



KUWAIT-IRAQ TIES UNSHAKEABLE: SHEIKH FAHAD AL-YOUSEF Abdaly border comeback underway

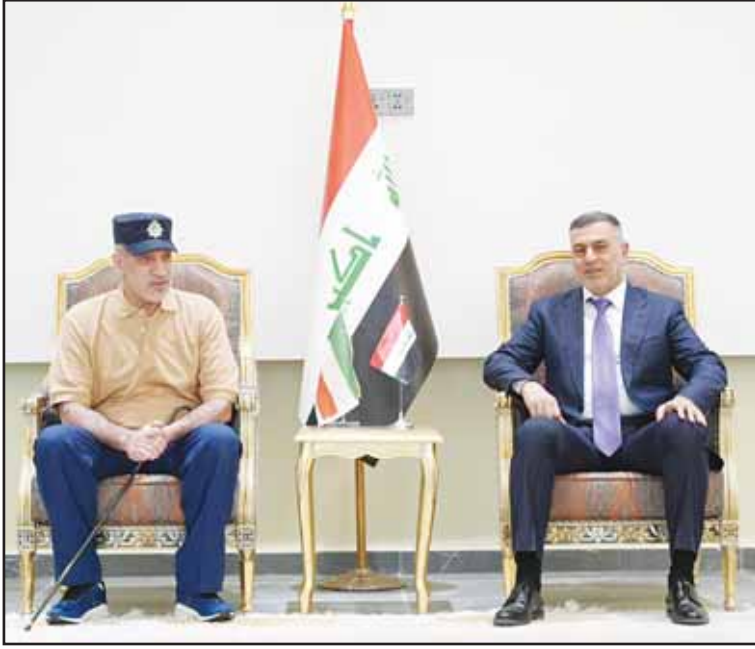
By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah announced the reopening of Abdaly border crossing to passenger and commercial traffic within 48 hours.

In a joint press conference held in Basra, Iraq – with Basra Governor Asaad Al-Eidani in attendance, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef affirmed that the relationship between Iraq and Kuwait is strong and unchanged.

He said the Abdaly border will reopen within 48 hours to welcome the Iraqis and allow Kuwaitis to enter Iraq, in addition to the resumption of trade between the two countries.



Left: Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah with the Governor of Basra in the Republic of Iraq, Asaad Al-Eidani. Right: Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef during his visit to Abdaly border crossing.



Ministry of Interior photos

- First Deputy PM's Basra visit sends unity message
- Security coordination gets new push
- Houthis escalate attacks on Saudi
- Energy chokepoints under siege
- US strikes cripple Iran infrastructure
- US warns citizens as tensions soar

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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Gulf states are more important to China and Russia than Iran

THE statement of US President Donald Trump that he will not allow Iran to bully the region and the efforts of Washington to form an international coalition to stop the Iranian aggression in the Strait of Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb Strait indicate that the international community has taken a step forward from mere political condemnation to the beginning of a serious process to punish the rogue Iranian regime.

However, this step is insufficient as long as there are major powers that continue to provide the Iranian regime with ample support by obstructing any international resolution that could subject Tehran to the international law.

Since relations among states are based on interests, it is a must to work seriously to stop the violence and terrorism practiced by Iran.

I mentioned in a previous article that the volume of trade and the political relations of Russia and China with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states are far greater than with Iran. This fact makes the alignment of Moscow and Beijing with the Gulf states more important than their support for a rogue regime.

Tehran is harming the entire world by blocking the Strait of Hormuz and directing the Houthi group in Yemen to disrupt traffic in Bab el-Mandeb Strait. Major Asian countries rely on the region's oil for most of their energy needs, hence, their support for Iran is like shooting themselves on the foot despite the lower price of Iranian oil that China receives compared to the global market price.

In the end, the US will toughen its sanctions on Iran, leading to the loss of this advantage, especially given the lack of land routes between Iran and China.

The continuous stance of Russia on this war is prolonging its conflict with Ukraine. European and western countries will exacerbate the situation if they do not receive a firm Russian position against Iran.

This equation has been clear since the beginning of the war. Nevertheless, it seems that some parties in these countries are prolonging the pressure on the global economy in spite of their losses for illogical reasons.

Consequently, the announcement of Beijing about its attempts to resume the Islamabad negotiations is inadequate as long as it continues to turn a blind eye to the Iranian practices. This does not mean that the US and European countries will offer concessions in facing Tehran's hardening stance due to the growing global economic losses.

It must be emphasized that the Iranian regime operates according to a military doctrine founded on an existential ideological principle. Thus, the Iranian regime will not abandon this doctrine, which underscores the need for a radical regime change. The Iranian regime is gambling with its people and the fate of the entire nation in order to buy more time.

From this perspective, we can understand the objective of the regime in expanding the scope of the war by targeting civilian infrastructure and employing its proxies in the region to bomb border crossings, as it occurred recently in Abdaly, in addition to disrupting shipping traffic in the Bab el-Mandeb and Hormuz straits.

The Iranian regime believes it is exhausting its adversaries, even though it practices terrorism and violates international laws and conventions. This situation requires the whole world to stand against the Iranian regime, just as it did against Al-Qaeda and ISIS.

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Global investment titans back Kuwait

KPC clinches landmark \$16 billion pact

KUWAIT CITY, July 25, (KUNA): Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) announced Saturday that its wholly owned subsidiary, Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), has signed a USD 16 billion lease-and-lease-back agreement involving its entire domestic and export pipeline network with a consortium of international infrastructure and institutional investors led collectively by Blackstone, Brookfield and KKR.

In a statement KPC told KUNA that part of the transaction, a newly formed Kuwaiti-incorporated JV will lease from KOC the usage rights to all of its 13 pipelines, spanning a total of approximately 320 kilometers of Kuwait's pipeline network. Under the terms of the agreement,

the JV will grant back to KOC the exclusive use, operational and maintenance rights in the pipeline assets for a 20.5 year period, in exchange for a volume-based tariff.

KOC and the consortium, comprising Blackstone, Brookfield and KKR, will establish the new joint venture, with KOC holding a 51 percent majority stake and the consortium collectively holding the remaining 49 percent, with equal stakes and on equal terms.

KOC will continue to maintain full ownership and operational control of the pipeline network. The JV will not impose any restrictions on Kuwait's refining throughput or production volumes, all of which remain subject to decisions made by

the State of Kuwait.

The JV is expected to generate up-front proceeds of USD 7.85 billion for KOC upon closing, supporting KPC's capital expenditure plans, including KPC's target of 4 million barrels per day of crude oil production capacity by 2035, and supporting Kuwait's broader efforts to diversify sources of capital and deepen engagement with global investors.

The commitment represents the largest foreign direct investment in Kuwait's history. Its scale reflects the quality of KOC's asset base, the strength of KPC's operational stewardship, and the enduring appeal of Kuwait as an investment destination.

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Rome talks cement defense alliance

Kuwait, Italy align on regional security

KUWAIT CITY, July 25, (KUNA): Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraian held high-level talks in Italy aimed at strengthening military cooperation and expanding the strategic defense partnership between the two countries.

During his official visit to Rome, Al-Shuraian met with Italian Defense Minister Guido Crosetto and Italy's Chief of Defense, General Luciano Portolano, to discuss ways of enhancing bilateral defense cooperation and addressing issues of mutual interest.

According to a statement issued by the Kuwaiti General Staff on Friday, Al-Shuraian was accorded an official reception ceremony at the headquarters of the Italian Defense General Staff in the Italian capital.

The meetings focused on strengthening joint military cooperation, reinforcing the long-standing strategic defense partnership between Kuwait and Italy, and exploring avenues for broader collaboration between the armed forces of the two nations.

The two sides also exchanged views on the latest regional developments and discussed efforts to promote security and stability in the region.

Kuwaiti Ambassador to Italy Nasser Al-Qahtani attended the meeting with Defense Minister Crosetto, while Lieutenant General Al-Shuraian was accompanied throughout the visit by a delegation of senior Kuwaiti Army officers.

The General Staff said the Kuwaiti delegation has since concluded its official visit and returned to Kuwait.



Italian Defense Minister Guido Crosetto receives Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraian.



General Staff of Army photos
Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraian with Italy's Chief of Defense General Luciano Portolano.

No shortage ... no hoarding

Kuwait keeps 5-carton water purchase limit

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: Kuwait's Ministry of Social Affairs has confirmed that restrictions limiting bottled water purchases from central markets and cooperative society branches will remain in place, with customers allowed to buy a maximum of five cartons per purchase invoice.

The ministry stressed that cooperatives must strictly enforce the circular and said there would be no leniency in applying the regulations governing bottled water sales amid current circumstances.

An official source from the ministry's Cooperative Sector said instructions

were issued to the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies to ensure all cooperatives comply with the purchase limits and prevent bulk buying.

The source said the measure is aimed at stopping panic buying and excessive stockpiling, which can lead to unnecessary pressure on supplies and overcrowding at sales outlets.

The ministry clarified that the purchase limit is not due to any shortage in bottled water production or supply. Water factories continue to produce large quantities, and supplies are being delivered regularly to markets and cooperative societies.

Officials said the restrictions are precautionary measures designed to regulate purchasing behavior, ensure fair access for all consumers, and maintain stable availability of bottled water.

The ministry said it is continuing to monitor compliance by cooperatives and will take action against any violations or failure to implement the directives.

Consumers were urged to purchase only the quantities they need and avoid hoarding or spreading unverified information that could create unnecessary concern among citizens and residents.



9 Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait contributes \$3 million to support the Kuwait Emergency Response Fund

9 Kamco Invest named Kuwait's top DCM Bank by Euromoney



10 KFH honors top-performing children of employees in high school

'Dialogue, not escalation'

Hormuz hurdle no barrier to Pakistan-Kuwait trade

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: Pakistani Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Zafar Iqbal said his country has overcome the restrictions resulting from the

closure of the Strait of Hormuz by establishing alternative routes for transporting goods to Kuwait, thus, ensuring the continuous flow of goods.

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Pakistani Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Zafar Iqbal, joined by fellow ambassadors, during the launch of Pakistan Fruit Week at Assima Mall on Saturday.



‘Win to cement Kuwait-Spain sports ties’

‘La Liga’ expected to organize club matches: ambassador

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: Spanish Ambassador to Kuwait Manuel Hernández Gamallo affirmed that the victory of his country in the 2026 World Cup marks a new beginning in terms of solidifying sports cooperation between Kuwait and Spain.

Gamallo made the statement when he hosted a celebration of the victory of Spain at his residence, with Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Meshal Al-Sabah, several ambassadors and heads of diplomatic missions in attendance.

He pointed out the promising opportunities for expanding the partnership of sports institutions in the two countries, including the signing of official agreements, encouraging La Liga (the Spanish football league) to come to Kuwait, and organizing events and matches for Spanish clubs in Kuwait.

He considers the above-mentioned sports achievement an opportunity to celebrate with friends and football fans in Kuwait.

He disclosed that he feels at home in Kuwait, indicating that the World Cup reinforced this feeling, thanks to the immense popularity of Spanish football and the Spanish national team among citizens and residents here.

He stated that a large number of fans watched the matches of the Spanish national team and fully supported the team until they won the title. He expressed his sincere gratitude to everyone who joined the embassy in celebrating this achievement.

He indicated that Kuwait has a solid foundation for sports cooperation with Spain, given the presence of football academies operating according to the Spanish curriculum and supervised by Spanish coaches.

He said there is an opportunity to push for the signing of formal cooperation agreements between Kuwaiti and Spanish sports entities, in addition to encouraging partnerships with the private sector.

He also mentioned the possibility of encouraging La Liga (the Spanish football league) to come to Kuwait, organizing sporting events or hosting matches for Spanish clubs in Kuwait in the future. He added that he received several proposals in this regard, expressing his optimism that the coming period will bring “pleasant surprises” that will strengthen sports cooperation between Kuwait and Spain.



Manuel Hernandez Gamallo

‘Al-Rish Diwaniya’ hosts prominent guests

Kuwaiti people are fortunate to have Al-Sabah family: Al-Saif



Some photos taken at the gathering.

By Bassam Al-Qassab

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: ‘Al-Rish Diwaniya,’ one of the oldest diwanis (traditional Kuwaiti gathering places) in Kuwait, hosted a delegation consisting of President of the Political Science Club Dalal Abdullah Khaled Al-Saif and Kuwaiti Ambassador for Peace Eng. Sarah Faisal Abdullah Al-Kharji.

This is a significant national event, coinciding with the announcement of the initiative titled, “The Amir in Our Hearts”, which aims to publish a book documenting the messages of loyalty and affection for His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, with contributions from the ministers, governors, owners of Kuwaiti diwanis, diplomats, and prominent national, media and cultural figures.

The book will serve as a national document reflecting the deep relationship between the leader and the people, and embodying the values of loyalty and sense of belonging that characterize the Kuwaiti society.

Fahad Al-Rish and the regular attendees of the diwaniya warmly welcomed

the guests.

Al-Saif expressed her happiness over the opportunity to be at Al-Rish Diwaniya, while praising the efforts of the Kuwait Armed forces in defending the country and the patriotism of the Kuwaiti people.

Addressing the Al-Rish Family, she stated “you are the sons of His Highness the Amir, not just the sons of Al-Rish.”

Al-Rish responded by confirming that His Highness the Amir made the same statement when they visited him at Bayan Palace. He quoted HH the Amir as saying, “Al-Sabah is Al-Rish, and Al-Rish is Al-Sabah.”

Al-Saif emphasized that the Kuwaiti people are fortunate to have the Al-Sabah Family, indicating that each Amir leaves his unique mark in the history of the nation. She added that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad, may Allah protect him, is blessed with immense wisdom and the love of the people.

On the other hand, Al-Rish welcomed the visiting delegation, affirming that this visit has deep national significance, adding that he and all of the patrons of his diwaniya are proud of such visit.

He said His Highness the Amir estab-



From right to left: Ms. Huda, wife of Ahmed Al-Rish, Dr. Salma Al-Rish, acting Supervisor for High School Education in Hawally Educational District, Ms. Amal Al-Rish, Senior Legal Affairs Specialist and Head of the Technical Office at the Ministry of Interior Ms. Munira Al-Rish.

lished the approach of solidifying direct communication with citizens and the bridges of trust between the leader and the people.

He pointed out that the interest of His Highness the Amir in the diwanis is not surprising, as it is an extension of his concern for the pulse of Kuwaiti society,

based on his belief in the historical role that diwanis play as a mirror of the society, a platform for dialogue and consultation, and one of the most important features of the national identity.

He asserted that diwanis are not just a place for showing hospitality, because throughout the history of Kuwait, they

have been serving as a gathering place for Kuwaiti families and a social, political, cultural and economic platform that strengthen national unity and consolidate the values of consultation and solidarity among the people of the nation.

Meanwhile, the women of the Al-Rish Family, Munira Saleh Al-Rish and Amal Abdullah Al-Rish, affirmed that the people of Kuwait renewed their pledge of loyalty and allegiance to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may Allah protect him. They stressed that the Kuwaiti people stand behind the political leadership with sincerity and determination, believing that the strength of Kuwait lies in the unity of its people and their support for their leaders.

They added that His Highness the Amir is leading the nation towards progress with steadfastness, competence and wisdom, praying that Allah Almighty continues to protect him and perpetuate the blessings of security, safety and stability for Kuwait.

Moreover, acting Supervisor for Secondary Education in the Hawally Educational District Dr. Salma Abdulah Hamad Al-Rish stated that renewing

the pledge of allegiance to the State of Kuwait and its wise leader is a national responsibility. She added that adherence to the Constitution and respect for the laws and decisions issued by the state are manifestations of good citizenship, while they strengthen security and stability, and preserve national unity.

She added that educational institutions play a pivotal role in instilling the values of loyalty and respect for order and the rule of law, and strengthening national identity in the hearts of the younger generation in order to prepare fully aware youths who are capable of continuing the journey of building and development.

Also, the attendees agreed that the initiative is a message of loyalty from the people of Kuwait to their leader, reflecting the deep-rooted relationship between the leader and the people, based on trust, love and loyalty.

They said this initiative embodies the cohesion of the Kuwaiti society and its national unity, while reaffirming that diwanis will remain one of the most important social and national institutions that preserve the memories of Kuwait and reinforce the values of patriotism and communication among citizens.



KUNA photo

Deputy Foreign Minister, Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan at the meeting in Manila, Philippines.

Kuwait: Dialogue cornerstone in global mediation, peace bid

KUWAIT CITY, July 25, (KUNA): Deputy Foreign Minister, Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan, said on Friday that preventive diplomacy is a cornerstone of Kuwait’s foreign policy, emphasizing the country’s unwavering commitment to supporting the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

This came during his participation in a meeting held in Manila, the Philippines, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), on the sidelines of the ASEAN meetings.

Ambassador Al-Mashaan added that the true success of diplomacy is not measured solely by the conflicts it resolves, but also by the crises it prevents before they occur. He considered this the “quiet” achievement of preventive diplomacy, which has proven its importance today, just as it did when the TAC was adopted in 1976.

He expressed pride in Kuwait’s accession to this treaty, which embodies shared principles based on dialogue, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence, calling for building upon the legacy established over the past five decades by strengthening the practical measures of preventive diplomacy to help prevent conflicts before they escalate.

Concluding his speech, the Kuwaiti senior diplomat stressed the importance of supporting mediation and dialogue efforts in order to consolidate sustainable security and peace.

Accede

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) announced that Sweden, Poland, Lithuania, and Romania formally acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia on Friday.

A joint ASEAN foreign ministers’ statement said the four countries signed their respective Instruments of Accession during a ceremony held following the 59th ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Manila, Philippines, in the presence of Philippine Foreign Minister Maria Theresa Lazaro.

‘Kuwait pioneer in charitable, humanitarian work’

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: United Nations (UN) Ambassador for Community Partnership and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Al-Awazem Charitable Foundation Hamad Zaid Saud Al-Bseis stated that Kuwait is one of the leading countries in charitable and humanitarian work, thanks to its legacy in this regard and the unwavering support that the political leadership provides to charitable endeavors, in addition to the development of its institutional framework, which reinforced governance, transparency and sustainability, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Bseis pointed out that charitable work in Kuwait is a model worthy of emulation at the regional and international levels. He said the Kuwaiti charitable organizations moved from the concept of providing traditional aid to adopting sustainable devel-



Al-Bseis

by their ability to manage resources efficiently and transparently, face accountability, ensure compliance, and boost the confidence of donors, community and regulatory bodies.

He added that investing in governance and

opment programs based on scientific planning, impact measurement and partnership building.

He explained that governance is the true guarantee for the sustainability of charitable action, asserting that the success of institutions is no longer measured by the amount of donations or the number of projects, but by their ability to manage resources efficiently and transparently, face accountability, ensure compliance, and boost the confidence of donors, community and regulatory bodies.

He added that investing in governance and

building institutional capacity raised the efficiency of the non-profit sector and solidified the position of Kuwait as the main reference point in humanitarian work. He revealed that many Kuwaiti institutions have adopted global best practices in risk management, internal control, impact measurement and digital transformation.

He said maintaining Kuwait’s leadership position requires continuous development of institutional performance, taking advantage of modern technologies and artificial intelligence, promoting social innovation, and equipping Kuwaiti staff with the necessary skills.

He affirmed that the future of Kuwaiti charitable action is linked to further strengthening governance, enhancing partnerships, measuring impact, and investing in sustainable development.

Other Voices

By Ahmad alsarraf

Countries around the world differ significantly in their approaches to a citizen’s desire to change their first, middle, or last name. The more developed a country is, the more flexible it tends to be in this regard, even allowing changes to an individual’s entire name. In these countries, the determining factor is the citizen’s national identification number, or Social Security Number (SSN), as in the United States.

This number is primarily used to track an individual’s income, taxes, career history, and access to banking and credit services. It remains associated with the citizen from birth until death and.

In the US, it consists of nine digits divided into three parts, each with its own meaning and purpose. The first part of the SSN previously indicated the place of residence, but this practice was later discontinued. Therefore, the identification number serves as a record of the individual regardless of any name changes or modifications..

For example, the US Vice President’s birth name was James Donald Bowman, which he later changed to James David Hamel before eventually adopting the name James David Vance, often abbreviated for political purposes as J.D. Vance. Throughout all these changes, his identification number remained unchanged. Name modifications are generally permitted only through a court order to ensure that the change is not intended to evade prosecution, legal charges, or criminal responsibility.

Last April, Kuwait issued a law regulating procedures related to lineage claims and name corrections.

The law represents a significant legislative and regulatory step for developing the legal framework for protecting lineage and names, while strengthening the controls governing these matters in a way



alsarraf

Lineage, affiliation and changing surnames

that safeguards personal and family identity and supports social stability.

There is no justification for excessive restrictions in this area, as it relates to personal freedom, provided that a strong security system is in place to ensure the identification of individuals through a unique and specific number.

However, the identification number is not currently fully reliable, despite its use alongside the civil ID number, as it competes with other identifiers such as the passport number, which differs from it, the driver’s license number, the nationality number, and the serial number printed on the back of the civil ID card.

Therefore, intervention is needed to eliminate this somewhat confusing multiplicity and adopt a single number for all official documents.

