autonomous vehicles and humanoid robots to health care robots and drones. If intelligence requires embodiment, as Plato and Aristotle believed, it might seem as if AI is coming closer than ever to human thinking.

AI does take on many forms, but they’re still not bodies; they run on code, algorithms and datasets. Intuitive understanding, emotion, integrity and practical wisdom seem to require an embodied, perishable form that is moved by experience.

Perhaps we should ask AI itself - so I did. When I prompted ChatGPT with the simple question, “Can you think?” it responded: “I can process information, analyze patterns, and generate responses based on data. So in some ways, it might ‘seem’ like I’m thinking. But it’s not thinking like a human does. I don’t have consciousness, emotions, intentions, or awareness. Everything I ‘do’ is based on patterns learned from huge amounts of text and a set of rules and probabilities. I can ‘simulate’ certain aspects of thinking, but I don’t truly think or understand in the human sense.”

That response aligns with Plato and Aristotle’s views. For now. (AP)

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Dr. Al-Sabti praises Ministry of Health for expanding use of AI in healthcare

Kuwaiti ophthalmologist unveils remote robotic eye surgery system backed by KFAS

KUWAIT, July 14, (KUNA): Kuwaiti ophthalmologist and vitreoretinal surgeon Dr. Khaled Al-Sabti has unveiled the world's first robotic system for remote eye surgery, developed with Meshari Al-Jandal and supported by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS).

Speaking to KUNA, Al-Sabti said the system, named Rebotic, enables remote eye surgery and international collaboration by allowing surgeons worldwide to participate via advanced communications technology.

The innovation also features an AI-powered robotic nurse that assists surgical teams, supports decision-making, reduces errors and maintains consistent precision throughout the procedures.

Dr. Al-Sabti thanked KFAS for supporting the project and its continued efforts to promote innovation, empower national talent and advance scientific research.

He also praised the Ministry of Health for expanding the use of AI in healthcare to improve diagnosis, enable early disease detection, foster innovation and enhance the quality of patient care in line with global developments.

He said Rebotic represents a future vision for eye surgery, with ongoing research bringing it closer to global clinical use, initially introduced at a US conference, the concept drew strong interest from experts who called it a promising step forward.



Left: Dr. Khaled Al-Sabti – Kuwaiti ophthalmologist and vitreoretinal surgeon. Right: Remote robotic eye surgery system

KUNA photos



This Dec. 2023 photo provided by Pablo de Vicente shows a radio telescope at Yebes Observatory in Yebes, Spain. (AP)

In sweet discovery, astronomers find sugar lurking in space between stars

NEW YORK, July 14, (AP): The space between stars just got a little sweeter.

Astronomers have detected a type of sugar in space that's also found in raspberries and self-tanners. The sugar, called erythulose, lurks in what's called the interstellar medium: thin clouds of gas and dust littered between stars.

Sugar does more than sweeten tea and powder doughnuts. Different varieties fuel our cells and even make up DNA. Scientists are itching to know how sugars form because they're a key ingredient for life as we know it.

Using two dish-shaped radio telescopes in Spain, researchers collected data from a large gas cloud near the center of the Milky Way. They identified the sugar in gas form by comparing telescope signals to samples in the lab. It's the latest kind of sugar detected in space - in a region crossed by NASA's twin Voyager, the farthest spacecraft to ever travel from Earth.

The results were published Monday in the journal Nature Astronomy.

Scientists have found interesting chemistry in our galaxy, including building blocks for genetic material and parts of the cell. They spotted a cousin to table sugar near the center of the Milky Way about 25 years ago, and black grains from asteroid Bennu retrieved by NASA's Osiris-Rex spacecraft yielded other sugars, including a

key DNA ingredient.

The latest sugar isn't essential for life, but can easily convert to a form that's thought to be crucial to kick-starting life on Earth. And it's one of the most complex sugars spotted so far, said astrophysicist Erika Hamden with the University of Arizona.

It's "a pristine example of the stuff that's just floating out in the galaxy," said Hamden, who had no role in the new research.

These interstellar investigations are all about understanding how life got started. Did faraway comets or space rocks deliver the essential ingredients to us? Or were the essential components already here that eventually gave rise to our solar system?

The new sugar lends evidence to the latter theory. Researchers want to look for more sugars in space and learn about how they convert to different forms.

Finding them in one spot means they're likely also hiding in distant corners of the galaxy along with other important bits, said study author Izaskun Jiménez-Serra, an astrophysicist at the Center for Astrobiology in Spain.

"The key ingredients for the origin of life could be present in other regions across the galaxy, opening the possibility for life to develop elsewhere in the universe," Jiménez-Serra said.

Fastest-growing outbreak in history becoming more challenging

Majority of new Ebola cases ‘from unknown chains of transmission’: WHO official

RWAMPARA, Congo, July 14, (AP): The Ebola outbreak in eastern Congo "continues to outpace the response efforts," the World Health Organization's emergencies chief said on Tuesday after returning from a trip to Bunia, in Ituri province, which is one of the worst hit areas.

"Perhaps the most alarming finding is that many of the newly reported deaths are people who died in their communities without ever reaching a health facility and without receiving care," Chikwe Ihekweazu said. "And as of today, 80% of new cases are outside our contact lists and so are coming to us from unknown chains of transmission."

Congo has been battling the outbreak of a rare type of Ebola since May with no approved treatment or vaccine. The Africa Centre for Disease Control said last week that it is the fastest-growing Ebola outbreak on the continent.

As of Monday, at least 1,926 people have been infected and 702 died in three provinces in Congo from the rare Bundibugyo virus, Congolese authorities said. Cases have also been confirmed in neighboring Uganda.

Last week, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said a US citizen working for a humanitarian organization in Congo has tested positive for the Ebola virus, without

providing further details.

Ihekweazu told reporters in Geneva that his visit to Bunia had been "quite encouraging on many fronts, but also deeply concerning on many fronts."