Determining a person’s true identity has become relatively easy, and the risks associated with similar names or name changes are no longer significant, especially with advancements in DNA testing, biometric identification, and iris scanning.

The new law has introduced stricter regulations for requests to change names or surnames, limiting them to specific cases following a significant increase in such requests.

These regulations are necessary to provide relevant authorities with clear guidelines to prevent the manipulation of names and lineage, ensure the seriousness of such requests, and protect the related legal and social considerations.

It is also essential to adopt modern scientific methods, such as DNA testing, in matters related to lineage, while establishing more precise procedures and fees and criminalizing the submission of false information to concerned authorities. These measures would enhance the accuracy of evidence and prevent the misuse of legal procedures.

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Kuwait, Slovakia in bilateral talks

K U W A I T CITY, July 25, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held a phone call on Friday with Slovak Deputy Prime Minister Tomas Taraba, during which they reviewed bi-lateral relations and ways to further strengthen cooperation across various fields.

The two officials also discussed latest regional developments and exchanged views on ongoing efforts to address the current situation, read a ministry statement.



Sheikh Jarrah

Hearing aids each month: official

PADA inks deal for supply of 300 specialized wheelchairs

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: Dr. Khalifa Al-Hailai, the acting Deputy Director General for Medical, Psychological and Social Services at the Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PtADA), affirmed that PADA is continuing to enhance its services by adopting technical and medical standards aimed at ensuring the efficient delivery of assistance to beneficiaries.

In a press statement, Al-Hailai said PADA has signed contracts to supply around 300 wheelchairs with specialized technical and medical specifications. The wheelchairs were selected based on recommendations from specialized committees that evaluate each case and determine the most suitable type of wheelchair. The contracts were awarded to companies that also provide maintenance, warranty and after-sales services.

Al-Hailai revealed that PADA has also developed a plan to speed up supply and delivery procedures while closely monitoring contract implementation to reduce waiting times and gradually meet existing requests.

He went on to explain that PADA continues to distribute hearing aids on a monthly basis to eligible people with hearing impairments. The devices are provided based on assessments by specialized medical committees and following the necessary examinations to ensure each beneficiary receives the most suitable hearing aid according to the degree of disability and individual needs.



Dr Al-Hailai

Kuwait raps terror hit in Pakistan

KUWAIT CITY, July 25, (KUNA) : The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Friday expressed the State of Kuwait's condemnation and denunciation of the attack that targeted a security checkpoint in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province northwestern of the friendly Islamic Republic of Pakistan, resulting in military and civilian casualties and injuries.

The Ministry reaffirmed Kuwait's full solidarity with Pakistan, as well as unwavering stance against all forms of violence and terrorism, extending Kuwait's heartfelt condolences and deep sympathy to the families of the victims, as well as to the government and people of Pakistan, and a speedy recovery for the injured.

First sustainable factory processing wool: KFAS

Kuwait's 'Soof' Center wins '26 innovation award



A view of the first sustainable factory in the country for processing local wool.



KUWAIT CITY, July 25, (KUNA): The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) announced that the 'Soof' yarn manufacturing center has won the 2026 Innovative Energy Project of the Year Award for the MENA region.

The award is granted by the US-based Association of Energy Engineers (AEE) in recognition of its excellence in applying innovative solutions in energy efficiency and sustainability.

In a press statement on Saturday, KFAS said that the center is the first sustainable factory in the country for processing local wool. It comes as a result of a national strategic partnership with Al Sadu Weaving Cooperative Society and Kuwait Livestock Transport and Trading Company.

The statement noted that this partnership aims to achieve added value from this natural resource and promote the concepts of sustainability and the circular economy.

KFAS added that the project's idea was initiated by Al Sadu Society to utilize local wool with limited use. The foundation adopted the idea and funded a re-



KUNA photos
Products ready for sale at the 'Soof' factory.

search project executed by the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) to study the feasibility of processing local Nuaimi sheep wool.

KFAS explained that the project's re-

sults proved the technical and economic feasibility of this industry. This contributed to establishing the center as a successful model for transforming scientific research outcomes into a sustainable industrial project.

It mentioned that the center contributes to reviving the craft of wool spinning and weaving by providing high-quality local wool used in training community members. This creates added value for animal production, as wool was previously exported at a low value, thereby enhancing the economic feasibility of livestock breeding in Kuwait.

The Foundation pointed out that the project embodies the principles of the circular economy and enhances resource efficiency. It also reduces environmental impact through the use of clean energy sources, water recycling, and utilizing production waste to manufacture fertilizers.

KFAS affirmed that winning the AEE awards is a significant achievement, proving that Kuwaiti projects based on scientific research and national partnerships can compete and achieve excellence at regional and international levels.

Kuwait lauded for 'child care'

Focus on root cause of family issues

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: During the first meeting to discuss the government's Family Protection Program, Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait affirmed that the program is the first comprehensive government program of its kind in the State of Kuwait, reports Al-Seyassah daily.



Al-Sumait

He highlighted that the program represents one of the priorities outlined in the government's work program.

The meeting was attended by Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi, Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology and Acting Minister of Information and Culture Omar Al-Omar, along with a number of officials and representatives from participating institutions.

Al-Sumait explained that the program, which includes 86 initiatives across 13 government agencies, has the support of the political leadership and the backing of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Al-Abdullah.

The program focuses on addressing the root causes of family issues rather than simply dealing with their consequences.

Protecting families and children is a shared responsibility that extends beyond the role of any single government institution.

Agencies

The program's success depends on government agencies working within a unified and integrated framework through the exchange of information and expertise, as well as providing support and consultations to transform the initiatives into a comprehensive government strategy.

The minister praised the role of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs in overseeing the implementation of the program and monitoring its initiatives, while commending Minister Al-Huwailah's expertise and efforts in following up on the matter.

He emphasized the importance of the Ministry of Information's role in highlighting government initiatives related to family and child protection and deliver-

ing awareness messages to the community.

Al-Sumait highlighted the crucial role of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs in promoting family awareness through monthly sermons and programs addressing family-related issues, including marriage, divorce, financial support, alimony, and the resolution of family disputes.

He stated that combating bullying in schools requires a clear program in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, one that distinguishes between educational issues, administrative interventions within schools, and cases that require legal or criminal action.

System

Al-Sumait affirmed that Kuwait has an advanced system for dealing with child victims, juvenile delinquents, and juvenile offenders, praising the expertise of personnel working in the Juvenile Police, Juvenile Prosecution, the Ministry of Justice, and other relevant authorities.

He highlighted Kuwait's experience in juvenile care, noting that these experiences have previously been presented to specialised international bodies, where international experts praised the level of programs, facilities, and services provided to juveniles in Kuwait.

Al-Sumait called for launching simple and practical initiatives that do not require large budgets, complex procedures, or lengthy implementation periods. Such initiatives, he said, would help demonstrate early results and strengthen public confidence in the program.

He affirmed that the implementation of the Domestic Violence Law has contributed to achieving rapid positive outcomes, including a 33 percent decline in domestic violence crimes during the first three months of its enforcement.

Al-Sumait stressed that plans cannot achieve their objectives unless they are translated into actionable programs and initiatives with clear indicators to measure impact, monitor results, and make necessary adjustments.

He affirmed that the Ministry of Justice is an important partner in implementing the program through providing legal support and specialised consultations, contributing to the preparation of legislation and laws related to family and child protection, and supporting programs related to juveniles, child victims, and domestic violence.



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Kuwait's humanitarian hand reaches Gaza, Yemen, Africa

Food, medicine and hope: Kuwait aid reaches the vulnerable

KUWAIT CITY, July 25, (KUNA): Kuwait continued its humanitarian and development efforts through charitable organizations over the past week, delivering relief assistance across the Gaza Strip, Yemen and Africa in line with its long-standing commitment to supporting vulnerable communities and responding swiftly to humanitarian crises.

The country's relief institutions maintained support for people affected by conflicts and displacement, reflecting Kuwait's role as an international humanitarian partner through emergency assistance and sustainable development programmes.

From the Gaza Strip, through refugee settlements in Africa, to Yemen, Kuwait's humanitarian efforts extend to form a safety net for communities affected by conflicts, reflecting the comprehensive vision of Kuwait's approach in moving from urgent relief to sustainable development.

Recent projects included the distribution of infant formula in Gaza, food baskets for Sudanese refugees in Chad and Uganda, and support for healthcare services in Yemen through close coordination with local and international partners.

In the Gaza Strip, Namaa Charity, affiliated with the Social Reform Society, distributed more than 3,000 tins of infant formula to families in the areas most affected by the humanitarian crisis.

Namaa Deputy Chief Executive Officer Abdulaziz Al-Kandari said the project targeted infants facing acute shortages of essential nutritional supplies, adding that the charity coordinated with field teams to ensure aid reached the most vulnerable families.

Al-Kandari said infants remain among the groups most affected by



Left: Medical teams. Right: Distribution of food aid to Sudanese refugees in African countries.



Left and right: Kuwait's Al-Najat Charity delivered four hemodialysis machines and a cooling unit to the dialysis center at Al-Jumhuri Hospital in Taiz Governorate.



KUNA photos

the difficult humanitarian conditions in Gaza, where access to infant formula has become increasingly challenging and risking the health of thousands of infants.

He reaffirmed Namaa Charity's commitment to continuing humanitarian programs in support of the Palestinian people, particularly vulnerable groups, while urging donors to

support relief initiatives for affected children and families.

In Uganda, Namaa Charity distributed 250 food baskets to Sudanese refugee families, with each basket providing sufficient basic food supplies for a family of five for one month.

Namaa Director of Public Relations and Media Waleed Al-Kandari

told KUNA that Sudanese refugee families face severe humanitarian conditions after being displaced from their homes and livelihoods, making food one of their most urgent needs.

He said the charity would continue implementing relief programs in refugee and displacement areas, calling on Kuwaiti donors to support projects

providing food and other essential assistance to vulnerable families.

Meanwhile, Tanmeya Charity launched its humanitarian convoy to Chad to support Sudanese refugees and the most vulnerable families through a wide range of relief.

Tanmeya Director of Public Relations and Media Musab Al-Otaibi told KUNA the convoy reflects Ku-

Continued from Page 1

Gulf states

Countries that turn a blind eye to the practices of the Iranian regime and its proxies in the region must realize that establishing the language of terrorism as the basis for relations between states is a double-edged sword.

The continuous support of these countries for the Iranian regime and its proxies, and their threat to the global economy, will not benefit them in the long run, even if it weakens the power of the United States. The reason is that the cost will be extremely high for all parties and the world will suffer a crisis that will take decades to recover from. This, in itself, undermines international stability and peace.

Hormuz hurdle

In a statement to the press on the sidelines of the launching of the Pakistan Fruit Week at the Assima Mall on Saturday, Iqbal disclosed that shipments reached Kuwait through Saudi Arabia during the airspace closure, and direct shipping between Pakistan and Kuwait already resumed normal operations.

Iqbal affirmed that the Pakistani government is actively engaged in diplomatic efforts to de-escalate tension and bring all parties back to the negotiating table, expressing his optimism about the possibility of progress in this regard.

He pointed out that positive indicators on the resumption of American-Iranian negotiations emerged recently, stating that the US President also spoke about the possibility of resuming negotiations.

He stressed that military escalation will not be limited to one country, as it will have serious repercussions for the entire region, which compels Pakistan to continue its diplomatic efforts to prevent further deterioration of the situation.

He added that the Pakistani Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Field Marshal are leading continuous efforts to de-escalate tension, while maintaining constant communication with the Kuwaiti leaders.

He emphasized that the defense cooperation between Kuwait and Pakistan, which began in the 1980s, is strong and mature. He also confirmed the ongoing military training programs, exchange of expertise, and technical cooperation between the two countries in various areas of mutual interest.

He revealed that bilateral trade between the two countries exceeded \$1.5 billion this year, adding that more than \$1 billion of this figure relates to the oil sector, which Pakistan imports from Kuwait, while Kuwaiti non-oil

exports are witnessing huge growth.

He affirmed that his country will always stand by Kuwait, especially in times of hardship.

He added that the Pakistan Fruit Week is dedicated entirely for the Pakistani fruit, showcasing six or seven of the finest varieties of Pakistani mangoes, which are considered among the best in the world.

KPC clinches

The agreement ranks among the first major inward investments in the Arabian Gulf region since the onset of recent tensions, and it bears testament to Kuwait's resilience and agility, and the sustained confidence of global institutional investors in Kuwait and KPC.

Beyond its immediate proceeds, the JV is intended to serve as a catalyst for deeper participation by global investors in the national economy, in keeping with KPC's development plan and Kuwait's long-term diversification agenda.

The transaction will be governed by Kuwaiti law and is subject to customary closing conditions and regulatory approvals. Centerview Partners, HSBC and J.P. Morgan acted as financial advisors to KPC.

For his part, Deputy Chairman and CEO of KPC Shaikh Nawaf Saud Al-Sabah said "Project Peregrine represents the largest foreign direct investment in Kuwait's history and a defining milestone for our country's economic development."

He added that it delivers on the commitment announced by His Highness the Prime Minister Shaikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at the Kuwait Oil & Gas Show (KOGS) in February 2026 to attract world-class international investors into Kuwait's strategic infrastructure while preserving full national ownership and operational control.

"We are pleased to welcome Blackstone, Brookfield and KKR as long-term partners in this landmark transaction. Their investment reflects confidence in Kuwait's resilience, the quality of KPC's assets and our long-term vision for the country's energy sector", he stated.

He stressed that this transaction sends a powerful signal that Kuwait continues to rise as an attractive destination for global capital, even amid a challenging regional environment.

For their parts, Co-CEOs of KKR, Joe Bae and Scott Nuttall, said "Kuwait has established itself as one of the world's leading energy producers through decades of disciplined investment and prudent stewardship. We have greatly valued our partnership with Shaikh Nawaf and his team."

"This investment reflects our confidence in Kuwait and our commitment

to providing long-term capital in support of strategic infrastructure, and we look forward to deepening our partnership and identifying further opportunities to invest alongside Kuwait in the years ahead", they added.

CEO of Brookfield Corporation Bruce Flatt, said "Kuwait is a long-standing and highly valued partner of Brookfield's, and we have long admired the way it has built a globally leading energy industry. We are proud to support Kuwait as it continues to build out its vital energy infrastructure, and honored to invest alongside our partners for the long term."

Chairman, CEO and Co-founder of Blackstone Stephen Schwarzman said "Kuwait's leadership, vision and resources have made it a compelling destination for international capital, built on its strength in the energy sector and remarkable efforts to diversify its economy. We are proud to support this critical infrastructure, helping meet rising global energy demand while deepening Blackstone's nearly four-decade partnership with Kuwait."

KPC is a state-owned corporation overseeing Kuwait's oil and gas sector Through an integrated supply chain managed by its six wholly owned subsidiaries.

KOC is responsible for the exploration, production and transportation of crude oil on behalf of the State of Kuwait

KKR is a leading global investment firm that offers alternative asset management as well as capital markets and insurance solutions. KKR aims to generate attractive investment returns by following a patient and disciplined investment approach, employing world-class people, and supporting growth in its portfolio companies and communities.

Brookfield is a leading global investment firm with more than USD 1 trillion in assets under management headquartered in New York that owns and operates real assets and essential service businesses that form the backbone of the global economy.

Blackstone is the world's largest alternative asset manager. Blackstone seeks to deliver compelling returns for institutional and individual investors by strengthening the companies in which the firm invests. Blackstone's over \$1.3 trillion in assets under management include global investment strategies focused on real estate, private equity, credit, infrastructure, life sciences, growth equity, secondaries and hedge funds.

Abdaly border

He asserted that regardless of any developments between Kuwait and Iraq, the two countries will remain neighbors and brothers. He stated

that the reciprocal visits will continue in a bid to prevent any party from damaging the relationship between the two brotherly nations and to nip any discord in the bud. He stressed that his relationship with Basra Governor Asaad Al-Eidani is one of friendship and brotherhood.

On the other hand, Al-Eidani stated that Iraq warmly welcomes the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of Kuwait and his accompanying delegation, who visited his country through the Safwan border crossing. He pointed out that this visit confirms that Iraq is a country of love and peace towards its brothers in the Gulf states, especially Kuwait. He emphasized that relations between the two countries are built on brotherhood and shared interests.

Al-Eidani also affirmed the Iraqi and Kuwaiti governments' commitment to continue their joint efforts to enhance regional stability, and address security challenges and conflicts in the region.

He confirmed the ongoing coordination and communication between the two sides to overcome any obstacles or individual errors that may occur, and to strengthen relations between the two brotherly peoples.

Moreover, the Ministry of Interior issued a press statement, indicating that Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef discussed a number of issues of mutual interest with Al-Eidani, foremost of which are the most recent security developments in the region.

The ministry disclosed that the two officials looked into various aspects of cooperation between the two sides and ways to fortify security coordination.

At the end of the visit, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef inspected the Abdaly border crossing, where he saw the extent of the damage caused by the Iranian attack. He then instructed the concerned authorities to quickly assess the damage and take the necessary measures to reopen the border as soon as possible, and in a way that ensures the return of traffic to normal and serves the interests of the two countries.

Separately, Head of the General Administration of Customs (GAC), Yousef Al-Nuwaif, accompanied by Vice President for Ports, Investigation and Customs Search Saleh Al-Omar, inspected the Al-Abdaly border crossing following the Iranian attack, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to an official statement issued by GAC, Al-Nuwaif and Al-Omar reviewed the damage caused

to the Al-Abdaly Customs Center and received a briefing from field officials on the impact of the attack and the measures taken to address the situation.

Al-Nuwaif praised GAC personnel for their efforts in carrying out their duties and maintaining the smooth flow of customs services despite the exceptional circumstances.

He reaffirmed GAC's commitment to continuing operations at all border entry points, implementing necessary security measures, and ensuring the continuity of customs services in coordination with relevant authorities.

Meanwhile, Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem and Undersecretary of the ministry Dr. Adel Al-Zamil stressed the importance of continuing efforts to ensure the stability and reliability of the country's electricity and water systems.

During separate field visits to power and water desalination plants, Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem and Dr. Al-Zamil reviewed operational conditions, assessed ongoing work, and checked on employees amid continued high electricity demand during the summer season.

They praised ministry personnel for their professionalism and dedication in responding to the damage sustained by some power and water desalination facilities as a result of the Iranian attacks.

They were briefed by officials and technical teams on rehabilitation efforts for the affected units and the measures being implemented to ensure the continued production and supply of electricity and water.

The ministry said the visits are part of ongoing field inspections aimed at monitoring operations at various facilities and supporting employees who continue to carry out their duties efficiently under challenging circumstances.

Kuwait's armed forces on Friday were intercepting hostile drones amid the heinous Iranian aggression, the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army announced.

In a press statement, it added that explosions heard were the result of air defense systems intercepting the drones.

It urged the public to adhere to safety and security instructions issued by relevant authorities.

The attacks have drawn widespread condemnation. The UAE on Friday strongly denounced the renewed Iranian missile and drone attacks on Bahrain, Kuwait and Jordan.

wait's humanitarian mission and the association's commitment to implementing projects in accordance with approved charitable regulations and the highest standards of governance and transparency.

The convoy includes drilling five artesian wells, establishing a Quran memorization center, distributing sewing machines and dairy cows, and organizing medical camps to perform 150 eye surgeries and treat malaria and malnutrition among 1,000 children.

It also includes distributing around 1,500 food baskets, operating a community kitchen serving approximately 10,000 beneficiaries, and providing 500 mattresses and clothing for 500 women and 500 children in refugee camps.

In Yemen, Kuwait's Al-Najat Charity delivered four hemodialysis machines and a cooling unit to the dialysis center at Al-Jumhuri Hospital in Taiz Governorate with funding from a Kuwaiti donor under the 12th annual "Kuwait By Your Side" campaign.

Director of Taiz's Office of Social Affairs and Labour Foaad Al-Faqih told KUNA the equipment would enhance the center's capacity, enable it to receive more patients and reduce waiting times for dialysis treatment.

He praised Kuwait's continued humanitarian and development support for the Yemeni people across various sectors, helping alleviate their suffering.

Al-Jumhuri Hospital Director Foaad Al-Haddad also commended Kuwait's leading humanitarian role in supporting the health sector, saying the initiative would improve care for kidney failure patients and reflected the strong ties between the two countries.

Chairman of the Spirit of Giving Foundation for Development and Education, Abdulraouf Al-Yousefi, expressed appreciation for Kuwait's continued humanitarian support, describing it as a reflection of the country's longstanding commitment to assisting those in need, particularly in the healthcare sector.

In a statement, the Emirati Foreign Ministry underlined that these hostile attacks constitute a flagrant violation of the sovereignty of these countries and a threat to their security and stability.

The ministry reiterated the UAEs full solidarity with the Kingdom of Bahrain, the State of Kuwait, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and its support for all measures aimed at safeguarding their security and stability.

Jordan likewise condemned a drone attack on Al-Abdaly frontier crossing in the State of Kuwait.

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis rebels said Saturday that they fired missiles and drones at Saudi Arabia in response to Saudi airstrikes on the strategic Red Sea city of Hodeida, in another escalation over vital shipping routes in the Middle East while the United States and Iran vie for control of the Strait of Hormuz.

Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree, the Houthis' military spokesman, said in a prerecorded statement that the attack targeted facilities in the Red Sea cities of Yanbu and Jizan that belong to Aramco, the world's largest oil company.

Saudi Arabia's civil defense said alerts sounded multiple times early Saturday in both cities, but the Kingdom hasn't commented further.

There were no reported strikes overnight in Iran, in an apparent break from nearly two weeks of consecutive nights of U.S. attacks, though tension remains high following a recent escalation between the two countries over the Strait of Hormuz.

The rising tension in the Red Sea threatens to further choke global shipping because the rebels have said they would close the Bab el-Mandeb Strait to Saudi-linked shipping.

That strait, at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, is a vital shipping chokepoint, connecting the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden. Around 12% of the world's trade, including a quarter of its container traffic, passes through the narrows.

The Strait of Hormuz has been at the center of the conflict. The U.S. military on Friday fired on a merchant vessel in the Gulf of Oman that was trying to breach its renewed blockade of Iran's ports, while Iran targeted U.S.-allied countries in the region.

U.S. embassies alerted American nationals in the Middle East on Friday that options to leave could become more limited, as Iran's Revolutionary Guard advised residents of neighboring countries to stay away from bases with U.S. troops.

Michigan Gov Whitmer endorses Stevens in Democratic Senate primary

Democrats select S.Carolina to kick off presidential nominating contest in '28

WASHINGTON, July 25, (AP): South Carolina was selected Friday to once again lead off the Democratic Party's 2028 presidential nominating schedule, cementing a dramatic break from decades of tradition by leaving Iowa out of the early-state lineup altogether and elevating more racially diverse states.

The decision by the Democratic National Committee's Rules and Bylaws Committee will need to be approved by the full organization, which is scheduled to meet in August.

Nevada is expected to follow South Carolina, with New Hampshire, New Mexico, Michigan and Virginia rounding out the early-state calendar. Those states will wield outsized influence in the nominating contest before Super Tuesday, when voters across a large group of states cast presidential primary ballots.

"This calendar will battle test our candidates, ensure our nominee can appeal to broad swaths of the electorate and this calendar will allow voters, not money, but voters to be the ultimate decider," DNC Chair Ken Martin said after the vote.

The overhaul reflects Democrats' effort to give greater influence to states that better mirror the party's diverse coalition, particularly Black

and Latino voters, after years of a calendar led by Iowa and New Hampshire, two states with overwhelmingly white electorates.

But hopes of emerging from Friday's meeting with a party unified around one map were dashed by anger from states that had previously led the process. Rita Hart, chair of the Iowa Democratic Party, said she was disappointed but not surprised by Friday's calendar vote, which she called "very messy" and a sign that the national party is "out of touch with voters."

There was more angst in New Hampshire, where the secretary of state is required by law to schedule its presidential primary at least seven days before any other state holds a similar contest, setting up a potential conflict with the DNC calendar.

"The Democratic National Committee's decision today is wrong for Democrats, wrong for New Hampshire, and wrong for the country," said a group of congressional leaders in New Hampshire, including Sens. Jeanne Shaheen and Maggie Hassan.

Democrats opted to lead with South Carolina after President Joe Biden successfully pushed to move the state to the front of Democrats' 2024 calendar after the state revived his struggling 2020 presidential



US Rep James Clyburn (left), and Michigan Gov Gretchen Whitmer (center), appear at a rally on July 24 in Detroit, to support Democratic Senate candidate Haley Stevens. (AP)

campaign. South Carolina has long been the first Southern contest and has served as a key test of candidates' support among Black voters.

Jaime Harrison, a former DNC chair in attendance Friday, told The Associated Press after the vote that keeping his home state first on Democrats' nominating calendar signaled to Black voters the value they

bring to the party, especially after a Supreme Court decision aimed at weakening their voting power.

"I think we needed a strong statement to say to the most loyal members of our party, which are Black voters, that we're going to stand up with you," said Harrison, who also chaired South Carolina's Democratic Party. "It was just really important



A helicopter drops water while battling the Akawa Butte fire on July 24 near Sisters, Ore. (AP)

Oregon firefighters fight blazes

Firefighters battling two of the largest blazes burning in Oregon were bracing for windy and dry conditions forecast to arrive in some areas of the state Friday and into Saturday.

Crews have been able to build some containment lines around the Akawa Butte Fire, which is burning near Sisters, a town about 22 miles (35 kilometers) northwest of Bend. Started

by lightning on July 16, the fire has scorched 42 square miles (109 square kilometers) and destroyed two homes.

It has been designated as the nation's top priority wildfire because of its proximity to people. The designation will allow officials to tap into resources from other states and other countries, Oregon Gov. Tina Kotek said Friday. (AP)

Supreme Court not a rubber stamp for Trump, says Kagan

BELLEVUE, Wash., July 25, (AP): The US Supreme Court may be deeply conservative, but it is not simply a rubber stamp for President Donald Trump, Justice Elena Kagan said.

Kagan, one of the court's three liberal justices, told an audience of lawyers and judges from the 9th U.S. Circuit in Bellevue, Washington, that at significant times, on some big issues, "the court has checked the executive branch."



Kagan

The court has sided with the Trump administration in the vast majority of cases to come before it so far, including largely upholding his immigration crackdown and expanding Trump's authority over federal regulatory agencies. But Kagan pointed to key rulings where the president did not get what he sought, such as decisions rejecting Trump's sweeping tariffs and his efforts to strip birthright citizenship from the

children of people who are in the US illegally.

"Is this court very conservative? Does it do a bunch of things that are out of the playbook of the conservative legal movement that I think are deeply wrong? You know, yes," Kagan said. "But is this court the kind of puppet for the current administration? I think definitely not."

Polling has found public trust in the Supreme Court at historic lows in recent years, and a number of critics of the current court have suggested political motivations on the part of its justices. Trump has personally assailed justices who rule against him in stark terms. One liberal justice, Ketanji Brown Jackson, said in May after the court struck down a majority-Black district in Louisiana and weakened the Voting Rights Act that the institution risked being seen as political.

Chief Justice John Roberts, who was among those joining the court's liberal justices on some key cases such as birthright citizenship and tariffs, has fought back against the perception that the justices are "political actors," calling it a misunderstanding.



Law enforcement investigate the scene of a fatal house fire on July 24 in the Grand Haven Township, Mich. Ottawa County Sheriff's Office said six children and two adults were found dead in a 'suspicious' house fire. (AP)

8 found dead in Michigan fire

Eight people, including six children, were found dead in a Michigan home after a fire, some with gunshot wounds, law enforcement said Friday.

Police and fire authorities responded just before noon to a house fire in Grand Haven Township, on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan. When they went inside, they found the bodies, Capt. Jacob Sparks of the

Ottawa County Sheriff's Office said at an evening news conference.

Sparks said authorities had not fully identified all the victims yet and do not have an official cause of death for them. The children's ages ranged from 5 to 15, he said.

He did not say how many of the people had gunshot wounds. (AP)

Russian and Ukrainian officials report 11 dead in latest attacks

KYIV, July 25, (AP): Ukrainian forces attacked tourist resorts in the partly Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia region, killing eight people, Moscow-installed officials said on Saturday, while authorities in Ukraine's northeastern Sumy region said a Russian drone strike killed three people.

Two children were among the eight people killed in the attack on the resorts, Yevgeny Balitsky, the Kremlin-installed regional head, said Saturday, adding that 14 people were wounded.

Ukraine did not immediately comment on the attack.

Sumy regional head Oleh Hryhorov said on Saturday three people were killed when a large fire broke out after a Russian drone struck a "civilian facility," adding that the victims were drivers for private Ukrainian postal and courier service Nova Poshta.

Russia's defense ministry said it attacked a "storage and launch site"



This photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, shows the site of Russian missile strikes in Kyiv region, Ukraine on July 24. (AP)

for Ukrainian drones in the Sumy region.

In Zaporizhzhia, in southeastern

Ukraine, a Russian drone attack late Friday hit a shopping center, causing a fire that spread over a 500-square-meter area and injuring several people, regional head Ivan Fedorov said.

A major Russian attack on Friday on a site hosting a defense industry event near Kyiv killed at least 10 people and wounded nearly 100 others.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy warned in his evening address on Friday that intelligence assessments indicated that Russia was preparing missiles for a large attack, saying there were indications that this could happen in the next 48 hours.

On Saturday, Romania's defense ministry said its forces "safely shot down" a drone that breached its airspace in an "unpopulated area" near the Ukrainian border. The drone was "shot down by a Romanian pilot from an F-16 aircraft," President Nicușor Dan said in a post on Facebook.



A helicopter passes over firefighters near Lacanau, southwestern France on July 25. (AP)

More than 250,000 flee homes in France and Spain as wildfires burn

LEGE-CAP FERRET, France, July 25, (AP): France was preparing to use a massive specially adapted cargo aircraft to dump flame retardants Saturday on a wildfire that has forced the evacuation of tens of thousands of people, including from some suburbs of the wine region city of Bordeaux.

Including some 70,000 people evacuated in central Spain, wildfires in southern Europe this week have displaced more than 250,000 people.

French Interior Minister Laurent Nunez said the hulking A400M aircraft will join 18 other water- and retardant-dropping planes and helicopters waging an expected "long and very difficult" battle against the

blaze raging in the Gironde region of southwestern France.

With winds expected to shift in a west-to-east direction on Saturday afternoon, potentially driving the fire closer to Bordeaux, fire crews and authorities were digging trenches, using retardants and taking other steps to block it, Nunez said. He said the fire was about 30 kilometers (20 miles) west of the city and lost some of its intensity overnight.

The government mobilized soldiers to join the battle and was rushing in 1.5 million face masks to protect against choking smoke.

Authorities ordered people between the fire and Bordeaux to evacuate, including from parts of

the city's western suburbs and other towns and villages.

Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu described the fires as unprecedented and said the Gironde blaze became so strong on Friday that it had begun generating its own winds.

"Our priority is clear: protecting human lives," he posted on X, adding that evacuation orders "must be respected without delay."

He said firefighting teams were being reinforced Saturday with the addition of hundreds of soldiers and that breathing masks to filter out smoke particles were being rushed to the Gironde region for those exposed to the clouds of potentially noxious fumes.

UK's Burnham caps busy first week with part-time office move to Manchester

LONDON, July 25, (AP): Andy Burnham is a man in a hurry.

Since entering 10 Downing St. on Monday, Britain's new prime minister has traveled to the southeast, southwest and northwest of England, and to Scotland, spoken to more than a dozen world leaders and made a flurry of small but symbolic economic announcements: a tax cut on household electricity bills, a 2 pound (\$2.70) cap on bus fares and a tax break for pubs.

"We are on borrowed time if we don't get a move on," newly appointed Housing Secretary Angela Rayner told the BBC on Friday. "This is a down payment within the first week that says, 'We get it.'"

On Friday Burnham gathered Cabinet ministers, senior civil servants and regional mayors at "No. 10 North," an outpost of the prime minister's office in Manchester, 165 miles (265 kilometers) northwest of London.

Burnham says he will work at least



Britain's Prime Minister Andy Burnham arrives and greets staff at No. 10 North, in Manchester, England on July 24. (AP)

one day a week from the northern office, which will serve as the cockpit for his goal of spreading economic growth to "every post code" in the land.

Decentralizing power and spreading

wealth from southern England to post-industrial cities and depleted seaside towns is key to Burnham's platform, and he told staff as he arrived at No.10 North on Friday: "This might be the best day of my life."

Europe

Boat crashes into bridge in London: A police boat responding to a report of a person in the River Thames crashed into Westminster Bridge in central London on Friday, launching officers into the water and injuring five of them, the Metropolitan Police said.

Paramedics treated the wounded on a black inflatable boat as a police helicopter hovered overhead near the clock tower that houses the bell known as Big Ben.

Four officers remained in the hospital Friday night with serious injuries but were expected to survive, police said.

Witnesses said they saw two boats speeding up

the river and heard a loud bang when one struck the bridge. (AP)

1 soldier killed in Czech copter crash: A Czech army Venom helicopter with five soldiers onboard crashed on Thursday, killing one and injuring four, officials said.

The accident took place around noon (1000 GMT) at an air force base in Náměšť nad Oslavou located 180 kilometers (about 112 miles) southeast of Prague, the Czech military said.

The regional rescue service said one person didn't survive the crash, while the four others were transported to hospitals. (AP)

Hong Kong cancels flights

S.China on alert for Typhoon Noul

HONG KONG, July 25, (Agencies): Typhoon Noul is bringing winds and heavy rain to southern China and Hong Kong over the weekend, with the region on high alert and dozens of flights canceled.

Hong Kong's Observatory said Noul, which had intensified with maximum sustained winds of 140 kph (87 mph) near its center, was moving on Saturday steadily across the northeastern part of the South China Sea and edging closer to the coast of eastern Guangdong.

The city's observatory forecasts Noul could make landfall Sunday morning around the vicinity of the southern Chinese cities of Huizhou and Shanwei, bringing strong winds and squally showers to parts of the region. China's weather center, meanwhile, expects Noul to make landfall between late Saturday and early Sunday.

Hong Kong airport's website showed more than 150 flights had been canceled for Saturday and Sunday.

Also:

TAIYUAN: A sudden loess collapse struck a village in Hongtong County in the city of Linfen in north China's Shanxi Province, located on the Loess Plateau, on Friday evening. A house was buried as a result of the collapse, killing five people and injuring three others, according to county-level emergency response authorities.

The incident struck Haoyi Village, Dicun Township of Hongtong at around 18:49 on Friday. All eight buried individuals were found following prompt rescue efforts by local police, firefighters and medical personnel. However, five were found without vital signs, while three are in stable condition after being hospitalized.

Eleven European tourists, one local rescued after speedboat sinks in Indonesia; boat captain missing

PALU, Indonesia, July 25, (AP): Indonesian rescuers found alive 11 European tourists and a local crew member who went missing after their speedboat apparently broke apart and sank in rough weather off a bay on Sulawesi island, officials said Saturday. Search teams continued looking for the vessel's captain.

The vessel departed a dive resort in Tojo Unauna regency of Central Sulawesi province on Friday morning bound for Marisa Port in the neighboring Gorontalo province but failed to arrive as scheduled, said Heriyanto, Head of the Gorontalo Province Search and Rescue Office.

A local tour guide reported the missing boat to the search and rescue office at 3:40 p.m. on Friday, prompting an immediate search operation, said Heriyanto, who, like many Indonesians, uses a single name.

"Concerns arose when their speedboat had not arrived by afternoon," Heriyanto said. "We immediately launched a search mission overnight."

Five Dutch nationals, three Ger-



In this photo released by Makassar Search and Rescue Office on July 19 Indonesian Navy personnel cruises on a rubber boat during a search for victims after a passenger boat sank in the waters near Balalohe Island in South Sulawesi, Indonesia.

mans, a Czech man, a Belgian man, a French woman and two Indonesian crew members were on board, according to Indonesian authorities.

There was no immediate comment

mately 300 square nautical miles of waters along and around Tomini Bay, a renowned marine tourism destination, with dozens of islands dotting its vast waters, based on the tour boat's route projections. A thermal-imaging drone and diving equipment were also being used in the search, he said.

Indonesia's meteorological agency forecast generally clear skies in the area, but rescuers on Saturday have faced challenging sea conditions, including strong winds and waves reaching up to 2.5 meters (8 feet) high.

As of Saturday afternoon, rescue teams on two speedboats searching waters where the vessel was believed to have disappeared eventually located all 11 foreign tourists and one crew member alive. However, the boat's 29-year-old captain, remains unaccounted for, Heriyanto said.

"We will continue the search and rescue operation for up to seven days to find him," he said, adding that the rescued passengers have been safely evacuated and are staying at a resort in Tojo Unauna.

50 killed and 700,000 displaced by floods after monsoon rains

India's education minister resigns in major victory for 'Cockroach' movement

NEW DELHI, July 25, (AP): India's education minister Dharmendra Pradhan resigned on Saturday after weeks of protests that demanded his removal over alleged leaks in some of the country's most competitive entrance exams and irregularities in the education system.

Pradhan announced the decision in a post on X, handing a major victory to the "Cockroach" movement, which has spearheaded nationwide demonstrations, sit-ins and hunger strikes. His resignation marks the first significant concession by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government to one of the most visible waves of public dissent it has faced in recent years.

The government has rarely yielded to sustained public pressure during Modi's more than 12 years in office. The most notable exception came in 2021, when it was forced to withdraw controversial farm laws after a yearlong farmers' protest.

The "Cockroach" movement began more than a month ago after allegations of leaks in some of India's biggest entrance exams. It started as a call for education reforms but has grown into a broader protest over unemployment, government accountability and economic opportunities. Students, professionals, families and activists have joined rallies in New Delhi and other cities across India.

News of Pradhan's resignation sparked celebrations among the thousands of protesters who have camped at New Delhi's protest site for more than a month. Many embraced each other and waved the Indian flag.

Prachi Kumar, a corporate employee who joined the protests, said Pradhan's resignation was necessary to restore accountability in the education system.

"This had to be done. Someone must be held accountable," she said.

The Cockroach Janta Party, which launched the protest movement, declared victory following the resignation, writing on X: "DEMOCRACY WINS!"

The demonstrations have become one of the most persistent challenges to Modi's government in recent years, with thousands returning to the streets even after police used tear gas and batons to disperse marchers.

Tensions escalated on Monday when police moved to disperse thousands of protesters marching toward Parliament. Several students were injured in the



Protesters react after India's Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan resigned following nationwide protests as part of the Cockroach Janta Party's protest movement in New Delhi, India on July 25. (AP)

crackdown, intensifying anger among demonstrators.

Modi's government had earlier sought to ease tensions by announcing fast-track courts for cases involving exam paper leaks and saying it would introduce legislation to strengthen measures against cheating and corruption in the examination system.

The measures failed to satisfy protesters, who said they did not address government accountability. Although Pradhan's resignation met their main demand, the movement leaders said their campaign would continue as they sought compensation for families of students who died by suicide after al-

leged exam paper leaks and action against police officers they accused of using excessive force.

"Remember, do not mess with (the) cockroach," Abhijeet Dipke, a movement leader, said in a written statement.

Also:

GUWAHATI, India: Flooding in India's northeastern Assam state has killed at least 50 people and displaced 700,000 after days of heavy monsoon rain that overflowed the Brahmaputra River, officials said Friday.

The river, one of Asia's largest that originates in China's Tibet region and flows about 900 kilometers (560 miles) through Assam, flooded villages, swept away homes and forced nearly 300,000 people into government-run relief camps, officials said.

Authorities provided food and relief supplies to flood victims including air-drops from helicopters, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

Nearly 900 villages were submerged and more than 7,000 homes were without electricity, he said.

Police, disaster response teams and local volunteers were working to rescue stranded residents and deliver essential supplies to flood-hit communities, officials said.

Jatin Gogoi, a 52-year-old farmer from Nazira, said the rising waters swept away his bamboo-walled home and destroyed his livelihood.

"I lost all my cattle. My five-member family and I have nowhere to go, so we are taking shelter in a relative's home," he said over the phone.

Flooding on Thursday evening disrupted parts of Guwahati, Assam's capital with about 2 million residents, as submerged roads left commuters stranded for hours.

"I had to stay overnight at my office. The roads were filled with water, some waist deep," said Sudip Mazumdar, a journalist in Guwahati.

Experts say human-caused climate change is intensifying South Asia's monsoons, which traditionally run from June to September and again from October to December. The rains, once predictable, now arrive in erratic bursts that dump extreme amounts of water in short periods, followed by dry spells.

Pakistan suicide bombing kills 15 security forces

ISLAMABAD, July 25, (AP): A suicide bomber backed by gunmen attacked a security checkpoint in northwest Pakistan, killing 15 members of the security forces, the military said Friday.

In a statement, the military said troops repelled the overnight assault in Tank, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, and killed 12 militants.

The military blamed the attack on the Pakistani Taliban, known as Tehrik-e-Taleban Pakistan, or TTP.

The group is separate from but allied with Afghanistan's Taliban rulers. Pakistan has long accused Afghanistan's Taliban government of providing sanctuary to TTP militants, an allegation Kabul denies.

There was no immediate comment from the group.

According to the military, the attackers attempted to storm the checkpoint but were pushed back by security forces before ramming an explosives-laden vehicle into the perimeter wall, triggering a powerful blast that severely damaged the checkpoint.

The military said those killed included 12 soldiers, two police officers and a former forest department official.

It said security forces were conducting a clearance operation in the area to search for any remaining attackers.

Pakistan has witnessed a surge in militant attacks targeting police and security forces in recent years. Authorities have blamed the TTP and allied militant groups for much of the violence.

Brazil's Flávio Bolsonaro to secure presidential bid despite headwinds

SAO PAULO, July 25, (AP): Brazilian Sen Flávio Bolsonaro, one of the sons of former President Jair Bolsonaro, is expected to be confirmed as the presidential candidate of his father's Liberal Party on Saturday in his bid against incumbent Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva as his campaign faces many headwinds.

The 45-year-old Sen. Bolsonaro still seeks a running mate and does not enjoy the support of centrist parties as his father did. Even his popular stepmother, Michelle Bolsonaro, is not expected to join him at the Arena Mercado Livre Pacaembu in Sao Paulo after they recently exchanged barbs.