Treatment capacity in Bunia is now close to 800 beds, which is increasing every week, and lab capacity has increased from one to 14 labs, while there have been improvements on other fronts too.

Ihekweazu said that despite "our best efforts ... we have not caught up in the race."

The response has been hampered by a funding gap, attacks on health centers, and an ongoing conflict in eastern Congo, as well as mistrust among local communities.

The Congolese authorities declared a fresh Ebola outbreak on May 15 after the disease had been transmitting for weeks without official detection, according to the WHO.

Clinical trials for treatment began last week after researchers launched a highly anticipated study in the hope of fighting the virus.

The Ebola outbreak in eastern Congo is now the fastest-growing one in history, and new challenges keep emerging even as work begins on a study of two badly needed treatments for a type of Ebola that currently has none.



Workers at an Ebola treatment center go on strike over unpaid salaries and bonuses at Rwampara General Hospital, in Ituri, northeastern Congo on July 13. (AP)

A strike this week by unpaid workers at an Ebola treatment center at the heart of the outbreak could light the flame for others in a remote region already suffering from barebones infrastructure, rebel threats and misinformation asserting that the deadly virus isn't real.

Now cases are suspected in two more provinces, including one of Congo's largest cities, Kisangani, as responders struggle to understand

how far Ebola has spread. Experts have said the outbreak was missed for weeks because tests were conducted for a more common type of Ebola, and its origin is still not known.

Here's a look at the outbreak and the growing effort to contain it.

The outbreak is caused by the Bundibugyo virus, a type of Ebola that has no approved vaccines.

Ebola is highly contagious and

can be transmitted to people from wild animals. It spreads in the human population through contact with bodily fluids such as vomit, blood or semen, and with contaminated surfaces and materials such as bedding and clothing.

Traditional funerals in which loved ones wash and prepare bodies have been restricted, to some anger by residents.

The disease is rare but severe and often fatal. Symptoms include fever, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle pain and at times internal and external bleeding. Outbreaks often occur in remote villages in Central Africa, near rainforests.

Associated Press journalists have witnessed the aftermath of attacks on health centers by a wary, highly mobile population that has long been traumatized by armed groups.

Outsiders can be looked upon with suspicion, and community outreach teams have worked to spread the word about Ebola prevention measures in the face of abuse and accusations that the outbreak is a scam.

Part of the outbreak is unfolding in a major city and humanitarian hub, Goma, that rebels backed by neighboring Rwanda seized over a year ago, further complicating the response.

Now there is unrest among local

Ebola responders themselves after weeks of risky crisis work and little or no pay from the Congolese government. On Monday, staff at a treatment center in Ituri province, the outbreak's epicenter, closed the facility and blocked access, burning a tire. Striking staffers included epidemiologists, case investigators, drivers and gravediggers.

Congolese officials have said they are in talks with the health workers to find a solution. A labor strike that spreads to other overstretched and underequipped facilities would be another serious blow to Ebola containment efforts.

The strikes come at a vulnerable time. Earlier this month, researchers began a study of two possible Ebola treatments and began enrolling participants.

One is Gilead Sciences' remdesivir, a broad-acting antiviral approved to treat COVID-19 that has shown some hints in lab tests that it may help fight the Bundibugyo virus. The other is Mapp Biopharmaceutical's experimental MBP134, antibodies engineered to target Ebola viruses including Bundibugyo.

The World Health Organization has said patients will be randomly assigned to receive today's best standard of care as well as remdesivir, MBP134, both or neither.

No relief from heat as many US cities to see record overnight temperatures

WASHINGTON, July 14, (AP): Another week of blistering heat will bring even more health risks in the coming days, as overnight temperatures won't provide much relief.

The National Weather Service is predicting that more than 90 temperature records across the U.S. will be tied or broken this week through Wednesday - and most of those will be overnight heat records.

Health experts say overnight temperatures that fail to cool down are even more dangerous than daytime temperatures that soar.

It has already been a sweltering start to the summer across much of the U.S. due to the long-lasting heat dome expected to blanket much of the country this week. The blistering temperatures over the past few weeks have caused heat-related deaths in New Jersey and helped fuel wildfires in the West.

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



A woman sits in the shade to avoid the heat on July 13, in Detroit. (AP)

National Weather Service said.

Over the next few days, places in the Midwest and Northeast known for frigid winters will see nighttime temperatures remain above 70 F (21 C), including Fargo, North Dakota; International Falls, Minnesota; and

Portland, Maine.

Health experts say that high overnight temperatures are particularly dangerous because there's no time for the body's core temperature to cool down and recover from daytime heat.

Health

Mongolia issues bubonic plague warning: Mongolia's National Center for Zoonotic Diseases (NCZD) on Monday issued a warning about the risk of bubonic plague, urging the public to take precautions to prevent the spread of the disease.

Although hunting marmots is prohibited by law in Mongolia, the animal is still considered a delicacy by some people, and illegal hunting continues.

The summer season poses a heightened risk of infection in Mongolia as more people travel to rural areas for recreation, where some consume marmot meat. In previous years, several cases of bubonic plague, including fatalities, have been reported during this period.

According to the NCZD, 17 of Mongolia's 21 provinces are currently considered at risk for bubonic plague.

The World Health Organization says bubonic plague is a bacterial disease transmitted by fleas that live on wild rodents, including marmots. If left untreated, the disease can become fatal within 24 hours. (Xinhua)

Namibia declares end to cholera outbreak: Namibia has declared the end of its cholera outbreak after recording 82 confirmed cases and one death, following over 28 days without new infections in the affected health districts of Opuwo and Grootfontein.

In a statement issued Monday, the Ministry of Health and Social Services said the outbreaks in the two districts had been contained through a coordinated response involving government institutions, regional authorities, and international health partners.



A child suffering from cholera has a blood sample taken at the MSF treatment centre in Maiduguri, Nigeria on June 8, 2026. (AP)

Of the 82 confirmed cases, 52 were recorded in Grootfontein Health District in the Otjozondjupa Region and 30 in Opuwo Health District in the Kunene Region.

A total of 282 suspected cases were reported during the outbreaks, the ministry said.

The last confirmed cholera case in Grootfontein was recorded on Feb. 18, while Opuwo recorded its last confirmed case on March 22, allowing the country to meet the required monitoring period for declaring the outbreaks over, it added.

The ministry attributed the successful containment to collaboration among government agencies, regional authorities, and international partners, including the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund. (Xinhua)

Fleetwood leads England’s Open hopes

Super Sunday? England dreams of a British Open-World Cup double

SOUTHPORT, England, July 14, (AP): How’s this for a dreamy scenario for English sports fans on Sunday.

An Englishman becomes “the champion golfer of the year” by winning the British Open at Royal Birkdale.

Then, a few hours later, England’s soccer team wins the World Cup.

“It would be mega,” said Matt Wallace, one of 21 English golfers in the field for the final major of 2026 taking place on the northwest coast of England from Thursday.

So, is this joyous sporting double a possibility? Sure.

A probability? That would be pushing it.

It might be the most well-known fact in all of sports in these parts that England - where soccer is king - hasn’t won the World Cup since 1966. This year, the men’s team is

into the semifinals and will face Lionel Messi and Argentina on Wednesday.

Less known is that no Englishman has won the Open Championship in England since Tony Jacklin in 1969.

Soccer fans call it six decades of hurt, and the wait is getting excruciating for the golfers, too. Indeed, since Jacklin, only one Englishman has won the Open and that was Nick Faldo - three times (1987, ’90 and ’92) and all of them in Scotland.

Tommy Fleetwood might be England’s best bet this year and, boy, how the locals would celebrate a win.

As a kid, Fleetwood lived just round the corner from Royal Birkdale, which he’d sneak on when accompanying his father, Peter, on evening dog walks.



Tommy Fleetwood of England walks away after putting on the 18th green during a practice round for the British Open Golf championships at Royal Birkdale golf club, in Southport, England. (AP)

He’s the poster boy for this championship but is aware he’s sharing the limelight with the country’s more globally recognized soccer players this week.

“For those guys, they definitely carry a nation on their shoulders a lot more than we do,” the No. 9-ranked Fleetwood said. “They’ve been doing a great job.”

And yes, the soccer will be intruding on the golf.

On Monday, Matt Fitzpatrick - the highest-ranked English golfer at No. 3 - pleaded to be given a later tee time for the first round on Thursday. The England-Argentina game kicks off at 8 p.m. local time on Wednesday night and wouldn’t finish until close to 11 p.m. if it goes to extra time and penalties.

“If anyone’s listening, ... it would be nice if all the English lads were late/early,” Fitzpatrick said of the

Thursday/Friday tee times. “That would be great.”

They weren’t so lucky. Each of the first eight groups to go out in the first round on Thursday will contain an Englishman.

Matthew Baldwin, who was born a stone’s throw away in Southport, is a member at Royal Birkdale and came through qualifying to take his place in his home major. He will have the honor of hitting the first shot of the championship at 6:35 a.m. on Thursday.

That might mean him having to wake up at 4 a.m. Will he watch the soccer?

The World Cup effect is certainly evident around Royal Birkdale, which is a short drive from the soccer hotbed of Liverpool. Watching players on the practice putting green on Sunday was a young girl wearing an England jersey with “Belling-

ham” and “10” on the back - a nod to England star Jude Bellingham - and with a tattoo of the England flag on each cheek.

R&A chief executive Mark Darbon has said the final round of the Open could be brought forward to avoid a clash with the World Cup final, which begins at 8 p.m. local time. The last round might not finish until around 6:30 p.m. - and that’s if there’s no need for a playoff.

Just imagine if it’s Fleetwood making that late-evening walk down the 18th ahead of collecting the claret jug and watching England in the soccer final.

“It would be outrageous,” said Roger Shutt, a 70-year-old Englishman who was one of the thousands of fans to attend Monday’s practice round. “If they coincide, it’ll be a holiday for everyone.”

Al-Hassawi confident in the team

Kuwait off to Doha for GCC U-18 Basketball Champ’ship

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Kuwait U-18 national basketball team left for Doha on Tuesday to compete in the GCC U-18 Basketball Championship, which doubles as a qualifying tournament for the FIBA Asia U-18 Cup. The event begins on Friday and continues through July 22.

The squad travels to Qatar after wrapping up a two-week training camp in Cairo, where it played five warm-up games, including friendlies against Egypt and Jordan, as part of its final preparations for the regional tournament.

The delegation is led by Mohammed Al-Hassawi, Assistant Secretary-General of the Kuwait Basketball Federation and chairman of the Training and National Teams Committee. Joining him are team administrator Ghazi Al-Otaibi, Serbian head coach Mako, assistant coach Yahya Al-Bahar, strength and conditioning coach Milan, and team manager Taleb Al-Kandari.

Kuwait’s 12-player roster includes Ali Al-Hindal, Amir Asadullah, Abdulrahman Al-Marzouq, Musaed Al-Obaidi, Abdullah Al-Juraid, Omar Murad, Ahmed Al-Rashid, Yousef Al-Ghoneiman, Adam Asadullah, Ali Al-Salahi, Farij Al-Furajj and Omar Al-Saleh.



Mohammed Al-Hassawi, Assistant Secretary-General of the Kuwait Basketball Federation and Chairman of the Training and National Teams Committee.

Al-Hassawi said the team had successfully completed its preparation program, noting that the players delivered encouraging performances during the training camp and friendly matches, allowing the coaching staff to settle on the final squad.

He also praised the players’ commitment and discipline throughout the camp, expressing optimism that the team is well prepared to compete for a place at the continental finals.

Sparks part ways with Pebley

Reese’s 16th double-double powers Dream past Sparks

COLLEGE PARK, Ga., July 14, (AP): Angel Reese had 23 points and 13 rebounds for her WNBA-leading 16th double-double of the season, Allisha Gray added 20 points, and the Atlanta Dream beat the Los Angeles Sparks 101-92 on Monday night.