The elder Bolsonaro brother will have as a highlight the attendance of Argentina's President Javier Milei and the promised endorsement of several members of the U.S. President Donald Trump administration. But most notable damage to his campaign will be noted in those absent rather than present.

He has so far failed to recruit a high-profile female running mate after attempts to lure former Agriculture Minister Tereza Cristina. Her Popular Party, which has a stronghold in Congress and was key for Jair Bolsonaro's presidency, was expected to not present a presidential candidate, but distancing itself from Sen. Bolsonaro has been surprising.

Flávio Bolsonaro "has faced a problem each week, sometimes two problems," said political consultant Thomas Traumann, based in Rio de Janeiro. "This convention might be the moment in which he says what he thinks, what he intends to do as president. So far, he has been on the defensive, saying the campaign only starts in August."

Lula's Workers' Party will confirm the 80-year-old's reelection bid in a convention on Aug. 2, also in Sao



Presidential candidate Flavio Bolsonaro of the Liberal Party speaks at the 'Brazil 2050: Industry on the presidential candidates agenda' event in Brasilia, Brazil, June 22. (AP)

Paulo, one of the key battlegrounds of October's vote.

Many of the troubles Sen. Bolsonaro has faced are self-inflicted. Support to his bid started to wane in May after he admitted he had requested millions of dollars from jailed banker Daniel Vorcaro to pay for a film about his father's life. The revelation shocked many of his allies.

Flávio Bolsonaro then visited the White House and the U.S. State Department days later expecting to get a Trump boost, but now many voters, business leaders and politicians blame him for the U.S. government imposing new tariffs on Brazilian exports of up to 37.5% as of Friday.

Even as most of Brazil was glued to the TV watching the World Cup, Sen. Bolsonaro faced another blow to his campaign. His stepmother, who is very popular with Bolsonaro's key base of evangelical voters, recorded a video to say Sen. Bolso-

naro was being disrespectful to her in a phone conversation.

Then last week, Sen. Bolsonaro also drew criticism after repeating debunked claims on the reliability of Brazil's electronic voting system, echoing those that led the country's top court to rule his father ineligible.

Jair Bolsonaro is currently serving a 27-year sentence for a coup attempt. He is now under house arrest, spending all of his days with his wife.

As the convention was being prepared, the senator and his stepmother made amends in separate videos. Sen. Bolsonaro made the first move in a live broadcast, in which he apologized and added he is being "disproportionally persecuted" by others, as his father was.

Michelle Bolsonaro accepted Sen. Bolsonaro's apology on Friday, in what could be a first move of reconciliation within the family as the campaign begins.



Ghanaian nationals repatriated from South Africa following concerns about unrest wait at the Accra International Airport upon their arrival in Accra, Ghana on May 27. (AP)

Ghanaians ask ICC to examine years of anti-migrant violence in S.Africa

ACCRA, Ghana, July 25, (AP): Two Ghanaian nationals have asked the International Criminal Court to examine years of xenophobic violence in South Africa, arguing that repeated attacks on foreign nationals could amount to crimes against humanity.

The petition submitted to the ICC prosecutor by former Ghanaian government spokesperson Palgrave Boakye-Danguah and security analyst Emmanuel Kotin says it seeks accountability after years of recurring attacks on migrants.

"We are simply asking the ICC to investigate these allegations," Kotin

told The Associated Press on Thursday, adding that the initiative was private and not backed by Ghana's government.

South Africa has experienced periodic outbreaks of anti-migrant violence for nearly two decades, with rights groups repeatedly urging authorities to do more to prevent attacks and prosecute those responsible.

Anti-immigrant protesters in recent months blamed foreigners in South Africa for high levels of unemployment, crime and pressure on public services. The violence at the protests and attacks on Africans

prompted Nigeria, Ghana and Malawi to repatriate their citizens and summon South African diplomats.

The petition was submitted to the ICC prosecutor on July 15 and alleges widespread and systematic attacks against African migrants between 2015 and 2026, including killings, assaults, looting and forced displacement. It also argues South African authorities failed to adequately prevent or prosecute the violence.

A spokesperson for the South African government did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

S.Africa halts impeachment against Ramaphosa

JOHANNESBURG, July 25, (AP): A South African court ordered a halt to impeachment proceedings against President Cyril Ramaphosa over a scandal involving over \$580 000 of cash stolen from his farm in 2020.

The Western Cape High Court judgment on Friday does not stop the impeachment committee from doing other preparatory work for the pending proceedings.

Lawmakers had started impeachment proceedings in June after a damning parliamentary report concluded the president had a case to answer regarding the handling of the theft, including why such large amounts of cash were kept in a



Ramaphosa

sofa at the farm. The inquiry also includes questions over the source of the money, whether the foreign currency was legally declared and why he did not immediately report the theft to the police.

Ramaphosa is challenging the report in court and applied for the impeachment proceedings to be halted until the process to review the report is complete.

Ramaphosa welcomed Friday's judgment, according to his office, which said he would "cooperate with and abide by processes of accountability."

"The President reaffirms his respect of judicial independence and separation of powers enshrined in our Constitution," the office said in statement.

The so-called "Phala-Phala scandal" has been one of Ramaphosa's major political headaches since he became the country's leader in 2018.

Kuwait oil price down \$8.38 to \$94.01

KUWAIT CITY, July 25, (KUNA): Price of Kuwaiti oil went down by USD 8.38 to reach USD 94.01 per barrel (pb) in Friday’s trading, compared to USD 102.39 pb the previous day, according to Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Saturday.

In global markets, Brent crude went down by USD 3.90 to reach USD 96.78 pb, while US West Texas Intermediate declined by USD 2.87 to reach USD 89.31 pb.

Other Voices

Crude oil is not the problem; refining is

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

THE main concern is not crude oil itself, but the attacks on refineries in major oil-exporting regions, including the Arabian Gulf and Russia.

Such disruptions could create major limitations for countries that are solely dependent on imported petroleum products, particularly those that lack sufficient refining capacity.

This situation could increase their reliance on importing petroleum products derived from a barrel of crude oil. However, the quantity and quality of imports depend on each country’s demand profile and specific requirements.

Based on domestic demand, gasoline is expected to be the main petroleum product requiring imports.

The countries with the largest refining capacities in the world are China, with 18.5 million barrels per day, followed by the United States with a similar capacity of around 18.4 million barrels per day. Russia ranks third with approximately 7 million barrels per day, while India has around 6 million barrels per day.

Kuwait has a total refining capacity of more than 1.2 million barrels per day across three local refineries. In addition, it has three overseas refineries with a combined capacity of 600,000 barrels per day spread across three countries, bringing its overall refining capacity to more than 1.85 million barrels per day.

This makes Kuwait the second-largest country in OPEC in terms of investment in refining capacity after Venezuela, while Saudi Aramco ranks third among OPEC members with a total refining capacity of 3.3 million barrels per day.

Investing in refining and downstream activities provides added value beyond the sale of crude oil. It exposes the country to a wider range of customers and global markets rather than relying on a limited number of crude oil buyers.

It also provides companies with opportunities to explore



Al-Harami

opportunities for further investments into related oil activities, including lubricants and other products, while building closer relationships with customers.

It creates opportunities to expand into retail outlets and bring the brand closer to households. By extending services to include fresh food, laundry, and mail services, the company can become an integrated part of customers’ daily lives. Over time, this builds mutual commitment that continues from one generation to the next.

It is important not to stop at refining, but to go further by taking one more step in investing in downstream activities through service stations and convenience stores, with additional profit margins and added value.

Investing in service stations helps make the stores and gas stations part of the family’s daily life, creating loyalty for generations to come, as seen in Western countries.

A good example is Q8 service stations in Europe and Thailand, which make us proud to highlight our Q8 brand when visiting Europe, and Italy in particular, as one of the largest gasoline station networks.

Disruptions to product supplies from our refineries are a major challenge, as we serve global customers from the Far East to Europe. This is a responsibility that Kuwait is proud to fulfill.

Being attacked on a daily basis by Iran in an attempt to disrupt petroleum product supplies to our global customers is an act of disrespect towards the very country that supported them and supplied their needs during difficult times. Today, they are targeting the same facilities that helped keep their country running.

Unfortunately, they are unable to maintain the safety and stability of their own country, while attacking Kuwait, a nation that supported them when they needed it.

We will continue refining, exporting crude oil, refined petroleum products, and gas globally through our six refineries inside and outside Kuwait. We will maintain our position with a “business as usual” approach - something Iran cannot claim or achieve.

email: nafitkuwaiti@yahoo.com

By National Bank of Kuwait

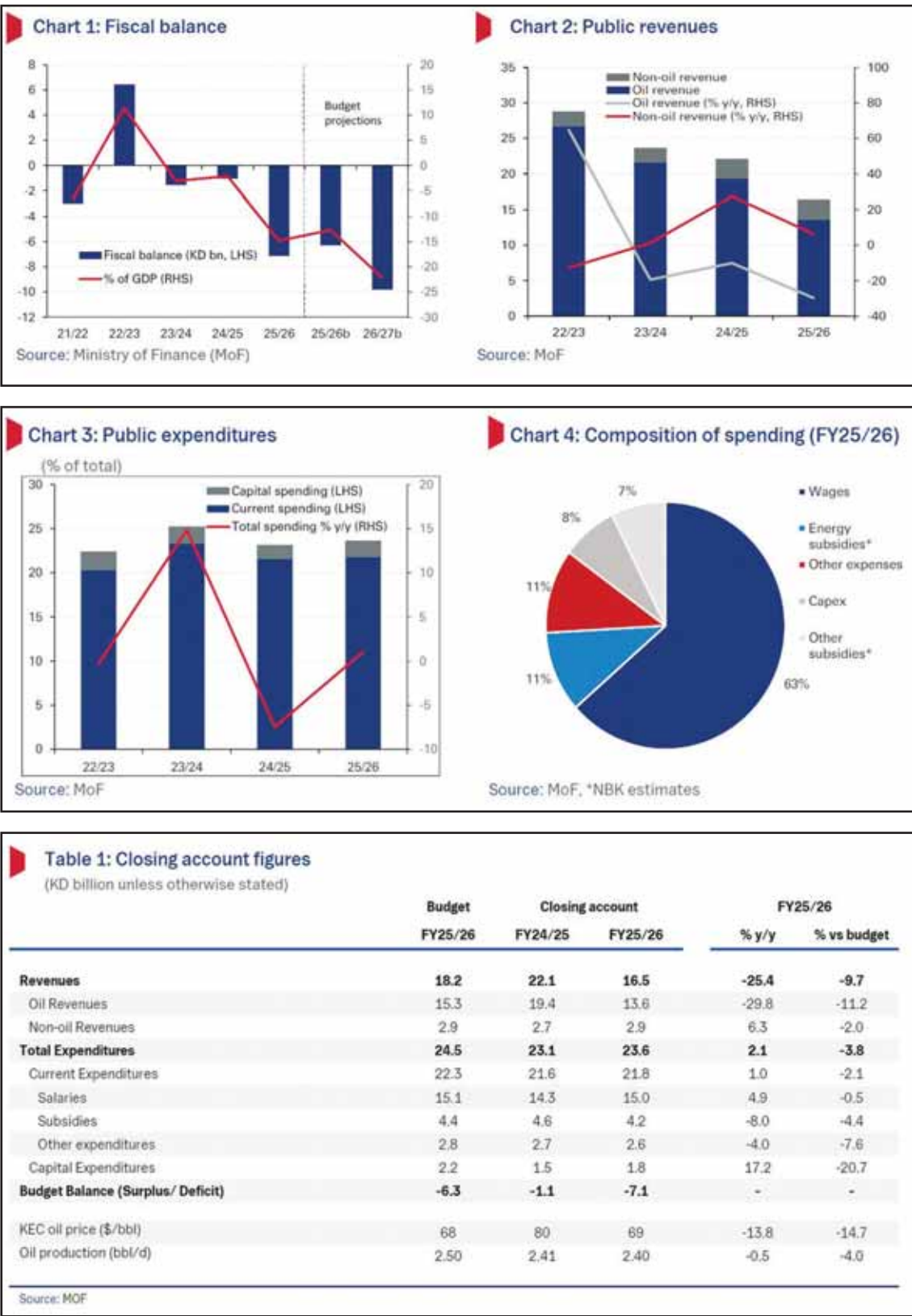
THE state’s closing account for the fiscal year just-ended (FY2025/26) revealed the deficit widening from KD 1.1 billion the previous year to an unexpectedly large KD7.1 billion (est. 15% of GDP), the widest since pandemic-affected FY20/21, and exceeding the authorities’ own budget deficit projection by KD800 million. This was largely due to a sizeable decline in oil revenues linked to slower-than-expected unwinding of OPEC+ production cuts and latterly oil export disruptions caused by the US-Iran conflict rather than much higher spending as outlays were broadly on budget. In contrast, non-oil revenues continued to increase but remained relatively low. On the expenditure side, the marginal year-on-year increase of around 2% reflects restraint on the part of the authorities but also the positive effect of lower subsidy outlays due to softer oil prices in 2025. An increase in capex was positive for economic development, but it remained at historically low levels. Overall, the fiscal outcome underscores the continued exposure of the state’s finances to volatile oil revenues and the need to accelerate both fiscal consolidation plans and economic reforms, especially in an increasingly uncertain regional geopolitical environment.

The most eye-catching aspect of this fiscal release outside of the increase in the headline deficit figure is the fall in total revenues, which, at 25% y/y, is the most severe since the pandemic in 2020/21. This is almost entirely related to oil revenues, which dropped by a steep 30% y/y to come in more than 11% below budget at KD13.6 billion, an infrequent occurrence given the tendency of the budget to assume conservative oil price and production projections. While the realized oil price in FY25/26 was broadly in-line with the budgeted oil price, at \$69/bbl, oil production was overestimated by some margin, with OPEC+’s pause on production increases in Q1 (to forestall potential oversupply amid softening oil prices) and then Iran’s closure of the Strait of Hormuz in March detrimentally affecting the country’s oil export revenues.

In contrast, non-oil revenues continued to improve, rising by 6% y/y, the third consecutive yearly increase thanks to ongoing efforts to mobilize non-oil revenues through measures such as higher service fees and public property rents. This follows the recent implementation of a white lands tax and a 15% corporate income tax on multinational corporations which should appear in the FY26/27 accounts. Further moves in this area are likely in the near-to-medium term, with the mooted excise tax potentially in 2027.

Business

Kuwait FY25/26 deficit widens on oil slump



On the expenditure side, outcomes were broadly in line with expectations, with spending rising by 2.1% y/y to KD23.6 billion and coming in below budget as per the historical trend. Spending rose on compensation of employees (+5% y/y), which more than offset reductions in subsidies (-8.0%) and other (-4.0%) outlays. Restraint on the spending side has been a common theme in recent years, and one we expect to persist as the government looks to rationalize discretionary spending (remuneration, goods & services etc.) and look for efficiency gains. It is worth noting the improvement in capital expenditure, up 17% y/y to KD 1.8 billion, and the higher capex utilization rate (79% of the budget). This should be seen as a sign of recovering projects activity and a renewed government domestic investment drive, at least before the current US-Iran conflict.

Deficit financing

With the approval of the financing and liquidity law in March 2025, the government returned to the debt markets for the first time since 2017, selling a total of KD7.8 billion worth of bonds (KD 6.0 bn in FY25/26) in oversubscribed local and international offerings, including a Eurobond sale totaling \$11.3 billion in October 2025. Outstanding public debt as a share of GDP is estimated to have reached 14% of GDP by the close of FY25/26. Looking ahead, the current fiscal year (FY26/27) could see the deficit widen to above 20% of GDP given the impact of the conflict on Kuwait’s public finances, especially in terms of the loss in oil export revenues due to Iran’s closure of the Strait of Hormuz since March and extra conflict-linked spending on subsidies and logistics workarounds, import materials etc. This would be on top of the extra spending on non-recurrent items already identified by the MoF in the FY26/27 budget, published pre-conflict and which envisaged a deficit of KD9.8 billion. Consequently, further debt issuance is likely this year, for which there is ample scope given that the debt law allows for up to KD30 billion cumulative over 50 years, in addition to drawdowns from the General Reserve Fund, whose total liquid asset levels remain undisclosed. Despite the increase in fiscal stress due especially to the Gulf conflict, debt levels are manageable. Kuwait’s sovereign credit ratings were recently affirmed by both S&P (AA-) and Moody’s (A1), on the back of strong external reserves.

Across short-, medium- and long-term horizons

NBK provides comprehensive savings solutions for customers’ financial goals

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continues to advance its suite of innovative banking solutions, helping customers achieve their financial goals while promoting a stronger culture of saving. Through a comprehensive range of solutions tailored to diverse needs, NBK supports customers in pursuing short- and medium-term objectives, as well as long-term plans centred on building savings and growing wealth.

NBK offers customers two distinct savings pathways, enabling them to choose the solution that best aligns with their financial goals and future aspirations. The NBK eSavings Account is tailored to short- and medium-term savings objectives, while the NBK Fixed Savings Account is designed to support long-term financial planning. Together, these solutions provide customers with the flexibility to meet their current goals and the confidence to build a secure financial future.

NBK eSavings Account

The NBK eSavings Account is a fully digital savings account that customers can open and manage entirely through the NBK Mobile Banking App. It enables customers to create a personalised savings plan and track their progress towards achieving their financial goals every step of the way, from anywhere and at any time.

Upon opening the account, customers can select a savings-plan term ranging from one month to five years and set a target amount between KD 200 and KD 5,000, providing considerable flexibility to accommodate a wide range of short- and medium-term goals.

Designed to address a broad range of financial needs, the NBK eSavings Account can support goals

such as planning for holidays and travel, purchasing electronics and personal items, preparing for marriage or engagement, covering education and training-course costs, and building an emergency fund.

The account is supported by a suite of smart tools designed to make saving a seamless part of everyday life. These include Auto Saver, which enables customers to schedule recurring transfers of specified amounts into their savings account; Save the Change, which rounds up purchases made at points of sale or online and transfers the difference directly into the account; and Tap to Save, which allows customers to transfer a preset amount into their savings account with a single tap through the NBK Mobile Banking App.

The account also offers flexible reward options, allowing customers to choose between earning competitive monthly interest or accumulating eSavings Account loyalty points upon achieving their savings target within the specified timeframe. These points can be redeemed for e-vouchers from a wide range of brands.

NBK FIXED SAVINGS ACCOUNT

For customers pursuing long-term financial goals, NBK offers the NBK Fixed Savings Account, designed to help them build their savings through a structured plan that combines regular contributions with guaranteed returns.

Customers can set savings targets ranging from KD 5,000 to KD 50,000 through a plan extending from 5 to 15 years. A fixed monthly amount is transferred by standing order from the customer’s primary account to the NBK Fixed Savings Account, helping customers maintain a disciplined savings approach and work towards their future

goals in a structured manner.

Designed to support long-term objectives, the account is well suited to goals such as preparing to purchase a home, funding children’s university education, establishing a personal business, planning for a more comfortable and financially secure retirement, and building long-term wealth through regular saving and guaranteed returns.

For greater clarity and certainty in financial planning, the interest rate is agreed upon when the account is opened and remains fixed throughout the savings-plan term. This enables customers to determine their expected returns in advance and plan their finances with greater confidence. Interest is calculated daily on the end-of-day account balance and paid monthly.

The applicable interest rate is 3.25% for plans with terms ranging from 5 to 7 years, 3.75% for plans extending from 7 to 10 years, and 4% for plans ranging from 10 to 15 years. Customers can open the account through the NBK Mobile Banking App or by visiting their nearest NBK branch.

These solutions are integral to NBK’s strategy of advancing digital innovation and delivering more accessible and flexible banking products that empower customers to manage their finances more effectively and make saving a lasting financial habit that supports their future goals and aspirations.

By combining the NBK eSavings Account for short- and medium-term goals with the NBK Fixed Savings Account for long-term objectives, NBK continues to offer a comprehensive savings proposition tailored to customers’ diverse needs, equipping them with the appropriate tools to achieve both near-term financial goals and long-term aspirations.



■ The NBK eSavings Account enables customers to create a personalised savings plan and track their progress towards achieving their goals every step of the way

■ The Fixed Savings Account combines regular savings with guaranteed returns through a plan ranging from 5 to 15 years

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait contributes \$3 million to support the Kuwait Emergency Response Fund

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced a contribution of USD 3 million to the Kuwait Emergency Response Fund, reaffirming its commitment to corporate social responsibility, its national duty, and its support for the efforts of the relevant authorities in Kuwait to confront challenges and crises and overcome them successfully.

Through this initiative, ABK demonstrates its strong national commitment and its role in supporting economic and social stability, particularly during exceptional circumstances and national crises. The Bank believes that its responsibility during such periods extends beyond the provision of traditional banking services to include actively supporting the efforts of the country and its official institutions.

The contribution also reinforces ABK's role as a development partner that places its capabilities

and resources at the service of the nation, helping safeguard the country's resources, mitigate the impact of crises, and meet urgent requirements.

ABK stated that contributing to the Fund represents a national and moral duty that it is proud to fulfil as part of its social responsibility. The Bank also emphasized its firm belief in the essential role of the private sector in supporting and assisting responsible authorities and standing united with them to provide the resources necessary to respond effectively to emergency situations.

The Bank affirmed that supporting the country and Kuwaiti society remains at the forefront of its corporate social responsibility priorities. ABK continuously works to support national initiatives that generate a sustainable positive impact and strengthen the values of solidarity and social cohesion across Kuwaiti society.

ABK extended its deepest appreciation and gratitude to all national frontline personnel serving under the current circumstances. The Bank expressed its full confidence in Kuwait's ability to overcome exceptional challenges and reinforce its security and stability through the unity of its leadership, people, and institutions.

The Bank also praised the tremendous role and dedicated efforts of the Kuwaiti authorities and field teams in managing crises with professionalism and competence.

ABK stressed that it will continue to remain at the forefront of supporting initiatives aimed at safeguarding the security and stability of Kuwait. This contribution forms part of a series of initiatives and development projects adopted by the Bank to respond swiftly to community needs and strengthen the country's preparedness to address emergency circumstances.



ABK Headquarters.

Recognized for transaction success

Kamco Invest named Kuwait's top DCM Bank by Euromoney

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: Kamco Invest, a regional non-banking financial powerhouse and one of the most active investment banks in the region, announced that it has been named "Kuwait's Best Investment Bank for DCM" at the Euromoney Awards for Excellence 2026. The recognition marks the second consecutive year that Kamco Invest has received the prestigious distinction, reinforcing its position as a leading player in debt capital markets in Kuwait and across the region.

Kamco Invest was selected following Euromoney's rigorous evaluation process, which considered a detailed submission outlining the Company's achievements, transaction record and contribution to local and regional debt capital markets, followed by an in-depth interview with Euromoney's judging panel. The award followed Euromoney's competitive evaluation process, which considered the Company's achievements, transaction record and contribution to the development of local and regional debt capital markets.



Abdullah AlSharekh



Omar Zaineddine

our clients' strategic objectives and contribute to the continued development of debt capital markets across the region."

Since launching its debt capital markets platform, Kamco Invest has played a key role in managing more than USD27.2bn in conventional and Islamic debt issuances across all six GCC countries. Its participation in prominent corporate bond and sukuk issuances has strengthened the Company's position as a trusted debt advisor and manager, providing tailored solutions that address the diverse financing requirements of issuers across different sectors.

Omar Zaineddine, Executive Director of Capital Markets, commented, "2025 represented another strong year for our Debt Capital Markets team, with the value of completed transactions reaching an unprecedented level for Kamco Invest. The breadth of the mandates executed across bonds, sukuk and liquidity management solutions demonstrates our ability to adapt to different funding requirements and navigate changing market conditions."

Zaineddine added, "Our focus remains on supporting local and regional issuers through the full transaction cycle, combining market insight, structuring expertise and access to a broad investor network. As debt markets continue to evolve, we look forward to pursuing new opportunities, strengthening our regional presence and delivering solutions that create lasting value for our clients and investors."

Kamco Invest's Investment Banking division has managed mandates amounting to over USD48.3bn since inception, which include USD11.1bn managed and co-managed equity capital market transactions, USD27.2 Islamic and conventional debt capital market deals, and USD10.0bn merger & acquisition mandates, as of 31 March 2026.



Kuwaiti issuances recorded a 129% year-on-year increase to \$8.67 billion

GCC fixed income market sees \$102.69 billion in primary issuances during H1 2026, representing a 6.50% increase

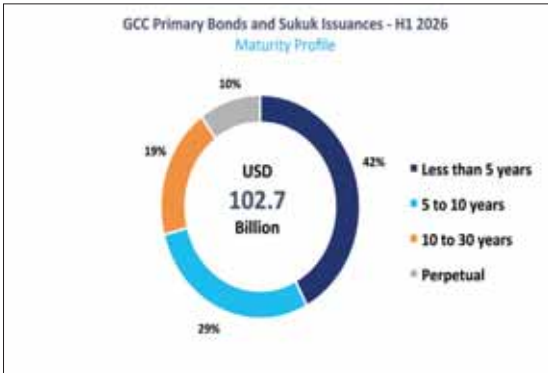
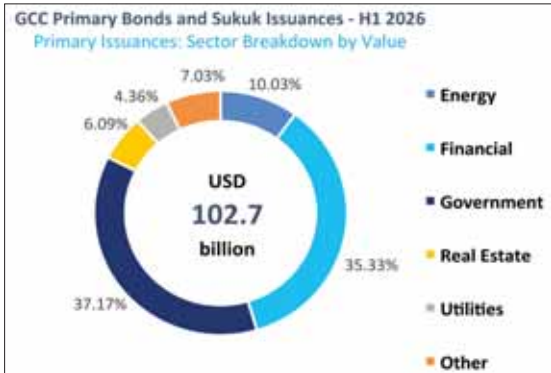
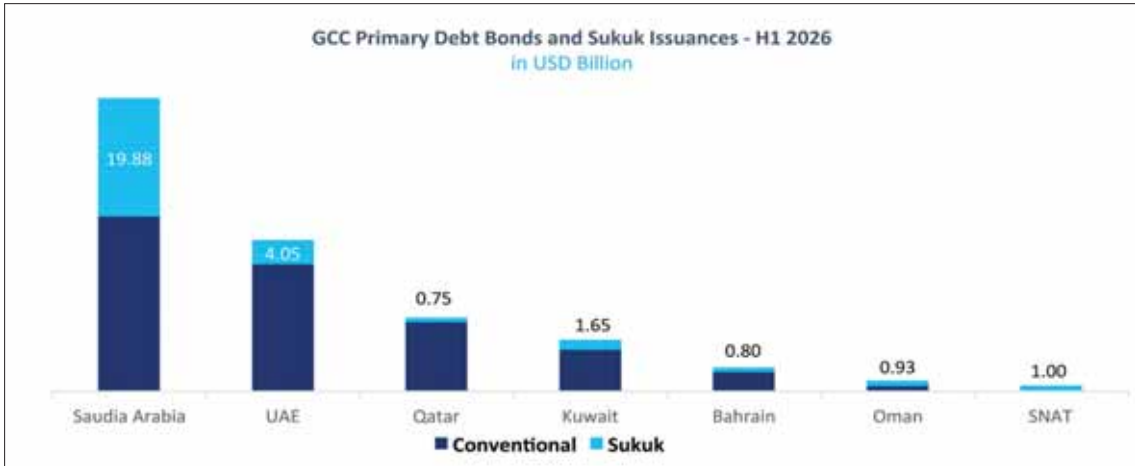
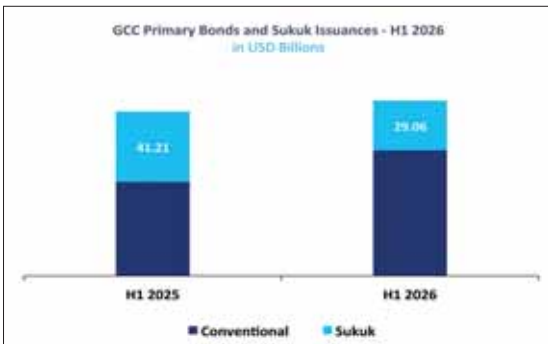
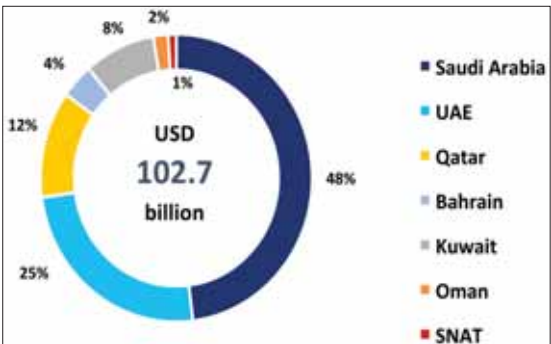
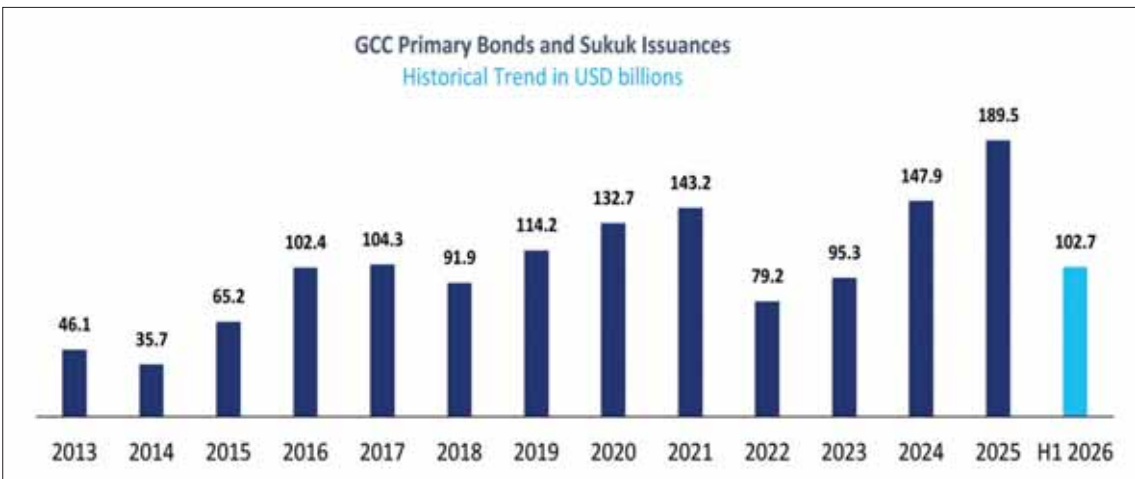
KUWAIT CITY, July 25: In its Fixed Income Report, Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" states that primary Bonds and Sukuk issuances in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries reached USD 102.69 billion through 161 issuances during H1 2026, representing a 6.50% increase from the same period last year, when primary issuances in H1 2025 totaled USD96.42 billion.

Issuances by Geography: Saudi-based issuances led the GCC during H1 2026, raising USD 49.34 billion through 58 issuances, up 1.6% from USD 48.58 billion in H1 2025 and accounting for 48% of total GCC issuance value. UAE-based issuances ranked second, raising USD 25.45 billion through 58 issuances, representing 24.8% of the market, despite a 6.8% decrease compared with the same period last year. Qatari entities were the third largest issuers by value, raising USD 12.4 billion through 18 issuances, an increase of 32.3% from the same period last year and representing 12.1% of total issuance value in H1 2026. Kuwaiti issuers followed, with a total issuance value of USD 8.67 billion through 14 issuances, a 128.6% increase from H1 2025. Bahraini issuances recorded a 32.8% decrease from the same period last year, raising USD4.03 billion through 5 issuances, while Omani entities issued a total of USD 1.82 billion through 6 issuances. Finally, the market saw two issuances from a Supranational ("SNAT") entity, The Arab Energy Fund, with a value of USD 1.00 billion.

Sovereign vs. Corporate: Total GCC corporate primary issuance value increased by 8.4% in H1 2026, reaching USD 66.67 billion, compared with USD 61.50 billion in H1 2025. Corporate issuances represented 64.9% of total issuances in H1 2026, in line with their 63.8% share in H1 2025, and continued to account for a greater share of the market than sovereign issuances. Government-related corporate entities raised USD 20.37 billion through 15 issuances during the year, an increase of 81.4% from USD 11.22 billion through 11 issuances in H1 2025. Total GCC sovereign primary issuances increased by 3.1% in H1 2026, reaching USD 36.01 billion and representing 35.1% of total issuances.

Conventional vs. Sukuk: Conventional issuances increased by 33.3% in H1 2026 compared to H1 2025, reaching USD 73.63 billion. Sukuk issuances, meanwhile, decreased by 29.5% in H1 2026, to USD 29.06 billion. As for issuance preferences, H1 2026 saw an increased appetite for conventional issuances in the GCC, representing 71.7% of total issuances for the first half of the year. This is consistent with issuance trends observed in H1 2025, during which conventional bonds accounted for the majority of issuances.

Sector Segmentation: The financial sector led the bond and sukuk issuances in H1 2026, with a total value of USD 41.70 billion through 104 issuances, accounting for 40.6% of total issuance value. Government issuances followed, with USD 36.01 billion through 29 issuances, representing 35.1% of total issuances. This represents an increase for both financial sector issuance (2.4%) and government issuances (3.1%) when compared to the same period last year. The energy sector ranked third, with USD 13.72 billion through 11 issuances, representing 13.4% of total issuances, while the remaining



sectors collectively accounted for a smaller portion of total issuance (11.0%).

Maturity Profile: In H1 2026, primary issuances with less than 5-year tenors represented 42.2% of GCC debt capital markets, with a total value of USD 43.36 billion through 97 issuances. Primary issuance with tenors of 5 to 10 years followed, raising USD 29.50 billion through 32 issuances and representing 28.7% of total issuances. Primary issuances with tenors of 10 to 30 years represented 19.0% of the GCC debt capital markets, with a total value of USD 19.47 billion through 11 issuances during the year so far. Notably, no issuance had maturities exceeding 30 years, while perpetual issuances increased in both value and number compared with H1 2025, reaching USD 10.36 billion through 21 issuances.

Issue Size Profile: During H1

2026, GCC primary issuances ranged in size from USD 4.1 million to USD 4.3 billion. Issuances of USD 1 billion or more accounted for the largest share of total value, amounting to USD 63.55 billion through 35 issuances and representing 61.9% of the total amount issued in the GCC. Issuances ranging from USD 500 million to USD 1 billion followed, with a total issuance size of USD 26.55 billion through 41 issuances. The highest number of issuances was under USD 100 million, with 43 issuances raising a combined USD 1.28 billion during H1 2026.

Currency Profile: US dollar-denominated issuances continued to lead the GCC Bonds and Sukuk primary market in H1 2026, raising USD 83.42 billion through 100 issuances, representing a substantial 81.2% of total primary issuance value. The Saudi Riyal (SAR) was

the second largest issuance currency by value, with SAR-denominated issuances raising a total of USD 7.46 billion through 10 issuances. Kuwaiti dinar (KWD)-denominated issuances followed, raising USD 5.67 billion through 12 issuances. Among currencies grouped under "Other", which totaled USD 3.7 billion, the British Pound (GBP) represented 0.8% of total issuances with a total value of USD 785 million through 4 issuances.

Rating: In terms of value, 75.1% of GCC conventional bond and sukuk issuances were rated in H1 2026 by at least one of the following rating agencies: Standard & Poor's, Moody's, Fitch, and Capital Intelligence, an increase from H1 2025 (69.9% of all issuances rated). Investment-grade issuances accounted for 69.8% of the total issuance value, while Sub-investment grade issuances represented 5.3%.

Oil shock ripples through consumer spending

NEW YORK, July 25, (AP): Already feeling pinched since the start of the Iran war, consumers are likely to feel more pain ahead as oil prices pushed past \$100 a barrel Thursday amid renewed fighting and military strikes that have left global oil supplies stranded in the Middle East.

The elevated price marked a turn from lower oil prices enjoyed briefly when hostilities between the U.S. and Iran waned in June. Brent crude, the international standard, last reached \$100 a barrel in May.

Companies that produce and sell fresh food, school supplies and anything that gets shipped using fuel reported cost impacts from an earlier spike in energy prices after the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran. They're likely to continue passing some of their increased expenses to consumers.

"In general, once you have an increase in costs, businesses are fast in increasing the price," said Miguel Gomez, director of Cornell University's Food Industry Management Program. But, he noted, "it takes more time to lower prices when the costs go down."

Here's how higher oil prices could further impact consumers' wallets.

Volatility along the Strait of Hormuz and broader regional instability pushed up the price of crude oil, the main ingredient in gasoline, and could continue to make driving costlier during the second half of summer, according to motor club AAA. The average U.S. price for regular gasoline reached \$4.09 a gallon Thursday, up 15 cents from a week ago, with drivers in most states now paying \$4 or more, according to AAA.

"Given the typical lag along the oil industry's supply chain, prices at the pump are poised to keep rising at least into next week," said Pavel Molchanov, investment strategy analyst at Raymond James. But he noted that futures prices for oil delivered later this year and next year are lower, suggesting prices could fall once military action ends.

For the most part, higher gasoline prices haven't stopped Americans from driving. Gasoline demand rose 1% to 8.9 million barrels per day last week, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

The annual celebration confirms the Bank's commitment to its staff

KFH honors top-performing children of employees in high school



Khaled Yousef AlShamlan and several of the bank's leaders honor top-performing children of employees in high school.

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) held a special ceremony to celebrate around 80 children of employees who achieved academic excellence in high school.

This annual initiative reflects the Bank's commitment to supporting its staff and their families, continuing a tradition of sharing in employees' milestones and strengthening ties with them.

KFH Group CEO, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan and several of the bank's leaders attended the ceremony, along with the parents of the top-performing students.

This recognition reflects KFH's strategic priority of investing in its human capital.

Over the years, honoring the achievements of employees' outstanding children has become an annual tradition that strengthens engagement and loyalty, drives performance by recognizing dedication, and shares in key family milestones.

It also highlights the powerful connection between personal well-being and professional excellence, creating mutual benefits for both the staff and the organization.

By hosting this initiative year after year, KFH highlights its commitment to celebrating the personal achievements of its employees and their families.

The Bank firmly believes that academic excellence is a vital milestone in building a bright future.

This transitional phase is especially crucial as students select university majors that not only match their personal talents and aspirations but also align with the evolving demands of the job market and future economic trends.

KFH believes that employees' personal and family stability directly enhances their performance and productivity, creating a holistic ecosystem of success and sustainable development.

KFH employees expressed their deep gratitude to KFH for this annual initiative.

They noted that honoring their children and sharing this milestone achievement represents a wonderful gesture of appreciation that reflects the bank's genuine care for its staff and their families.

They credited their children's success to a year of hard work and perseverance, calling this academic milestone a critical launching pad for future education and careers.

They also highlighted KFH's unwavering support for employees and their families, noting that the bank's diverse benefits and initiatives greatly promote family stability and a deep sense of belonging.

This approach, they added, perfectly reflects a corporate culture built on the spirit of one family and a shared, ongoing partnership in success.

Trump replaces temporary tariffs with new levies

US slaps new tariffs on 60 trading partners

WASHINGTON, July 25, (AP): President Donald Trump is going ahead with new double-digit tariffs on dozens of U.S. trading partners just as the clock runs out Friday on stopgap levies he imposed after a stinging defeat at the Supreme Court.

The United States will slap taxes of 10% to 12.5% on imports from 60 trading partners accounting for 99% of U.S. imports, charging that they have inadequately enforced bans on goods produced by forced labor.

"The United States has had a forced labor import ban for nearly a century, and rigorously enforces it; it's well past time for our trading partners to do the same," said U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer.

The new tariffs will take effect just as temporary 10% worldwide tariffs expire at 12:01 a.m. Friday. Trump had turned to those temporary levies after the Supreme Court struck down his biggest and boldest tariffs in February.

Now he's tapping more durable tariffs under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, which permits the president to impose import taxes and other sanctions against countries found to engage in "unjustifiable," "unreasonable" or "discriminatory" trade practices. Trump used Section 301 to impose big tariffs on China in his first term, and they survived court challenges.

More Section 301 tariffs are likely coming: The U.S. Trade Representative's office has launched a probe into whether 16 countries - accounting for 70% of U.S. imports - have overproduced goods, pushing down prices and putting U.S. companies at a disadvantage in global markets. The administration has yet to complete that investigation.

Trump, who argues that high tariffs will revive American manufacturing, last year overturned decades of U.S. policy that favored lower tariffs and ever-freer trade. Invoking the 1977 International Emergency Economic Powers Act, or IEEPA, he imposed double-digit tariffs on imports from almost every country on Earth, saying America's longstanding trade deficit amounted to a national emergency.

But the Supreme Court ruled that IEEPA did not authorize tariffs. The decision forced the administration to pay refunds to importers that had paid the tariffs.

In response, Trump announced 10% worldwide tariffs under Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974. But he can only use Section 122 levies for 150 days; time runs out on them Friday.

The administration initially proposed the forced labor tariffs last month. Since then, some countries have tightened forced labor enforcement and qualified for lower tariffs, said a senior administration official who spoke under condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly on the matter. For example, the official said, the tariff on imports from India initially was set at 12.5% but now will be 10%.

Some products - including oil and gas and fertil-

izer - are exempted from the new tariffs announced Thursday. Also being spared are products that qualify for duty-free status under the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement, the North American trade pact Trump negotiated in his first term.

The tariffs drew immediate fire from critics.

"Today's forced labor justification is too convenient to be taken seriously," said U.S. Rep. Richard Neal of Massachusetts, the top Democrat on the House Ways and Means Committee. "Forced labor is a real and pervasive problem in our supply chains and demands serious enforcement. It should never be cheapened into a pretext for a tariff policy built on dubious legal theories and personal grievances."

Brazil, which faces a 12.5% forced-labor tariff, called the U.S. move "arbitrary and unjustified" in a statement. It plans to trigger its reciprocity law - which could call for retaliatory tariffs on the United States - and take a complaint to the World Trade Organization. The United States, the Brazilian government said, "chose to manipulate an issue of great importance to human rights and the struggles of workers worldwide in order to accuse 59 countries and the European Union of unfair practices."