Gray made Atlanta’s first field goal of the fourth quarter with 4:07 remaining to tie it at 87. Then, Reese got a friendly roll on her third made 3-pointer of the season to make it 90-87 and she added two free throws on the next possession for a five-point lead. Jordin Canada capped the 9-0 run for a 94-87 lead.

Canada finished with 16 points and Rhyné Howard added 11 for Atlanta (14-10), which had lost six of its last seven games. Reese, who missed Saturday’s game against Portland, was 7 of 11 from the field and made all eight of her free throws in 32 minutes.

Erica Wheeler scored 20 points, Nneka Ogwumike added 19 and Rae Burrell 18 for Los Angeles (10-12). Cameron Brink (left ankle) missed her eighth straight game, and Kelsey Plum (lower left leg) missed her sixth straight.

Hamby made a driving layup with 4:21 remaining in the fourth to give Los Angeles its first lead at 87-85 since early in the second period.

Lynx 104, Mercury 100

In Minneapolis, Kayla McBride scored a season-high 37 points, rookie Olivia Miles had a career-high 33 and Minnesota beat Phoenix for their third straight victory.

McBride’s sixth 3-pointer gave Minnesota a 101-98 lead with 45.1 seconds left. Miles also had eight assists.

Miles drove into the lane and found Natasha Howard for a layup with 21.1 seconds left to make it 103-100.



In this file photo, Los Angeles Sparks general manager Raegan Pebley, speaks at a WNBA news conference at Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles. (AP)

Courtney Williams had a steal at the other end, and Miles made 1 of 2 free throws for a four-point lead.

The game featured 23 lead changes and 13 ties - with both teams shooting 55% from the field. Minnesota (18-6) made 24 of 26 free throws.

McBride finished one point shy of her career high set in 2018. Miles became the fastest player in WNBA history to reach 400 points, 100 rebounds and 100 assists - doing it in 22 games.

Kahleah Copper scored 26 points, and Alyssa Thomas had 19 points, eight rebounds and 12 assists for Phoenix (8-17).



The Los Angeles Sparks agreed to part ways with general manager Raegan Pebley.

In the interim, the job will be shared by assistant GMs Zach Knowlton and Nate Nielsen.

Pebbley, 50, was hired as GM in January 2024 without any previous executive experience. The Sparks were 39-66 during her tenure, which included firing coach Curt Miller in September 2024 after two seasons. He was succeeded by Lynne Roberts, who went 21-23 in her first season last year.

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

MUSCAT, July 14: Kuwait launches its campaign at the second West Asia Men’s Volleyball Championship today, facing Syria in its Group A opener at 7:30 pm at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Muscat, Oman. The tournament runs until July 22.

The match comes after the competition’s opening day, which featured the Group B encounter between Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

Kuwait is in Group A alongside Syria and Qatar, with the two sides set to meet on Saturday. The national team enters the regional tournament aiming for a strong showing after a comprehensive preparation phase that included a training camp in Cairo and four friendly matches.

During the camp, the coaching staff worked on improving the team’s technical and physical levels while identifying the best lineup for the championship.

The tournament features seven teams split into two groups, with the top two sides from each group advancing to the semifinals. The remaining teams will compete in classification matches to determine final positions.

Meanwhile, Al-Qadsia has bolstered their first-team squad with the signing of Beninese international Daouda Yacoubou ahead of the new season.



Kuwait volleyball team receives instructions from the coach during a training session ahead of the West Asia Championship.

The two-meter-tall outside hitter arrives with valuable international experience, having previously played for Qatar’s Al Sadd, Turkey’s Alanya and Slovakia’s Bratislava. His arrival is expected

to add power and depth to Al-Qadsia’s lineup.

The club has also completed its volleyball department structure, appointing Hussein Al-Qabandi as general supervisor, Mohammed Al-

Damkhi as team manager, and Argentine coach Humberto Alejandro as head coach. He will be assisted by compatriot Diego, while Luciano Jorge takes charge as team statistician.

‘I’ll do everything I can to reach the top’

Spieth eyes another major after Birkdale glory

SOUTHPORT, England, July 14, (AP): Jordan Spieth was four days shy of turning 24 when he delivered pure magic in the final hour at Royal Birkdale to win the British Open for the third leg of the Grand Slam. It was among the most astonishing finishes in a major championship.

Perhaps even more astonishing? He has only two PGA Tour victories since. He has played in the final group at a major only once.

What hasn’t changed is his optimism that he can get back to his best golf, now matter how far away that looks for a player who is No. 51 in the world, who has not been to the Tour Championship the past two years, who has not been in the conversation at a major in five years.

“If you give up on reaching your ceiling, then I don’t see a point in playing anymore,” Spieth said Monday. “So for me it’s always about I’ll do everything I can to be trying to be at the very best in the world, because I know that I can be. I have been. It’s nice to have the blueprint.”

The blueprint was nearly a decade ago - the pursuit of the calendar Grand Slam that ended with a bogey on the 17th hole at St. Andrews in 2015, his British Open title two years

later, and playing in the final group at Carnoustie in 2018 as he tried to keep possession of the claret jug.

He feels he is on the right track and keeps getting a bad hand. The analogy he used earlier this year was having a bad shoe at the blackjack table, staying put because as soon as he walks away, fortunes surely will

turn.

He’s still at the table.

“I’m quite frustrated with the results considering I know where my game is at,” Spieth said. “It’s better than it was four or five years ago when I got back to top 10 in the world. It’s without a doubt better than it was then. It’s just not quite



Jordan Spieth of the United States plays out of a bunker on the 7th green during a practice round for the British Open Golf championships at Royal Birkdale golf club, in Southport, England. (AP)

showing up in results.

“At the same time, it’s a stay-the-course mentality,” he said. “Sometimes you get rewarded right away, like I did back then maybe in a bit of a lucky fashion, and I understand that sometimes it’s delayed. And that’s how it feels like it is right now. ... So I’m just waiting for that opportunity.”