Chile's Undersecretary for International Economic Relations Paula Estévez said that the country has "solid labor institutions, a robust regulatory framework and a firm commitment to the prevention and eradication of forced labor." Chile faces a 12.5% rate.

"The Government of Chile considers that the application of this measure to our country is inconsistent with these standards, as well as with the technical, political, and legal background presented throughout the investigation process," she said.

Tariffs are paid by companies in the United States that import foreign products. The importers usually try to pass along the cost by charging consumers higher prices. Americans are already frustrated by the high cost of living. So the administration is taking a risk in rolling out new tariffs ahead of the Nov. 3 midterm elections.

Human rights watchers say that it's reasonable to be skeptical of the motivation behind the tariffs. But they say the levies could make an impact on the problem of forced labor.

The tariffs are being imposed on countries that the U.S. found either failed to impose or failed to effectively enforce a ban on importing goods made with forced labor.

Forced labor is defined by the International Labor Organization Forced Labor Convention of 1930 as "all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself (or herself) voluntarily."

According to the latest statistics from the ILO, which is a U.N. agency focused on human and labor rights, about 27.6 million people were in forced labor worldwide on any given day in 2021.

"We've gone on record for years now advocat-

ing for import bans, not as a magic bullet, it's not a silver bullet, but as a potentially effective tool in combating forced labor across the globe," said Martina Vandenberg, founder and president of The Human Trafficking Legal Center.

"It's possible to be extremely critical of tariffs, as we are, and to be very concerned about blanket tariffs used as bludgeons against countries," she said. "And yet I think it's undeniable that there is a significant response in terms of the adoption of import bans."

However, Vandenberg and her organization urged in testimony that the tariffs be implemented in a phased approach to give countries time to implement a ban or a plan for enforcement.

"Our concern is that the import bans will be thin slips of paper with no enforcement," she said. "Countries need time to build import ban mechanisms that are meaningful and enforceable."

In a statement, Dominic LeBlanc, the Canada-U.S. Trade Minister, said the move "is not unexpected."

LeBlanc said Canada shares the U.S.'s objective of ensuring that goods produced with forced labor don't enter the supply chain.

"We will continue engaging constructively with the United States on this matter, as well as other outstanding issues, over the coming weeks to the mutual benefit of our citizens," LeBlanc said.

Kenya Davis, partner at Boies Schiller Flexner, said the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, a U.S. federal law passed in 2021 that prohibits the importation of goods made wholly or in part in China's Xinjiang region or by designated entities, is the most significant legislation related to forced labor that the U.S. has passed before the tariffs.

"The level of effectiveness is certainly up for debate, but it certainly has drawn attention to the issue of labor trafficking and forced labor," she said. "And so, if nothing else, these import bans will serve that function of bringing greater awareness to forced labor."

But without a "comprehensive approach" that provides transparency about what the investigations consisted of, and programs that provide countries aid in enforcing bans, "I'm very cautious in my enthusiasm about the (tariffs)," she said.

Isabelle Glimcher, senior research scientist for global labor at the NYU Stern Center for Human Rights, said one flaw in the tariffs is that they focus on levying the tax on countries based on goods they import - not goods they make domestically.

But she said the impending tariffs threat has spurred several countries - such as India - to amend their foreign trade policies to include a forced labor import ban. European Union forced labor regulations due to go into effect later next year are also contributing, she said.

"Not all of these things are necessarily or wholly attributable to the Section 301 investigations, but does seem like countries are responding and starting to take all of this seriously," she said.

US launches new trade investigation against EU

WASHINGTON, July 25, (AP): The United States will open a formal investigation into the European Union's trade practices, President Donald Trump said on Friday, claiming the bloc has unfairly levied billions of dollars of fines against Google, Apple and other U.S. tech giants.

The Republican president made the announcement a day after the EU hit Google with a fine of 890 million euros, or \$1 billion, after it said the technology behemoth broke digital antitrust regulations by setting up Google Play and its ubiquitous search engine to corral consumers toward its own services and apps to the detriment of competitors.

In a lengthy post on social media, Trump said he has warned the EU about its practice of fining U.S. tech companies. He named Google, Apple, Meta, Amazon and others.

"The United States of America is not a 'PIGGYBANK' for Europe, nor will we allow it to be!" Trump said, adding that his post should serve as notice of an immediate trade investigation "into the practice of 'ROBBING' American Companies and, in turn, the American Taxpayer."

"The European Union will pay a very big price for this illegal and highly unethical conduct, which I have consistently warned them about," he said.

In the post, Trump asserted that the penalties against the companies "will be entirely reversed" and predicted "a substantial TARIFF" would be placed on the EU "at the earliest possible moment."

"Stay tuned!" he said.

Trump's move comes a day after the White House announced double-digit tariffs on imports from more than 60 countries, accusing them of inadequately enforcing bans on goods produced by forced labor. The new tariffs replace temporary 10% worldwide import taxes that Trump imposed after the Supreme Court struck down his biggest tariffs.

The new tariffs are being implemented using Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, which permits the president to impose import taxes and other sanctions against countries found to engage in "unjustifiable," "unreasonable" or "discriminatory" trade practices.

José Castañeda, a spokesperson for Google, said the company has worked hard to comply with the EU's Digital Markets Act and has expressed its concerns about the effects of recent decisions by the European Commission.

"We appreciate the engagement by the administration and U.S. government," he said.

Representatives of Amazon, Apple, Meta, and Microsoft did not immediately respond to requests for comment. There

also was no immediate comment from the Brussels-based European Commission.

The EU's billion-dollar fine against Google was the latest major crack-down on Big Tech by Brussels, which has led the world in reining in some of the world's largest companies from Silicon Valley to Beijing.

It has done so despite the risk of incurring the wrath of Trump, who has lashed out at the 27-nation bloc's digital regulations in a broader campaign against Europe: imposing high tariffs, making threats to seize Greenland from Denmark by force, and rattling trust within the NATO military alliance.

Trump had threatened retaliation if American tech companies are penalized.

Google had recently lost its appeal of a \$4.5 billion antitrust fine imposed by the EU for throttling competition and reducing consumer choice through the dominance of its mobile Android operating system.

The European Commission, the bloc's executive branch and highest antitrust enforcer, said it was acting in the interest of consumers after an investigation of Google.

"The best products should succeed because they're better, not because they're owned by the company running the search engine. And European consumers have a right to be told by app developers where to sign up to the best offers, even when the app store owner does not get a cut," said Teresa Ribera, the commission's executive vice president for clean, just and competitive transition.

Google's president of global affairs, Kent Walker, assailed the fine as "product degradation driven by a small group of self-serving complainants" that will hurt European businesses and consumers.

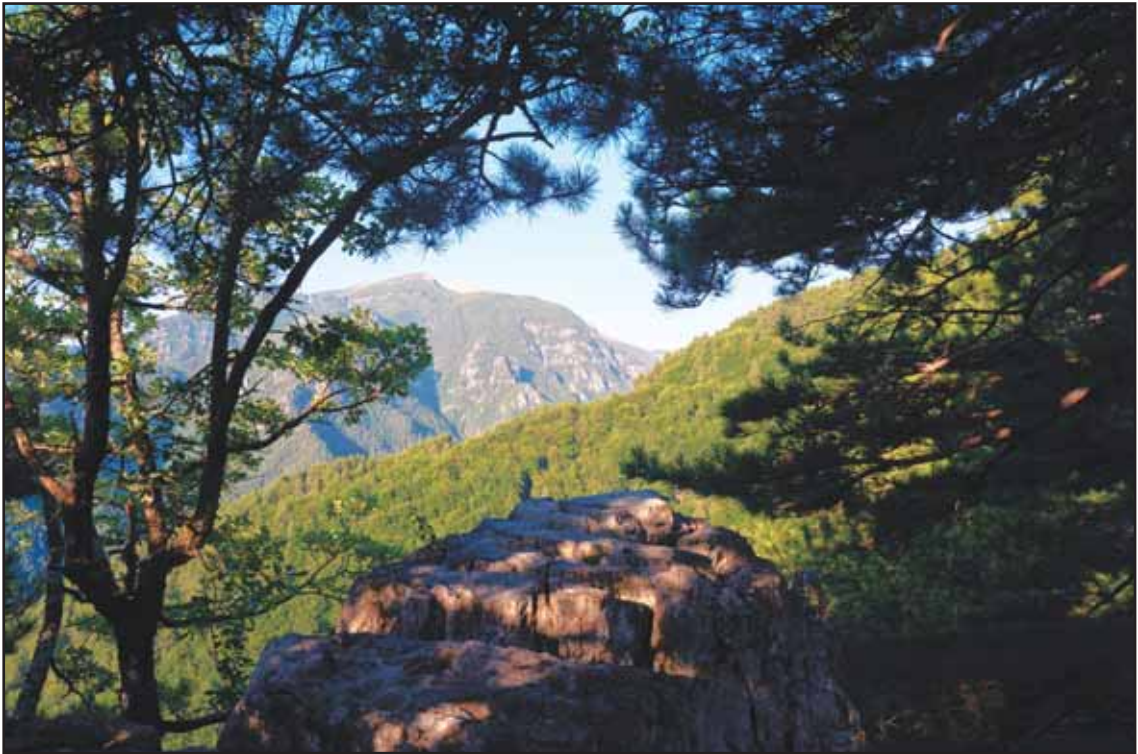
He said the EU's Digital Markets Act forces Google "to strip away real-time search features Europeans love - like instant pricing and direct availability for hotels, flights, and restaurants - and dismantle safety protections on Google Play."

The EU describes some of the world's leading tech giants - Amazon, Apple, Google parent Alphabet, Meta, Microsoft and TikTok owner ByteDance - as "gatekeepers" that control access for consumers.

"In the EU, businesses have the right to compete fairly. Gatekeepers have the obligation to ensure a level playing field and consumers the right to choose for cheaper alternative offers," European Commission spokesperson Thomas Regnier said. Alphabet reported \$403 billion in revenue last year.



Thai Buddhist monks pray as they gather at Wat Dhammakaya temple to participate in Makha Bucha Day ceremonies in Pathum Thani, Thailand, Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2025. (AP)



Mount Olympus is seen from the lower slopes of the mountain near Litochoro in northern Greece, Wednesday, July 15, 2026. (AP)

Okefenokee, Thai temple, Korean tidal flats join UNESCO's global honor roll

Kuwait affirms support for UNESCO World Heritage efforts

KUWAIT CITY, July 25, (Agencies): The National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) affirmed the State of Kuwait's continued commitment to supporting efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in protecting cultural and natural heritage by enhancing its presence in concerned international forums.

This contributes to strengthening cultural cooperation and exchanging expertise with member states and relevant international organizations.

This came in a statement issued by the Council on the sidelines of Kuwait's participation in the 48th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, held in Busan, Republic of Korea until July 29.

The Kuwaiti delegation is headed by the country's Permanent Delegate to UNESCO, Ambassador Dr. Ali Al-Mudhaf, and includes the Secretary General of the Council, Dr. Mohammad Al-Jassar, along with a number of specialists in the fields of cultural and natural heritage.

The Council noted that the World Heritage Committee is one of UNESCO's most prominent committees, responsible for implementing the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. This includes reviewing nominations for new sites to be inscribed on the World Heritage List, assessing the state of conservation of inscribed sites, making decisions related to their protection and the preservation of their outstanding universal value, and discussing policies and programs aimed at strengthening international cooperation in the field of heritage preservation.

He explained that Kuwait won membership on the committee, becoming one of 21 member states representing the Arab Group for a four-year term, following elections held at UNESCO headquarters in Paris in November 2025.

Meanwhile, the Okefenokee Swamp in Georgia, an ornate 13th-century Buddhist temple in Thailand and tidal flats in western South Korea were among several sites added to the World Heritage List on Saturday at a U.N. committee meeting in South Korea.

The UNESCO meetings in Busan, which continue through next Wednesday, are reviewing dozens of other nominations, including the D-Day landing beaches in France, Mount Olympus in Greece and the ancient Japanese capitals of Asuka-Fujiwara.

The Okefenokee Swamp is regarded as one of the world's largest freshwater ecosystems, encompassing a vast network of wetlands that supports exceptional biodiversity and serves as the source of two major rivers. Its largely undisturbed peat beds preserve a 5,000-year record of environmental change, making the swamp both a globally significant natural habitat and a valuable source of information on long-term environmental change, according to a UNESCO description.

While the World Heritage designation places the Okefe-



The State of Kuwait delegation participates in the 48th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, held in Busan, Republic of Korea until July 29.



KUNA photos



Roman-era columns stand at an archaeological site, which was lightly damaged in an Israeli strike nearby last week, in the southern port city of Tyre, Lebanon, Thursday, June 18, 2026. (AP)



A Palestinian visitor takes a photo at the Roman historical site in the West Bank town of Sebastia Thursday, Nov. 20, 2025. (AP)

nokee National Wildlife Refuge alongside iconic U.S. landmarks such as the Grand Canyon, some locals have opposed the listing, fearing it would increase U.N. involvement in managing the site.

"We accept this inscription not as a finish line, but as a commitment to keep the Okefenokee wild, resilient, and thriving for generations to come," said Kim Bednarek, executive director of the nonprofit Okefenokee Swamp Park that's worked with the U.S. government on the refuge's nomination package.

Wat Phra Mahathat Woramahawihan, a 13th-century Buddhist temple in southern Thailand known for its 78-meter (255-foot) stupa and distinctive architecture, was also inscribed on the World Heritage List, becoming Thailand's ninth site.

UNESCO has described the temple as an outstanding example of Theravada Buddhist architecture that remains a living place of worship, preserving religious traditions that draw large gatherings of devotees. The temple was first proposed to UNESCO in 2012, and has gone through more than a decade of preparation to meet the nomination requirements.

While the World Heritage listing is expected to dramatically increase visitors to the temple, Kanop Ketchart, mayor of Nakhon Si Thammarat City, said officials are prepared to address potential infrastructure and capacity challenges.

A United Nations committee on Friday inscribed a major archaeological site in the West Bank and a group of castles in southern Lebanon on the World Heritage List, despite objections from Israel, which had urged the committee to reject the bids. The decision at a U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization meeting in South Korea came days after Israel's Foreign Ministry urged the committee to reject efforts to designate the small West Bank town of Sebastia and the Lebanese castles, calling the nominations a "weaponization of cultural heritage."

At their meeting in Busan, members of the UNESCO committee decided to place Sebastia and five castles in Lebanon's Mount Amel area on both the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger after reviewing the nominations on an emergency basis, citing ongoing conflicts in the Middle East.

Sebastia, a hilltop town about 10 kilometers (6 miles) northwest of Nablus in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, is identified by scholars as ancient Samaria, capital of the biblical Kingdom of Israel. The area's archaeological remains span the Iron Age, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic periods.

Christian and Islamic tradition holds that John the Baptist was buried there, according to a UNESCO website. Sebastia's nomination, first submitted by the Palestinian delegation to UNESCO in 2012, argued that World Heritage status was needed to help preserve the site, saying it remains largely undeveloped under Israeli control and requires additional conservation despite attracting tourists.

Anniversary edition unites generations through art, music and heritage

Jerash festival marks 40 years of Jordanian culture



Left: A snapshot of the vibrant theatrical performances presented at the Jerash Festival. Right: Artists perform on stage at the Jerash Festival, showcasing Jordan's rich cultural heritage through music, dance, and creative expression.

AMMAN, July 25, (KUNA): The Jerash festival lights its 40th anniversary candle, carrying Jordan's cultural and humanitarian message to the world.

The Jerash Festival for Culture and Arts celebrated its 40th edition, carrying Jordan's cultural and humanitarian message to the world under the theme "A Legacy That Lives On... Generations Meet."

The theme reflects Jordan's deeply rooted history while emphasizing its openness to different generations and cultures.

The festival's 40th edition marks a new milestone in its journey and stands as a national and cultural occasion that celebrates a legacy built over decades.

It forms part of "The Jordanian Narrative... The Story of the Land and Its People," while also conveying the continuity of Jordan's cultural project and its ability to engage successive generations and attract artists from Jordan, the Arab world and beyond in a spirit of respect, diversity and cultural dialogue.

It embodies Jordan's belief that culture is an investment in people, a platform for creativity and a bridge for dialogue. The festival continues to serve as a venue where art meets thought, creativity meets heritage and authenticity meets renewal.

In his introduction to this edition, Minister of Culture and Chairman of the Festival's Higher Committee, Mustafa Al-Rawashdeh, emphasized that "The Jordanian Narrative... The Story of the Land and Its People" was the central theme of this year's events and activities. It represents an effort to document Jordan's story, its land, its people, its rich civilizational



Left: Artists in traditional attire perform alongside a singer at a lively outdoor event. Right: Officials and dignitaries gather at the Jerash Festival, celebrating Jordan's rich cultural heritage and the enduring connection between its land and people.



KUNA photos

history and its national identity.

Executive Director of the festival, Yazan Al-Khudair, noted that "Today, as we celebrate the 40th edition, we realize that the Jerash Festival for Culture and Arts is no longer merely a festival. It has become part of the Arab cultural memory and a project that renews its message with every edition without losing its authenticity."

He explained that the festival administration sought to create an experience beyond musical performances by presenting an integrated cultural program featuring around 220 events, including music, poetry, theater, visual arts, heritage and family activities in one unified cultural space.

These renewal efforts, deeply inspired by Jordan's historical identity and its people, were clearly reflected in the opening ceremony held on

July 22 at the North Theater, where representative of King Abdullah II, Prime Minister Dr. Jaafar Hassan lit the festival torch.

The torch of "A Legacy That Lives On... Generations Meet," symbolizing the continuation of Jordan's enduring cultural and humanitarian message to the world.

The event presented an artistic narrative documenting the evolution of Jordanian music, beginning with legendary artists such as the late Abdo Mousa, Samira Tawfiq, and others who carried forward Jordan's heritage-rich musical tradition.

Their songs, rooted in the language and emotions of the Jordanian people, celebrated the close bond between the people and their land.

The performance then transitioned to a new generation of artists who have embraced contemporary musi-

cal styles while preserving the spirit, language and traditions of their ancestors.

The ceremony also featured impressive 3D lighting technology highlighting the significance of the festival's 40th anniversary, accompanied by live orchestral performances and a choir.

Jordanian artists including Omar Al-Abdallat, Hussein Al-Salman, Aziz Maraka, Nidaa Sharara and Essam Al-Najjar performed together in a reflection of diversity of Jordanian music and embodied the festival's slogan, "Generations Meet."

Often regarded as the age of full maturity, the festival's 40th anniversary was marked by a carefully designed program that reflected thoughtful planning in every detail. Improvements included infrastructure upgrades, enhanced trans-

portation services, greater use of digital technologies and a stronger emphasis on literary, intellectual and cultural programming alongside visual arts, theater, music, heritage, children's activities and family entertainment.

Among the most notable developments was the redesign of the Oval Plaza (Forum) to improve the visitor experience by adding new seating and rest areas.

The iconic Cardo Street was transformed into the "Art Walk," creating a vibrant open-air exhibition space where Jordanian artists and creatives engage directly with visitors along one of Jerash's most famous historical landmarks.

The Art Walk hosts visual art exhibitions, live music, painting and caricature performances.

Other enhancements included il-

luminating Hadrian's Arch with 3D projection technology and constructing a new Hippodrome Theater, built to international standards with a seating capacity of approximately 3,000 spectators, positioning it as one of the festival's most important venues for future editions.

The festival has long contributed to economic development and the empowerment of local communities, particularly women.

This year, it expanded those efforts by establishing a dedicated handicrafts market and reorganizing traditional artisan displays.

The market features broad participation from women in the local community, showcasing handmade crafts, traditional embroidery and local food products.

This initiative reinforces the festival's role in promoting Jordanian products as an essential part of the country's national identity, cultural narrative and economic empowerment.

The 40th edition, organized through the combined efforts of government institutions, security agencies, and cooperation between the public and private sectors, coincided with the national project "The Jordanian Narrative... The Story of the Land and Its People."

From its opening day, the festival reaffirmed Jordan's standing as an influential regional player despite the significant challenges it faces.

It demonstrated the country's effective use of soft power to showcase the resilience of the Jordanian people, their ability to overcome adversity, and their commitment to bringing Jordanians and Arabs together through culture.



In this picture made available by the Archaeological Park of Pompeii, Friday, July 24, 2026, part of the restored ceiling of the Bakery House is displayed at the Pompeii Archaeological site. (AP)

Pompeii archaeologists reconstruct frescoed ceiling

Archaeologists in Pompeii, the ancient city buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79, have unveiled the partially reconstructed frescoed ceiling vault of a banquet hall featuring detailed images of Greek mythology.

The curved vault was presented late Thursday

at the end of an international workshop on new discoveries and restorations in the excavations of Pompeii, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that is one of Italy's most visited tourist attractions.

The archaeological park said Friday that it used an innovative method to reconstruct the ceiling,

which is believed to have been from a banquet hall on the upper floor of a house with an adjoining bakery.

Experts created a curved support structure to place the fragments in the design that replicates the original shape of the vault. As new fragments

of frescoes are found and restored, they can be added to the scene, the park said in a statement.

Archaeologists determined that the main theme of the work was of Dionysus and Ariadne, whose union is one of the best-known Greek myths. (AP)



In this picture made available by the Archaeological Park of Pompeii, Friday, July 24, 2026, part of the restored ceiling of the Bakery House is displayed at the Pompeii Archaeological site. (AP)

Young Japanese artists turn school blackboards into a popular art medium

KUMAGAYA, Japan, July 25, (AP): The humble blackboard is serving as the canvas, and colorful chalk the paint, for young Japanese artists.

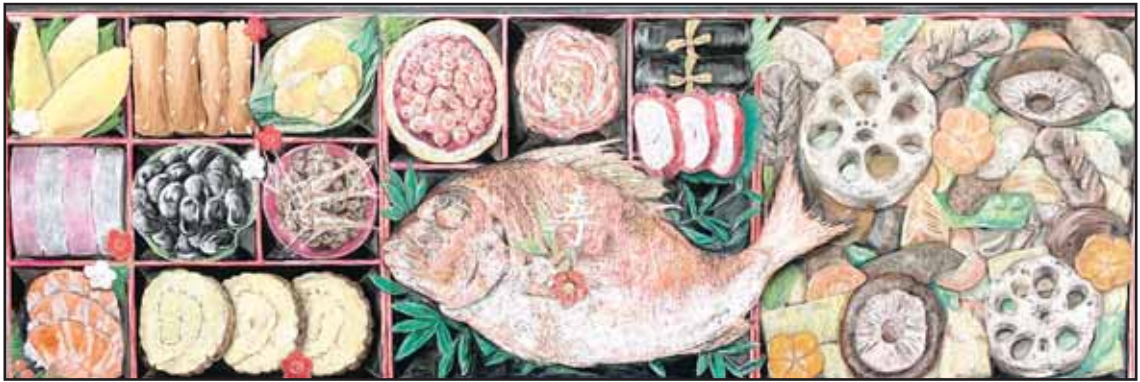
"Kokuban Art Koshien" is an annual national chalk art championship for high school students. Combining the word for "blackboard" ("kokuban") and the famous stadium where high school baseball is contested, the contest attracts artworks, all drawn on blackboards, usually over summer break, from about 300 high schools and junior high schools.

Each work - many dazzling in their artistry and often dreamlike themes - is a collaborative endeavor bringing together anywhere from one or two youngsters to dozens, all delivering a lesson in creativity and teamwork.

The images range from energetic depictions of dinosaurs, dogs and whales; popular manga scenes; Hokusai's Mount Fuji or the Mona Lisa, as well as slices of everyday life, except they aren't all that everyday, such as an underwater classroom.

Some works even show a person writing on a blackboard.

Kazunari Minamishima, an art teacher at the Saitama Prefectural High School of the Arts, whose students have



This undated image provided by Nichigaku Co., a Tokyo-based blackboard maker, shows the blackboard artwork by the top winner in the main category in 2019, titled 'New Year's Food' by students at Fukushima Prefectural Aizu Gakuho High School. (AP)

taken part in the contest, believes it appeals to students because it offers the chance to be more experimental than established forms of art, such as oil painting and sculpture.

"It's still a work in progress," he said. The contest began in 2015 by Nichigaku Co., a Tokyo-based blackboard maker. The annual judging is done by examining the photos of the works, given that the me-

dium, blackboards, can't be moved easily. The winners will be announced in November.

The use of blackboards for creating artworks existed before in the Japanese school system. It was a stunning replica of Da Vinci's "Last Supper" by an unknown artist on a school blackboard that caught Nichigaku's eye.

"Back then, there was graffiti, but there was no genre called blackboard art," said Nichigaku President Tomohiro Yoshida.

The contest doesn't really work as a direct marketing tool because schools already have blackboards. But some contestants become professional artists later, Yoshida added proudly.

Chalk powder gets scattered over the blackboard for an almost stardust effect. Smudging with fingers and tissue paper creates shadows and muted tones.

A skilled blackboard artist can depict the shiny translucence of a dragon's eyeball. One award-winning work used chalk powder mixed in water sprayed a la Jackson Pollock.

All schools in Japan can enter the Kokuban Art Koshien contest, including international schools. Nichigaku hopes the contest can expand overseas some day.

Responders struggle to understand how far outbreak has spread

DR Congo Ebola cases amount to 2,905 as vaccine enters human trial

KINSHASA, July 25, (Agencies): The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has recorded 2,905 confirmed Ebola cases with 1,269 deaths, the health ministry said in an update on Friday.

The sharp rise in cumulative figures was mainly due to the integration of harmonized databases from the eastern provinces of Ituri and North Kivu into the national database on Wednesday, including previously uncounted cases, the ministry said, adding that the increase did not solely reflect newly reported cases from the past 24 hours.

It said 97 confirmed cases and 62 deaths were reported on Wednesday. A total of 519 patients have recovered, while 722 others remain in isolation or are receiving treatment.

During a visit on Thursday to Kisangani, capital of the newly affected Tsho-po province, Prime Minister Judith Suminwa Tuluka said many patients were arriving at health facilities only after developing severe symptoms, making treatment more difficult.

She said the government would strengthen community training and awareness campaigns to encourage suspected patients to seek medical care at an earlier stage.

The government had allocated 50 million US dollars to the Ebola response, with priority given to laboratories, medical equipment, community surveillance and patient care, she added.

Meanwhile, the University of Oxford announced Friday that the first volunteer had been vaccinated in the world's first human trial of a vaccine designed to protect against the Bundibugyo ebolavirus strain responsible for the current outbreak.

The candidate vaccine, ChAdOx1 BDBV, was developed by the university's Oxford Vaccine Group and Pandemic Sciences Institute. The Serum Institute of India has manufactured and stockpiled about 620,000 doses, including 4,000 investigational doses supplied for the trial, according to the university.

The first-stage study is expected to recruit about 50 healthy adults and will primarily assess the vaccine's safety and immune responses. Subject to regulatory approval, further clinical studies are being prepared in cooperation with partners in Uganda, the university said.

The outbreak declared on May 15 is unlike most previous instances of Ebola spreading through communities because the Bundibugyo virus responsible has no approved vaccines or treatments.

It is mostly concentrated in remote Ituri province, which accounts for nearly 90% of cases, but there have been others confirmed in five provinces including one of Congo's largest cities, Kisangani, and in neighboring Uganda.

While Congolese officials say the sharp rise in cases appears to be slowing, they caution the outbreak has not yet peaked. The latest report by the country's public health institute says transmission remains sustained, with recent fluctuations in cases likely influenced by reporting delays and ongoing data



Health workers disinfect a coffin of an Ebola victim at Ebola Treatment Center at Bunia General Hospital in Ituri, Congo on July 22. (AP)

consolidation.

Contact tracing continues to lag, with only around 77% of known contacts monitored nationwide, well below the 95% target health officials say is needed to interrupt transmission.

Responders are struggling to understand how far the Ebola outbreak has spread and how much worse it might become.

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention researchers last month used computer modeling and found that in a worst-case scenario, the current Ebola outbreak could approach the worst in history.

The West Africa epidemic in 2014-2016 caused more than 11,000 deaths and took about eight months from the first case to reach 1,000 deaths.

The new outbreak's origin is still a medical mystery. The vast majority of cases are emerging from unknown chains of transmission, the World Health Organization said.

The WHO continues to assess the risk from the outbreak as "very high" inside Congo and "high" in Uganda and neighboring countries, citing cross-border spread, frequent population movement and ongoing transmission in eastern Congo.

The agency says the global risk of spread is low, noting Ebola spreads

through direct contact with the bodily fluids of an infected person rather than through the air, making it much harder to spread than respiratory viruses.

While WHO says additional imported cases are likely as the outbreak grows, those cases have so far been rapidly detected and contained without leading to sustained transmission outside the affected region.

The CDC echoed that assessment in its latest situation report, saying Ebola doesn't spread like respiratory viruses such as flu or COVID-19.

"You cannot get Ebola from being near someone," the agency said.

The CDC also notes that people infected with Ebola are not contagious until they develop symptoms, making case identification and contact tracing easier than with diseases that spread before symptoms appear.

The vast majority of Ebola cases are concentrated in Congo.

In neighboring Uganda, 20 cases have been confirmed, including two deaths. All cases were linked to imported infections from Congo and are concentrated in the capital Kampala. No new Ebola cases have been reported since June 21 and the WHO has discharged its final patient, beginning the 42-day countdown used to declare the end of an outbreak.

A positive case of Ebola was identified in France in a doctor traveling from Congo in June. He has since fully recovered and was discharged from the hospital earlier this month.

The United States currently bars most recent travelers from Congo from entering the country and requires U.S. citizens to spend 21 days outside Congo before returning, while travelers from neighboring Uganda and South Sudan who are allowed to enter are routed through designated airports for Ebola screening.

US plans to build an Ebola quarantine facility in Kenya for Americans evacuated from Congo have been met with legal challenges and a series of protests in Kenya, including some that have turned violent.

Lack of trust and resistance from locals remain one of the biggest obstacles to containing the outbreak, according to authorities and health workers.

Rumors about Ebola treatment centers, fears of isolation and resistance to safe burials have led some people to avoid testing or seek care only after becoming critically ill.

The response also has been hampered by conflict. Fighting involving the Rwanda-backed M23 rebels, attacks by the Islamic State-linked Allied Democratic Forces and mass displacement have complicated surveillance, contact tracing and access to affected communities.

At least 16 people were killed in an attack Wednesday by suspected ADF rebels in a village in Ituri province, local authorities said Thursday.

Unlike previous Ebola outbreaks, the Bundibugyo virus driving the epidemic has no approved vaccine or treatment. Although testing capacity has expanded since the outbreak began, responders say the virus continues to spread faster than they can contain it.

Salmonella outbreak tied to eggs has sickened 98 people since Nov

Outbreak of diarrhea-causing parasite linked to 4 more states

WASHINGTON, July 25, (AP): Federal health officials on Friday expanded the scope of their investigation into an outbreak of a diarrhea-causing parasite to four additional states, broadening the size of the largest US outbreak of cyclospora.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the outbreak first tied to shredded lettuce served at Taco Bell restaurants now includes Illinois, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania. Previously the agency's investigation included five states: Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and West Virginia.

The CDC, Food and Drug Administration and state health officials have been tracing the supply of the lettuce and interviewing people across the nation about the foods they ate two weeks before getting sick.

The number of cases linked to the lettuce is now 1,947, including at least 98 people who had to be hospitalized. There have been no deaths, the agency reported on its website.

The total number of people sickened by the outbreak is likely higher than the official tally, given that not

all cases are reported, the agency noted.

FDA officials earlier this week said they remain focused on lettuce from Taylor Farms as the source of the multistate outbreak. The company last week announced it was recalling iceberg lettuce grown in central Mexico.

Asked when it would be safe to eat lettuce again, Trump said Friday that his government is "going to put a major tariff on tax on Mexico because of the lettuce."

On Thursday, the FDA announced it was investigating a separate outbreak of cyclospora reported in 72 people. Regulators had not yet identified the products linked to the illnesses.

Overall, cyclospora cases have set a US record. Since May 1, CDC has received reports of more than 4,100 laboratory-confirmed cases and is investigating more than 7,400 other likely cases across 41 states. Federal health officials have said that other "brands, restaurants, retailers, or distribution channels" could be tied to the outbreak as the investigation continues.

Cyclospora is a microscopic para-

site that infects food that has come into contact with human feces, most commonly when produce is irrigated or washed with contaminated water. When ingested, the parasite causes intestinal illness marked by "frequent and sometimes explosive bowel movements," according to the CDC.

Mexican health officials announced Thursday that the parasite was not detected in the lettuce or water at the Taylor Farms plant in the Mexican state of Guanajuato.

The results were announced following a visit by Mexican health authorities to the Taylor Farms plant between July 18 and 20, during which 10 samples of iceberg lettuce were collected. Four water samples also were collected for analysis, authorities said.

Also:

WASHINGTON: Nearly 100 people in 17 states have been sickened in a salmonella outbreak tied to recalled eggs, federal health officials said Friday.

The 98 people had illnesses that started between Nov. 21 and June 30, according to the U.S. Food and Drug

Administration. No deaths have been reported, but 26 people have been hospitalized.

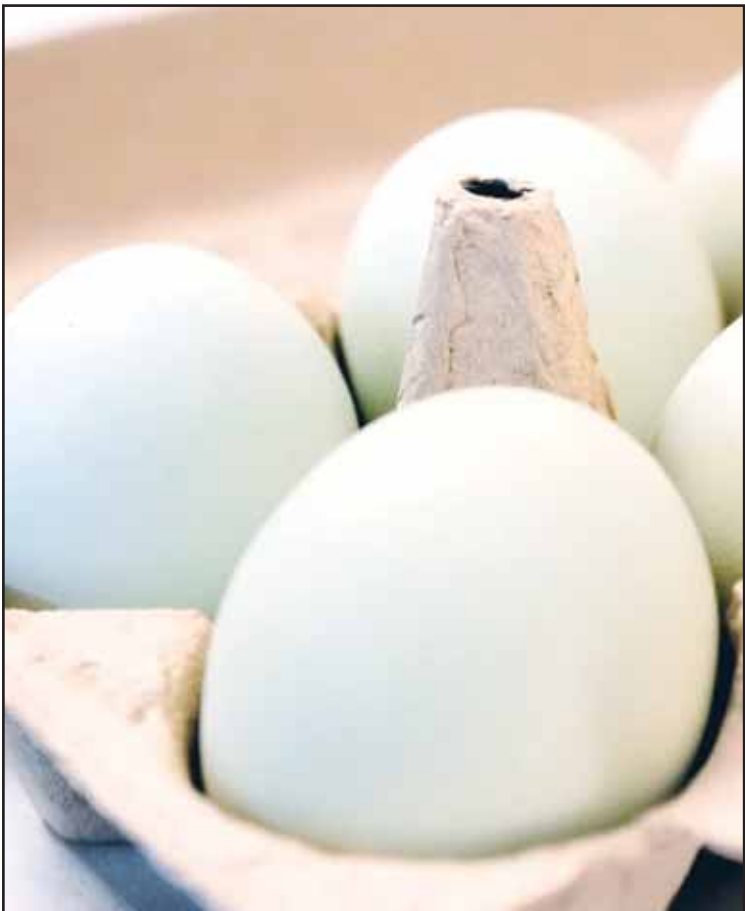
Investigators have determined that shell eggs recalled by Midwest Poultry Services are a likely source of the germ, but the Indiana-based company doesn't account for all the illnesses.

Midwest Poultry previously recalled eggs produced and distributed from farms in Texas between June 6 and July 3. The eggs were sold under several brand names and have sell-by or best-by dates between July 20 and Aug. 17.

Among the stores that received the recalled eggs were Kroger stores in Texas and Louisiana and Brookshire Grocery stores in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico and Mississippi.

Samples collected by Midwest Poultry at farms in Texas tested positive for salmonella, and genetic testing showed that some samples match the bacteria strain that sickened people, federal officials said.

Consumers should check their refrigerators for recalled eggs and throw them away or return them to stores for a refund.



A carton of eggs is pictured in Farmers Branch, Texas, on Oct 21, 2025. (AP)



SpaceX's Starship rocket lifts off for a test flight from Starbase, Texas on July 24. (AP)

SpaceX launches Starship on another test flight, this time with most advanced Starlinks

WASHINGTON, July 25, (AP) SpaceX's mammoth Starship rocket blasted off Friday on another test flight stretching halfway around the world, this time releasing 20 of the most advanced Starlinks.

Towering 407 feet (124 meters), Starship soared from the company's base at the southern tip of Texas. NASA monitored the space-skimming flight, a critical step toward using the Starship as a lunar lander for moon crews.

The hourlong journey ended with a splashdown so soft that the spacecraft remained afloat in the Indian Ocean as the SpaceX webcast drew to a close, drawing cheers from employees back at the launch site.

Elon Musk's SpaceX had replaced six of the 33 engines on the first-stage booster after some of them failed to ignite last week, resulting in a last-second launch abort. The

previous Starship flight in May also experienced engine trouble, which prevented the booster from making a controlled return.

This time, all of the engines fired at liftoff, but not enough of them lit back up for the booster's return, causing it to descend too fast and slam into the Gulf of Mexico. The spacecraft continued soaring eastward, popping out the Starlinks one by one 124 miles (200 kilometers) up before reentering.

It was the 13th flight of the world's biggest and most powerful rocket, and the second this year of the new version dubbed V3. Like the previous demo, neither the booster nor spacecraft was meant to be saved, instead plunging into the sea.

The stainless steel, retro-looking spacecraft hovered upright over the Indian Ocean before lowering into the water, more than 10,000 miles (16,000 kilometers) from where the

flight began.

It was the best reentry yet, according to SpaceX, with the intact booster floating amid just a few flames. Previous flights ended with the spacecraft engulfed in flames and exploding at splashdown - or rupturing in midair.

"We're really pumped about this," said SpaceX engineer Kate Tice, calling it "lucky flight 13."

The Starlinks accomplished all their jobs before reentering over the Indian Ocean.

After being ejected from the Starship's Pez-like dispenser, the Starlinks had just 20 minutes to communicate via lasers and radio before reentering. SpaceX said its engineers made contact and even downloaded data from each one. With more than 10,000 Starlinks currently providing internet, SpaceX boasts the world's largest satellite constellation.

How to keep the air inside your home clean during wildfires

MILWAUKEE, July 25, (AP): The eerie glow of an orange sun through thick wildfire smoke might be unnerving, but the biggest risk from the haze is something much harder to see.

Tiny particles in the air can cause a range of short-term and chronic health issues, experts say.

Wildfire smoke can settle over cities for days - like the recent blanket over parts of the US from burning fires in Canada, which has created hazardous air for millions of people across multiple states.

Health officials advise people to stay indoors - and to take steps to keep the air in your home clean.

If you have central air conditioning, it should clean the air in your home.

Make sure filters are replaced on schedule and are of the highest level of filtration your system can handle. Filters rated MERV 13 or higher are ideal. Set the air to recirculate and close any vents that pull air from outside if you can. The University of Oregon's Center for Wildfire Smoke Research and Practice recommends running the system's fan through the entire smoke event, not just when cooling.

If you buy a portable air filter, look for a HEPA air filter or one that says it traps small particles of pollution. Ensure it does not generate ozone, another harmful air pollutant.

If you can only afford one portable air filter, use it to create a "clean room" in your house where you can spend most of your time.

"The basic message is that something is better than nothing," said Amy Kalkbrenner, an environmental epidemiologist at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

There's good evidence that DIY filters made by duct-taping furnace air filters to a box fan work.

They're simple, relatively affordable and scientists at the Environmental Protection Agency have found they are just as good at removing fine particles of pollution from the air as a small commercial air purifier.



The sun is obscured by wildfire smoke as a person runs in front of the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool on the National Mall in Washington. (AP)

"The good news is they really work," said Kalkbrenner.

All you need to have to make one is: four 20-by-20-inch (50.8-by-50.8-centimeters) furnace air filters rated MERV 13 or higher, a box fan, cardboard and duct tape. The EPA's website shows how you can modify the design to only use one or two filters. The fan should blow out, and the arrows on the filters should point in. Make sure everything is taped up airtight.

Many window air conditioners, mini-split heat exchangers and portable air conditioners don't have the filters needed to remove fine pollution particles. But heat can also be dangerous.

"When smoke and heat occur together, the impacts on your health are even greater than when they occur by themselves," said Jess Downey, a researcher at the University of Oregon's Center for Wildfire Smoke Research and Practice.

Downey said the ideal scenario is running the AC unit and using an air purifier or a DIY box fan filter to clean the air. Make sure your AC is well-sealed in your window frame, she added.

Make sure the window units are set to recirculate air. Portable units with a single hose should be used sparingly, according to the University of Oregon wildfire smoke center.

If you don't have AC, any reprieve from hot, smoky air is important. Head to the library, shopping mall or other space with clean, cool air.

Whether it's a towel, some tape, or something else - plug areas where air could enter from outside.

"Being from Chicago, I think you can liken it to trying to keep the cold air out," said Dr. Khalilah Gates, a lung doctor with Northwestern Medicine. "Any areas in which air can come in, consider sealing up those areas to reduce the amount that's coming into the home."

When smoke levels are high, experts recommend avoiding anything that burns - candles, fireplaces, even gas stoves - so plan ahead with some meal prep.

Nothing about pressure is new for LeBron, Harper says

James’ move to Philadelphia makes 76ers NBA title contenders

PHILADELPHIA, July 25, (AP): LeBron James and Bryce Harper spent their careers on a parallel path toward stardom.

They were teenage phenoms who graced the cover of Sports Illustrated (back when magazines were cool) and both prodigies were No. 1 overall draft picks straight out of high school.

When Harper earned his first chance at testing free agency, there was only one city, one contract that was right for him.

Philadelphia.

It took a few years, but Harper has some company to fight with him on the short list of top elite athletes who have signed in Philadelphia.

Harper and the Phillies.

Pete Rose and Kyle Schwarber and the Phillies.

Saouon Barkley and Reggie White and the Eagles.