The return to Royal Birkdale at least allows him to remember how it felt to walk up to the 18th green with victory secure, sitting on the edge of a pot bunker with the claret jug as dozens of photographers captured the image of a 23-year-old often referred to then as “Golden Child.”

What he can’t relive is the finish. He lost the lead on the 13th hole even though his bogey felt like stealing a shot - he took a penalty drop from a dune covered in high grass, hit a blind shot from the driving range and limited the damage with a chip-and-putt for bogey, just like always.

Then came the 6-iron he nearly holed on the par-3 14th and the 50-foot eagle putt on the par-5 15th hole - “Go get that,” he famously said to caddie Michael Greller - and two more birdies.

Change Name

I, Meenakshi Shamra D/o Dinesh Kumar W/o Yogendra Kumar Sharma have changed my name to Meenakshi Sharma for all future intents and purposes. For my wife the name was incorrect in Passport and Civil ID Current Name: Meenakshi Shamra Correct Name: Meenakshi Sharma

Alonso moves fast at Chelsea, holding private talks with Fernandez

LONDON, July 14, (AP): New Chelsea boss Xabi Alonso says he’s spoken to midfielder Enzo Fernandez, whose future with the club has been in doubt for months.

Alonso signed on as the coach in May, took charge on July 1, and had his first press conference at Stamford Bridge on Monday.

Fernandez was handed an internal two-game suspension in April for saying in a podcast he would like to live in Madrid, amid speculation about a move to Real Madrid. Real Madrid de-

nied this month holding an interest in signing Fernandez.

Asked if he would like Fernandez to remain at Stamford Bridge, Alonso said, “Yes.”

“We have spoken,” Alonso added. “But as you can understand, what we have spoken about remains private.”

Fernandez is at the World Cup preparing with Argentina to play England in a semifinal on Wednesday in Atlanta. He’s one of four Chelsea players still involved in the World Cup alongside

England duo Reece James and Trevoh Chalobah and France’s Malo Gusto.

Chelsea finished 10th in the Premier League last season, falling from fourth in the previous season.

Alonso said qualifying for Europe was one of his targets.

“For sure that’s a goal,” the former Bayer Leverkusen and Real Madrid coach said. “But to reach that goal you need to do many right things and to be part of that process, how do

we want to play, how we want to see ourselves, how we want to approach a game wherever we go.

“That’s my job. That’s why I am really looking forward to having the whole squad. We are ambitious and we in Chelsea need to share that energy, that ambition, as well as that hunger to want to have success.”

Chelsea last won the Premier League in 2017 under Antonio Conte. Alonso is the eighth permanent manager since then.



England fans fear repeat as Argentina brings back famous World Cup colors



Argentina's Lionel Messi, front, and Switzerland's Fabian Rieder fight for the ball during the World Cup quarterfinal soccer match in Kansas City, Mo. (AP)

James fully fit for semifinal

NEW YORK, July 14, (Agencies): Argentina will don its dark blue away jersey for today's World Cup semifinal against England, a choice that has revived memories of past encounters and sparked concern among Three Lions fans.

The three-time world champions usually line up in their iconic sky-blue-and-white striped shirts, but FIFA's kit regulations mean the colors would clash with England's traditional white home strip.

Despite being designated as the home side by FIFA, England will face an Argentina team wearing blue — a color that has carried painful memories for their supporters in previous World Cup meetings.

The Daily Mail highlighted the issue with the headline, "Is this a bad omen for England?" while many England fans on social media expressed hopes that their team could switch to its red away kit for the semifinal in Atlanta.

Argentina wore the same dark blue strip during the famous 1986 World Cup quarterfinal victory over England in Mexico, a match remembered for Diego Maradona's controversial goal and his brilliant solo effort that is regarded as one of the greatest goals in World Cup history.



Harry Kane celebrates England's victory over Norway after their World Cup quarterfinal soccer match in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)

The kit itself became part of the story in 1986, as Argentina's original dark shirts were considered too heavy for the conditions in Mexico City. Team officials later bought lighter versions from a local market and added the national crest before the match.

The dark blue jersey appeared again when Argentina met England in the 1998 World Cup round of 16 in France. Argentina advanced after a penalty shootout following a dramatic match that saw England star David Beckham sent off.

England's only World Cup triumph

came in 1966, when the team famously wore its red kit in the final. England defender Reece James says he is fully fit and ready to face Argentina in Wednesday's World Cup semifinal.

The Chelsea right-back sustained a hamstring injury in England's group-stage match against Ghana and missed the wins over Panama, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mexico before returning as a second-half substitute in the tense 2-1 quarterfinal victory over Norway.

With Jarell Quansah still suspended

following his red card against Mexico, James is expected to start against Argentina and help bring balance to an England defense that has conceded plenty of chances during the tournament.

"It's good to be back out there," he told the Lions' Den podcast, relieved to have recovered so quickly.

"Picking up an injury at a tournament is always a race against the clock. I applied myself," he added when explaining his rapid recovery.

James believes an England team that reached the semifinals at the 2018 World Cup and the quarterfinals in Qatar four years ago, as well as the last two European Championship finals, should be able to cope with the pressure of the occasion.

"It comes with experience. The higher stakes the game is, the more pressure... We've been doing it for years, the fundamentals are the same, but the prize is slightly different," he said.

James also insisted that England was not being influenced by news or expectations from outside the squad.

"We're in a bubble, trying to complete our mission. It's hard to see the outside. We're happy we're making everyone at home proud. This is what dreams are made of. Everyone as a little boy dreamt of playing and winning a World Cup," he concluded.

Cairo Stadium turns into sea of fans, Egypt celebrates World Cup heroes



A sea of Egyptians supporters lights up the stadium as fans honour the Pharaohs after their best-ever World Cup run.

CAIRO, July 14: Thousands of Egyptian supporters gathered at Cairo Stadium the day before yesterday to celebrate the national team's return from the 2026 FIFA World Cup, following the Pharaohs' best-ever campaign in the tournament's history.

Egypt's World Cup journey came to an end in the Round of 16 with a narrow 3-2 defeat to Argentina. The Pharaohs had held a two-goal lead until the final 10 minutes before the defending champions staged a late comeback, but Egypt's impressive display earned widespread praise at home and abroad.

The celebration featured a spectacular entrance for the players and coaching staff, led by head coach Hossam Hassan, as they arrived on an open-top bus to a roaring reception from the fans. Mohamed Salah, Omar Marmoush and Hamza Abdelkarim were not present at the event.

The ceremony included entertainment performances and a screening of the team's most memorable moments from the tournament on giant screens, with supporters reliving the goals and highlights that shaped Egypt's historic World Cup campaign.

The Pharaohs had earlier received a massive welcome upon their arrival at El Alamein Airport before being hosted by President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, who honored the delegation for achieving a landmark milestone by reaching the World Cup knockout stage for the first time in Egyptian football history.

Forlán takes charge of Uruguay as national team rebuild begins

MONTEVIDEO, July 13: Uruguay has appointed football legend Diego Forlán as the new head coach of the senior national team and Under-20 side, as the country looks to rebuild following a disappointing 2026 World Cup campaign.

Uruguayan Football Association president Ignacio Alonso confirmed that Forlán will replace Marcelo Bielsa after Uruguay made an early exit from the tournament, finishing the group stage with just two points from three matches.

A national icon, Forlán scored five goals during



Forlán

the 2010 World Cup and remains one of Uruguay's greatest-ever players, with 112 international appearances and 36 goals for "La Celeste."

The 47-year-old will initially serve as interim coach, taking charge of upcoming friendlies and the opening stages of the 2030 World Cup qualifying campaign. The

federation will assess his performance in March before deciding whether to hand him the role on a permanent basis. Forlán is already managing Uruguay's Under-20 team and will combine the two positions as he focuses on developing a new generation of players for the national side.

While highly respected for his achievements as a player, Forlán has limited coaching experience, having previously managed Peñarol for 11 matches in 2020 and second-tier club CA Atenas for 12 games in 2021.

'We must allow the whole world to dream'

India & China hope expansion can open World Cup qualification door

ZURICH, July 14: France, Argentina, Spain and England — the four highest-ranked teams in the FIFA world rankings — have secured places in the semifinals of the 2026 World Cup. However, some of the world's most populous nations are still waiting for their chance to reach football's biggest stage.

A potential expansion of the World Cup to 64 teams could open the door for more countries to qualify in future editions, giving football giants in terms of population renewed hope of making their mark.

India and China, home to a combined population of 2.89 billion people, boast millions of passionate football supporters, yet both nations remain largely absent from the World Cup. The current tournament in the United States, Mexico and Canada features 48 teams for the first time.

The semifinals have brought together the tournament's four highest-ranked sides, with France meeting Spain and Argentina facing England.

China's only World Cup appearance came in 2002 in South Korea



FIFA President Gianni Infantino attends the World Cup quarterfinal soccer match between Norway and England in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)

Infantino has raised hopes for nations such as India and China by backing discussions over a possible 64-team World Cup format for future editions.

"We must allow the whole world to dream of the World Cup, not only Europe and South America," Infantino told Swiss outlet Blue Sport on Saturday.

Letexier removed from World Cup list

LOS ANGELES, July 14: French referees François Letexier and Clément Turpin will not officiate any more matches at the 2026 FIFA World Cup after FIFA confirmed the 13 referees selected for the tournament's final four fixtures.

The pair have been forced to leave the competition despite France still being in the race for the title. FIFA regulations prevent referees from nations still competing in the tournament from taking charge of the semifinals, third-place match or final to avoid any possible conflict of interest.

Letexier's final appearance came in the quarterfinal between Argentina and Egypt, which Argentina won 3-2. The French referee came under scrutiny from the Egyptian camp over a disputed penalty decision in the build-up to Argentina's late winning goal.

Turpin's final assignment was England's 2-1 extra-time victory over Norway, a match that sparked debate after Norwegian players claimed Jude Bellingham's equalizer followed contact between the ball and a suspended camera cable. FIFA later supported Turpin's handling of the incident.

Although Turpin and Letexier have ended their World Cup duties, French referee Jérôme Brisard remains available as a VAR official and could still be selected for the remaining matches.



Egypt's Mohamed Salah (10) talks with Referee Francois Letexier, of France, during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between Argentina and Egypt in Atlanta. (AP)

World Cup Diary

Slaven Bili returns to Croatia: Slaven Bilić is back as coach of Croatia after the team's most successful coach Zlatko Dalić left following the World Cup.

Bilić returns to a job he left 14 years ago, after six years in charge, with experience of coaching in the Premier League with West Ham and West Bromwich, as well as in Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

"I am genuinely happy to start this challenge and I feel fully prepared for it - as a more mature and experienced coach than in 2006, yet with the same motivation and desire to see Croatia stay powerful, bold, and successful," Bilić said in a statement.

He takes over a Croatia team which exited the World Cup amid a blizzard of recriminations. Its last-gasp equalizer was ruled offside over the lightest of touches detected by a sensor in the ball, ensuring a 2-1 loss to Portugal in the round of 32.

That ended nine years in charge for Dalić, who led Croatia to its only World Cup final in 2018, a loss to France, and then third place in 2022. The national soccer federation hailed him as the "greatest Croatian coach of all time" on a social media graphic when he stepped down last week.

Bilić was a standout defender on the team which was third at the 1998 World Cup, a landmark result for the then-newly independent nation. His last coaching job was with Saudi club Al Fateh from July 2023 to August 2024. (AP)

Vušковиć joins Brighton from Tottenham: Teenage defender Luka Vušković moved between Premier League clubs on Tuesday, joining Brighton from Tottenham after playing at the World Cup for Croatia.

Brighton said the 19-year-old Vušković signed a five-year deal without stating the transfer fee.

British media reported the fee was 46 million pounds (\$61.5 million). One month ago Tottenham paid Brighton a reported 52 million pounds (\$69.6 million) for the Netherlands defender Jan Paul van Hecke who Vušković should now replace.

Vušковиć played once at the World Cup, starting in the 4-2 loss to England in their opening group-stage game. Croatia was eliminated in the round of 32 by Portugal after a controversial call to disallow an equalizing goal deep in stoppage time.

Vušковиć's game time at Tottenham seemed blocked by the off-season signings of central defenders Van Hecke and Marcos Senesi, who was a free agent after his contract expired at Bournemouth.

Vušковиć spent last season on loan from Tottenham at Hamburger SV, where his brother Mario remains under contract serving a four-year ban in a doping case that expires in November. He won the Bundesliga's official rookie of the month award four times.

Brighton placed eighth in the Premier League last season and qualified for the third-tier Conference League, starting on Aug. 20 in the qualifying playoffs round. (AP)



In this file photo, Inter Milan's goalkeeper Yann Sommer controls the ball during the Serie A soccer match between AC Milan and Inter Milan, in Milan, Italy. (AP)

Sports

Kuwait names final squad for U-19 Championship



Jensen maps out team pans during training session.

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 14: The Kuwait Handball Federation has unveiled the final 18-player squad for the national U-19 team ahead of the 19th Asian Men's Youth Handball Championship in China, which also serves as a qualifier for the IHF Men's Youth World Championship.

The squad features Hassan Munther, Obaid Al-Shammari, Abdulrahman Al-Hashal, Hussein Boulund, Salem Al-Mahmoud, Youssef Madouh, Hussein Muntheni, Mohammed Faisal, Yaqoub Hassan, Abdulatif Sal-

meen, Hassan Rajab, Abdulwahab Al-Mutawa, Hassan Boulund, Saad Al-Khamis, Faisal Al-Enezi, Hussein Sami, Khairallah Abdullah and Abdulatif Al-Wuhaib.

Kuwait will head to China aiming to make a strong impression and challenge for one of the coveted World Championship qualification spots after completing an intensive build-up that included training camps and a series of friendly matches.

The team will be led by Danish head coach Hanni Jensen, with Saud Mufreh serving as assistant coach. Yassine Idrissi is the goalkeeping coach, while Youssef Al-Shahin will act as team manager.

Real pushes for Barcelona titles to be revoked over Negreira case

MADRID, July 14: Real Madrid has called on UEFA to consider stripping Barcelona of the trophies won during the period under investigation in the Negreira case, according to reports in the Spanish media, in the latest escalation of tensions between the two La Liga giants.

Spanish outlet AS reported that Real Madrid remains determined to take the matter to the end through both sporting and legal avenues, with relations between the two clubs at an all-time low and no sign of reconciliation.

The Madrid-based club has continued its legal efforts in the Negreira case while also approaching football governing bodies, including UEFA, over possible sporting consequences.

Real Madrid has asked the court to require Barcelona to provide its complete compliance and internal oversight framework from 2010 to 2018, in order to examine the measures in place to prevent sporting corruption and whether they were properly enforced.

The club has also requested financial records, payment approvals, internal procedures and audit documents linked to the companies Tresep, Radamanto and Best Norton, claiming the documents were previously requested but have not been included in the case file.

Real Madrid is reportedly determined to maintain pressure on both the sporting and legal fronts until a verdict is reached in the Negreira investigation.

Jose Mourinho returned to Real Madrid's Valdebebas training center on Monday to begin preseason training after taking charge of the club's first team for a second spell.

With many of Real Madrid's first-team players, such as Jude Bellingham and Kylian Mbappe, still at the World Cup, Mourinho will not be able to train with the full squad for some time. However, he told Real Madrid TV that work had begun long before Monday's opening session.

"It's not like I arrived here today and everything starts now. We've been working hard for a long time with the club's structure at different levels," he explained.

Mourinho returns to the club 13 years after leaving in June 2013 and said he was delighted to be back.

"This feels like a mission. It's not about worrying about myself or whether I'll win a lot or a little. I'm here to help everyone become better: players, staff, and to create a culture of work, responsibility, ambition, and responsibility." "It's not about working at Real Madrid; it's about working for Real Madrid and that is the spirit with which I am here." "Obviously, I would like to have all the players here, but you have to look at it positively. It's about getting to know the boys I'll be working with and giving them the opportunity to get to know me," explained Mourinho, who will include several players from Real Madrid's B team, Real Madrid Castilla, in the early training sessions.



A file photo of Real Madrid and Barcelona presidents having a chat.

Pogacar powers to 3rd stage victory to demoralize rivals and extend Tour lead

Vingegaard struggles to keep pace

LE LIORAN, France, July 14, (AP): Four-time champion Tadej Pogacar dealt his rivals another crushing blow by winning the 10th stage of the Tour de France on Tuesday to extend his already commanding overall lead.

"You never know how long it lasts," said Pogacar, who is on course to equal the record for Tour wins. Only Belgian Eddy Merckx, Spaniard Miguel Indurain and Frenchmen Jacques Anquetil and Bernard Hinault have five Tour victories to their names.

"We just need to be grateful for this moment to be riding in the biggest race of the world," the 27-year-old Pogacar said.

Pogacar, who had already sapped his rivals' morale with victory on the iconic Col du Tourmalet on Thursday, again stamped his authority with a break just over 900 meters from the summit of the Col de Pertus, the penultimate climb on Tuesday's hilly stage.

Pogacar's main challenger Jonas Vingegaard couldn't follow and Pogacar quickly made ground on Richard Carapaz before powering past him 200 meters before the summit. The Slovenian rider didn't slow down. Pogacar was 5 seconds ahead of Carapaz at the summit, and 18 ahead of Vingegaard, Remco Evenepoel, Florian Lipowitz, Juan Ayuso



Slovenia's Tadej Pogacar, wearing the overall leader's yellow jersey, celebrates after winning the tenth stage of the Tour de France cycling race with start in Aurillac and finish in Le Lioran, France. (AP)

and Paul Seixas.

He then increased that lead.

At the finish line, Pogacar was 32 seconds ahead of Evenepoel for his 24th stage victory altogether - his

third on Bastille Day, France's national holiday - and the third already at this Tour.

Seixas, French fans' greatest hope, was third, 34 seconds behind.

Vingegaard could only finish 44 seconds behind Pogacar, leaving the yellow jersey holder with a lead of 3 minutes, 36 seconds after 10 stages.

Pogacar already had the biggest lead he has ever had at this stage of the race.

Pogacar's UAE Emirates-XRG teammates controlled Tuesday's stage even when Mathieu van der Poel, the winner of the previous stage, was among a group of 31 riders that pulled away before the first climb of the day on Côte de Pailhlerols.

Javier Romo emerged to lead alone but he was never allowed to get too far ahead. Carapaz attacked after the Spanish rider was caught by the peloton and he in turn was powerless to prevent Pogacar surging past on the Col de Pertus.

"The team did a super good job. We targeted this stage a long time ago," said Pogacar, who remembered being beaten by Vingegaard "fair and square" at Le Lioran two years earlier. That was the Dane's last stage win over his rival.

"Today I had similar legs in the finish, completely destroyed," said Pogacar, who added he couldn't hear anything over his radio because of the noise from fans. "I didn't know I was going to win until the last kilometer."

Some fans booed, but Pogacar said he didn't mind. "To all the guys that were booing, they give us more power," he said.

Sommer joins Club Brugge on 3-year deal

Trossard leaves Arsenal for Besiktas

LONDON, July 14, (Agencies): Belgium winger Leandro Trossard is moving from Arsenal to Besiktas as the first of the English champion's title-winning squad to leave the club.

Arsenal said on Tuesday "we have reached an agreement with Besiktas for the permanent transfer" without stating the price the Istanbul club will pay.

Trossard spent 3 1/2 years at Arsenal after joining from Brighton, and scored six goals in the Premier League last season as the Gunners became champions for the first time since 2004.

Besiktas posted a video clip of the 31-year-old Trossard wearing the club's black and white jersey, and doing his signature goal celebration of cupping his hands to his eyes like a pair of goggles.

Trossard was in Arsenal's starting lineup for the Champions League final against Paris Saint-Germain in late May, and started all six games in Belgium's run to the World Cup quarterfinals.

Besiktas starts its European campaign next week in the Europa League second qualifying round, hosting Midtjylland in the first leg.

The 16-time Turkish champion placed fourth in the league last season and last won the title in 2021. Besiktas also signed Bayern Munich goalkeeper Alexander Nübel this month.

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Swiss goalkeeper Yann Sommer signed up for Champions League soccer with Club Brugge after three seasons and two Serie A titles with Inter Milan.

Brugge said it gave the 37-year-old Sommer a three-year contract as a free agent. He will replace veteran Simon Mignolet, who retired in May aged 38 after helping Brugge win the Belgian league.

Sommer will return to the Champions League after helping Inter reach the final in 2025, when it lost 5-0 to Paris Saint-Germain. Inter was stunningly eliminated by Bodø/Glimt last season in the knockout playoffs round. Sommer has won league titles with Inter, Bayern Munich and in Switzerland with Basel, where he started his career.

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Uganda Premier League side Kitara FC has signed Ghanaian defender Bonney Christopher on a two-year contract, the club announced.

"Kitara Football Club have completed the signing of Ghanaian born defender Bonney Christopher on a two-year contract," the club said in a statement.

Christopher becomes Kitara's first signing of the current transfer window as the Uganda Cup holder strengthens its squad for the 2026-27 season, when it will also represent Uganda in the TotalEnergies CAF Confederation Cup.

Allegri admits Milan collapse has 'weighed on me' as he starts a new Napoli era

MILAN, July 14, (AP): Massimiliano Allegri is not looking for redemption at Napoli despite still being troubled by the end of his second spell in charge of AC Milan.

Allegri was fired by Milan in May after what the club's owners deemed "an unequivocal failure" of a season. The 58-year-old was hired by Napoli at the start of July on a three-year contract.

Allegri's Milan spent much of last season in the top two positions and fighting for the Serie A title before a run of only two wins in the last eight matches dropped it to fifth on the last day of the season and saw the Rossoneri miss out on the lucrative Champions League.

"It's not a question of redemption; sometimes seasons

just end a certain way. I'm disappointed by how things turned out last season," Allegri said on Tuesday in his first press conference as Napoli coach. "We (Milan) were in the top three from Matchday 2 through Matchday 37; we only dropped out on the first and last matchdays, and the last one is the one that counts."

"I'm disappointed because, in all my time coaching - at Juventus and Milan - this was the first time I've finished outside the top four. And I won't deny that it's weighed on me."

Allegri has a tough act to follow at Napoli as he replaces Antonio Conte, who left the southern club in May after two years in charge, during which his team finished first and second in the Italian league.

Allegri has replaced Conte before, when he became Juventus coach in 2014 after Conte steered the Bianconeri to three Serie A titles. Allegri went on to win five straight at Juventus as well as guiding the team to four Italian Cup titles and two Champions League finals.

"I am inheriting a squad that is certainly accustomed to hard work," Allegri said about Napoli. "Conte has proven his worth throughout his career. I'm lucky, this is actually the second time I've inherited Antonio's team - let's hope it's a good omen."

"It will be important to work with seriousness and professionalism, and above all to lay the groundwork for reaching March - as I always say that's when seasons are

decided - still in contention for all our objectives: Serie A, the Champions League, the Italian Cup."

Milan replaced Allegri with Ruben Amorim, and at the Portuguese coach's presentation team owner Gerry Cardinale referred to him as a coach who plays to win, rather than playing not to lose.

"I absolutely do not comment on the ownership's words," Allegri said. "I can only thank those who supported me all season. Then, unfortunately, we are sorry for the missed objectives."

"But another year begins, beautiful to experience, we have three competitions and we start with great enthusiasm."