In the greatest July signature in Philadelphia since 1776, James has followed Harper from free agency to Philly when he rocked the NBA world and signed a two-year deal for the bargain-basement price of \$8 million total - only a smidge more per season than first-round pick Labaron Philon Jr. will earn - that stamped the Sixers as the most compelling team in the league this season.

Keeping tabs on the ballyhooed deal, Bryce Harper.

“He’s going to have a great couple of years here, and obviously everyone’s going to expect him to win a championship here like everywhere else,” Harper said. “So nothing new for him. He’s had all the pressure since he was in high school or younger than that.”

Here’s the difference between James and all the superstars in the city that played before him.

He’s LeBron James.

Meaning, his reach is so beyond

the court - from fame around the globe to his bank account to the cash register to pop culture - that there is no fair comparison. He is No. 4 on Forbes’ real-time list of wealthiest athletes at \$1.4 billion that his pay cut may not even be noticed in the ledger book. James has commercials and movie roles, and endorsement deals that alone would out-earn every single player on the Sixers.

Joel Embiid, league MVP and two-time scoring champ. He’s not LeBron.

Jaylen Brown, NBA Finals MVP and champion, He’s not LeBron.

Tyrese Maxey, an All-Star and the real franchise player in Philly. He’s not LeBron.

“I think it’s pretty cool to have one of the greatest basketball players ever to play, in the same city,” Phillies shortstop Trea Turner said. “So I’m excited for those who haven’t gotten a chance to see him



Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James stands on the court in the closing minutes of Game 4 in a second-round NBA basketball playoffs series against the Oklahoma City Thunder in Los Angeles. (AP)

time All-NBA selection, a four-time Most Valuable Player, a four-time NBA Finals MVP, a three-time All-Star Game MVP, and was a member of the NBA’s 75th anniversary team.

He’s also coming off a season where he averaged 20.9 points, 6.1 rebounds and 7.2 assists per game. For his career, he’s averaged 26.8 points, 7.5 rebounds and 7.4 assists in more than 1,600 games.

“He’s played in big markets before,” Harper said. “He knows exactly what he needs to do.”

Harper has largely lived up to the 13-year, \$330 million contract signed ahead of the 2019 season when he spurned the Washington Nationals for the Phillies and owned the richest contract in baseball history. He led the Phillies to the 2022 World Series, won the NL MVP in 2021 and helped win back-to-back NL East titles.

But he’s 0-for-October.

Season resumes in September

Yarmouk retains Al-Mutairi

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: Yarmouk Club has retained national coach Khaled Al-Mutairi as head coach of its first volleyball team for the upcoming season, continuing its policy of maintaining stability within the technical staff.



Khaled Al-Mutairi, head coach of Yarmouk Club

The new season is set to begin in early September as the club resumes the 2025-26 campaign, with Al-Mutairi tasked with leading the team through the remaining competitions.

Al-Mutairi expressed his appreciation for the board’s confidence, saying the decision gives him added motivation to continue working hard and deliver a season that meets the club’s expectations. He praised the administration’s support and efforts to provide the necessary resources to help the team develop and compete strongly in local tournaments.

The coach confirmed that Cameroonian professional Ibrahim Adam has renewed his contract for a second successive season, while his compatriot Aba Mohammed has also joined the squad as part of Yarmouk’s preparations. He added that the club is close to finalizing agreements with three local players to further strengthen the team ahead of the new campaign.

Fudd makes WNBA history as first rookie 3-point champion

Carleton takes runner-up spot

CHICAGO, July 25, (AP): Azzi Fudd had no idea she was the first rookie to win the WNBA All-Star 3-point contest. She put forth a stellar effort in the championship round to do it.

Fudd, the No. 1 pick in the WNBA draft by Dallas, scored 30 points in the finals to top Portland’s Bridget Carleton.

“I was shocked, that’s crazy to be the first is definitely an honor,” Fudd said of being the first rookie to win.

Fudd’s 30-point effort was tied for the second-most ever, equaling Sabrina Ionescu and Allie Quigley’s total. Ionescu holds the record, scoring 37 points in 2023.

Fudd hit her first six shots in the finals to get into rhythm. Carleton, from the expansion Fire, had 29 points in the opening round, but struggled in the finals, scoring 19 points.

Fresh off her victory, Fudd issued a playful request for a rematch with Golden State Warriors guard Steph Curry. The two had a 3-point competition when Fudd went to his camp when she was in high school.

“I mean Steph if you’re listening, I’m asking for a rematch,” Fudd said.

The 3-point competition capped off the Friday night festivities. Elena Delle Donne, Shakira Austin and high schooler Jezzelle Banks led team Washington to the Shooting Stars championship to tipoff the action. The trio scored 31 points to edge Seattle’s three in the finals, with Banks hitting two of the 4-point shots from just inside halfcourt to put the team over the top.

“She carried. She carried,” Austin said of Banks. “You could just tell in her energy, like as soon as we started, like it was confidence and I think that showed in how she hit those tough shots.”

In the 3-point competition, Carleton had a stellar first-round, scoring 29 points. She hit 13 of her first 16 shots. Fudd also had a great opening round, scoring 24 points. She made



In this file photo, Dallas Wings guard Azzi Fudd (35) dribbles against Los Angeles Sparks forward Nneka Ogwu-mike (30) during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Arlington, Texas. (AP)

four of her final five shots. That carried over to the finals.

Carleton’s hot shooting in the opening round brought the crowd, which included Jayson Tatum, Russell Westbrook, NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, Dwyane Wade and Sheryl Swoopes, to its feet.

Other players in 3-point contest were Atlanta’s Rhyne Howard, who scored 20 points, Golden State’s Janelle Salaun, who had 19 points; Toronto’s Marina Mabrey, who had 18 and Minnesota’s Natisha Heide-man, who had 17.

In the Shooting Stars competition, Seattle had 24 points to finish as runner-up after missing all of the team’s 4-point shots.

This was the first year that the contest was conducted. A skills competition was done in previous All-Star weekends. The format was

a two-round, timed shooting competition in which teams had 70 seconds to score as many points as possible from seven shooting locations around the court. The competition featured shots ranging from a layup to the 4-pointer.

Washington had the highest score in the preliminary round, posting 35 points. Once again, Banks hit 4-point shots to help her team reach the championship round.

Seattle’s squad needed to beat the 20 points that the Detroit/Dallas team put up to advance to the finals. High schooler Tatianna Griffin hit two of the 4-point shots to help Seattle reach the finals. Minnesota finished in fourth with 19 points with a team of Courtney Williams, Rebekah Brunson and Ryan Carter.

Detroit/Dallas had former Shock great Deanna Nolan, Wings All-Star

Jessica Shepard and high schooler Morghan Reckley.

The new CBA gave Fudd \$20,000 for winning the 3-point contest and each participant received \$10,000. That’s about eight-times last season’s prize money.

Each shooting stars winner received \$15,000. Each competitor, not including the high school players, will receive \$7,500. Last year, the winners of the skills contest each received \$2,575 from the WNBA.

In addition Afalac, like it has the past two years, gave extra money to the winners. Fudd took home \$40,000 for winning the 3-point contest. Carleton received \$30,000 for finishing second and Howard got \$15,000 for placing third.

Team Washington got \$40,000 from Afalac with Seattle receiving \$32,500 and Dallas \$12,500.

Al-Mutairi praises Abdullah’s dedication to Kuwaiti sports

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: President of the Kuwait Sports Media Coordinators Association Manawer Al-Mutairi praised the efforts of Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Sports Bashar Abdullah, saying a Kuwaiti sport has experienced significant progress thanks to his leadership and dedication.

Al-Mutairi said Bashar assumed responsibility during a difficult period but managed to successfully steer the sports sector through challenging circumstances, relying on his extensive experience and background as a former international player for Al-Salmiya, the Kuwait national team and the Olympic team.

He highlighted Bashar’s commitment to serving youth and sports in Kuwait, noting his continuous follow-up of the Public Authority for Sports’ activities involving clubs and federations, as well as his efforts



Manawer Al-Mutairi, President of the Kuwait Sports Media Coordinators Association.

to represent Kuwait at Arab, regional and international conferences.

Al-Mutairi added that Bashar Abdullah deserves to be appointed Director General of the Public Authority for Sports after the merger, allowing him to continue building on the achievements and progress made in Kuwaiti sports.

Maresca backs star’s future

Rodri to undergo back surgery

MANCHESTER, England, July 25, (AP): Manchester City midfielder Rodri will undergo back surgery next week, coach Enzo Maresca confirmed Friday.

Rodri, who sustained an ACL damage in 2024 endured an injury disrupted campaign last season before winning the World Cup with Spain.

Maresca did not say how long it would take for him to recover from his latest setback, but confirmed he wanted the former Ballon d’Or winner to stay at the club amid speculation about his future.

“Around a big player, there are always speculation so I’m not worried about that. I think it’s normal also because they won the World Cup. He was one of the



Spain’s Rodri poses with the tournament’s best player award at the end of the World Cup final soccer match between Spain and Argentina in East Rutherford, N.J., near New York. (AP)

best players and I think every manager wants to have Rodri because he’s a top player,” Maresca said. “But now (he has) surgery on, I think Monday, and he needs holiday. He needs to rest, he needs to recover and then he will be back here with us.”

Maresca was speaking at his unveiling as City coach after iconic former manager Pep Guardiola stepped down at the end of last season.

The Italian, who has previously part of Guardiola’s coaching staff, said he felt like he was back home after spells at Leicester and Chelsea and embraced the challenge of following in the steps of one of the greatest

SANTIAGO, Chile, July 25, (AP): One of the breakout stars at the World Cup has a new home in Chile - Cape Verde goalkeeper Vozinha has signed a contract with Colo Colo, the South American country’s biggest soccer team.

The 40-year-old Vozinha became one of the most talked-about players at the World Cup with a string of remarkable saves against top teams such as eventual champion Spain and defending champion Argentina.

“Welcome. We’re waiting for you,” the club wrote on its social media pages in a post that quickly sparked excitement not only among Colo Colo supporters but across Chile, where the national team failed this year to qualify for a third consecutive World Cup.

Anibal Mosa, president of Blanco y Negro, the company that manages the Chilean club, had confirmed shortly before that the goalkeeper, who had no contract with any team during the World Cup, will arrive in Chile soon.

“Vozinha is going to be a Colo Colo player. In the next few days, he will travel to Chile, undergo the necessary medical examinations, and then be presented here at the Estadio Monumental,” Mosa told media, referring to Colo Colo’s home stadium in Santiago, Chile’s capital.

Local media said the contract

was for 18 months.

Josimar Dias, better known as Vozinha, led Cape Verde, a small island country off the western coast of Africa, to a strong run in the tournament until losing to Lionel Messi’s Argentina 3-2 in extra time in the round of 32.

Vozinha’s appearance and exposure at the World Cup has seen his social media accounts increase from just under 50,000 to nearly 29 million.

South Korea midfielder Lee Kang-In has agreed to join Atletico Madrid from Paris Saint-Germain, the Spanish club said.

Atletico said the player would sign a contract through June 2031. The transfer fee was undisclosed but it is reportedly between 35 and 40 million euros (\$39.8 million and \$45.5 million).

The 25-year-old Lee played all three group-stage games at the World Cup, where South Korea failed to advance after losing twice.

Born in Incheon, Lee moved to Spain when he was 10 to join Valencia’s training academy and ended up playing 62 games for the club. After a stint with Mallorca, he joined PSG in 2023, scoring 16 goals in 124 appearances.

He will now play for an Atletico side that finished La Liga in



Cape Verde goalkeeper Vozinha (1) leaves the pitch after the World Cup round of 32 soccer match between Argentina and Cape Verde in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)

fourth place and reached the Copa del Rey final last season. Lee will help fill the creative void left by Antoine Griezmann, who has left for the MLS as Atletico’s all-time top scorer.

Newly-promoted Ipswich has signed Japan forward Daizen Maeda from Celtic, the English club said.

The 28-year-old Maeda played at the World Cup, scoring in a 1-1 draw with Sweden before Japan was eliminated by Brazil in the round-of-32.

Ipswich did not reveal financial details of the transfer.

Maeda scored 79 goals in 212 games with Celtic, helping it win

five Scottish league titles.

Earlier this week, Ipswich signed Morocco defender Issa Diop from Fulham as it prepares for its return to the Premier League after one season in the second tier.

Newcastle signed midfielder Aladjji Bamba from Monaco for a reported 34 million pounds (\$45 million).

The 20-year-old Bamba signed a five-year contract with the Premier League club.

“I’m excited to test myself in a new league, the biggest league in the world. I learned a lot last season and now I feel ready for this new opportunity,” Bamba said.

He’s a France Under-20 international who played for Monaco in the Champions League last season.

His move comes after midfielder Sandro Tonali left Newcastle for Tottenham this summer and amid reports Bruno Guimaraes could also leave.

“Aladjji adds depth and a range of qualities to our midfield options, with huge potential for growth. His development since breaking through at Monaco has been really impressive and something we believe we can help him build on,” Newcastle coach Eddie Howe said.

Change Name

I,Murtuza holder of Indian passport no. U8301442 having permanent address H.NO.31 TAHER PURA KADRI COLONY CHANDNI CHOWK, RATLAM PIN :457001, MADHYA PRADESH, INDIA residing in kuwait at present hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as under given name MURTAZA and Surname HAMID

Jürgen plans to make some surprising squad selections

Klopp begins Germany era, warns media and targets World Cup revival

MUNICH, July 25, (AP): Jürgen Klopp made a punchy start to his new job as Germany coach Friday, laying out red lines he'd consider resigning over, even before his turnaround effort with a squad which failed yet again at the World Cup.

In a combative first news conference, the ex-Liverpool manager warned the German media he'll quit if he believes they're intruding on his family's privacy.

He also hinted Germany could be his last job in coaching and admitted he hasn't been an avid follower of international games.

Klopp was the German federation's top target and now he's signed a contract through to the 2030 World Cup. At his presentation Friday, he said it was "a big honor" to take the job and signaled it could be his final role as coach.

Klopp said he would be prepared to leave without any severance pay if it doesn't work out, or if criticism becomes overwhelming, and threatened to resign if the media doesn't "leave my family in peace."

"Jürgen Klopp has no career after the national team," he said. "Ideally, this will be the highlight of my career, my life, my working life. I will put everything into it that I possibly can."

He replaces Julian Nagelsmann, who resigned amid heavy criticism after Germany's loss to Paraguay meant it failed to reach the last 16 of a men's World Cup for the third time in a row.

Klopp indicated he believed Nagelsmann and England's coach Thomas Tuchel had been treated unfairly in the media. "I'm doing the job even though I've heard how you treated Julian, although I've heard how England treats Tuchel," he said, without specifying what exactly he thought was the problem.

It is Klopp's first coaching job since he left Liverpool in 2024 citing fatigue. He said he was "recharged" in comments while in talks over the Germany job.

Klopp signaled he plans to make some surprising squad selections and said his mission isn't just to win games, but to bring back a buzz around the team.

Klopp himself admitted that "it's been a while" since he watched national



Newly appointed head coach of the German national soccer team Juergen Klopp, center right, poses for a photo with DFB President Bernd Neuendorf, left, DFB men's national team sporting director Rudi Voeller, center left, and vice-president Hans-Joachim Watzke, right, during a press conference at the headquarters of the German Football Association DFB in Frankfurt, Germany. (AP)

team games outside of major tournaments.

"I want to create something with the national team that means that people go home after the game and think 'That was really cool.' That's what I'd like to see happen," he said.

The man known for thrilling "heavy metal football" at Liverpool, Klopp

was Germany's preferred candidate as soon as Nagelsmann quit.

Over weeks of talks, the 59-year-old German - 20 years older than Nagelsmann - stayed in the United States as a World Cup pundit for a German-language broadcaster.

The federation also held talks with the Red Bull group, where Klopp spent the last year and a half as "head of global soccer" advising its worldwide group of soccer clubs.

German federation president Bernd Neuendorf said there wouldn't be a typical release fee paid to Red Bull for Klopp. Instead, the federation pays one million euros (\$1.14 million) to a Red Bull-linked charity and has agreed to hold three national team games in the eastern city of Leipzig, where Red Bull backs the city's Bundesliga club team.

Klopp faces a tough introduction to his first national team job with four Nations League games in 11 days against the Netherlands, Greece and Serbia in late September and early October. The first major milestone will be the 2028 European Championship.

Germany hasn't won a knockout game at a World Cup since beating Argentina in the 2014 final. Now a player from that team will be working alongside Klopp.

Former defender Per Mertesacker joins Klopp as the federation's new managing director for sport, with a role overseeing the German men's national teams and an emphasis on bringing players through youth national teams to star for the senior team. He will start the role in January and joins after eight years running Arsenal's academy.

Klopp is reunited with two of his assistants from his Liverpool days, Peter Krauwietz and Pep Lijnders, weeks after Lijnders left a role as Pep Guardiola's assistant at Man City. Ex-Germany player Sven Bender also takes an assistant role.

In an unusual arrangement, Klopp's longtime agent Marc Kossicke joins the coaching team in a role focusing on strategy and administration, but won't be a federation employee.

Kishan stars as India routs Zimbabwe to take 2-0 lead

Sooryavanshi makes speedy 20



India's captain Shreyas Iyer plays a shot during the second T20 cricket match between Zimbabwe and India in Harare, Zimbabwe. (AP)

HARARE, Zimbabwe, July 25, (AP): Ishan Kishan hit 81 off 44 balls as India crushed Zimbabwe by 90 runs in the second T20 on Saturday to take a 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

Kishan struck nine fours and two sixes as India piled up 219-5. Tilak Varma contributed 60 not out off 29 balls, including three sixes, while the 15-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi made a speedy 20.

In reply, Zimbabwe was bowled out for 129 in 17.5 overs. Debutant Yash Thakur picked up 2-30, while Abhishek Sharma took 3-17 and Prince Yadav claimed 2-10 in 1.2 overs before walking off with an injured hamstring.

Put into bat, Sooryavanshi provided a blistering start, hitting three

fours and one six in the powerplay, but Abhishek Sharma fell to Blessing Muzarabani for the second match running.

Muzarabani then caught Sooryavanshi off Richard Ngarava as India slipped to 29-2.

Kishan, however, put on 66 off 42 balls with skipper Shreyas Iyer, who scored 25 before being caught at backward point off Brian Bennett. It brought Kishan and Varma together and they added 94 off 43 balls for the fourth wicket.

Kishan scored his 13th T20 half-century off 31 deliveries, while Varma hit three sixes to race to his half-century off 23 balls.

Kishan fell in the 18th over, but Varma saw India past 200.

Zimbabwe's reply never really took off. Bennett made 32 off 19 balls, including three fours and three sixes, but didn't get much support.

India won the first T20 on Thursday by seven wickets. The third game is on Sunday at the same venue.

Standings leader Antonelli qualifies fourth

Norris snatches pole from Hamilton at Hungarian GP

MOGYOROD, Hungary, July 25, (AP): Defending Formula 1 champion Lando Norris took his first pole position of 2026 when he snatched it from Lewis Hamilton by just 0.012 of a second at the Hungarian Grand Prix.

Hamilton was on course for a record-extending 105th pole position, and first in a full grand prix since Hungary in 2023, before Norris darted through to take it away.

"It's been a while," Norris said. "I felt confident all weekend."

Norris felt he could easily have gone much faster if he'd had time for another run to iron out mistakes.

"I had the confidence to push more," he said. "I got it to unexplored territory from what happens to the balance when I push it at that next level, and I lost a bit of time in a couple of places."

Norris added that upgrades to McLaren's car give him confidence for Sunday's race, but "it's a long race ahead tomorrow and it's going to be a difficult one."

Charles Leclerc took third for Ferrari, .238 off the pace. With Hamilton facing a potential penalty, Leclerc may end up second



McLaren driver Lando Norris of Britain steers his car during a qualifying session ahead of Sunday's Formula One Hungarian Grand Prix auto race, at the Hungaroring racetrack in Mogyorod, near Budapest, Hungary. (AP)

on the grid alongside Norris.

Mercedes had a tough day. Standings leader Kimi Antonelli was fourth after seemingly being held up by Red Bull's Max Verstappen spinning ahead of him, and teammate George Russell was seventh.

Mercedes could also be facing a repair job after Russell broke down on track on his way back to

the pits.

Hamilton appeared likely to get a grid penalty in an investigation after qualifying over whether he impeded McLaren's Oscar Piastri.

The Australian driver gestured angrily at Hamilton after taking evasive action when he spotted his rival's Ferrari going slowly on the inside of the first corner. Piastri ended up fifth.

Asked what his main problem was in qualifying, Piastri said: "Lewis not looking in his mirrors."

Hamilton said: "I was told literally when he was at the apex behind me, so I had no idea ... I thought everyone had finished their lap. Crazy because (the session) had been clean and obviously it wasn't intentional."

Hamilton is an eight-time winner in Hungary and this was a day of regrets despite being one of his best qualifying performances since he joined Ferrari last year. "We clearly had the car to be on pole today and I just didn't deliver so that's tough to swallow," he said.

It's the 17th career pole in a full qualifying session for Norris, moving him level with a British hero, three-time champion Jackie Stewart. It's also his first since the Las Vegas Grand Prix in November, though everything went wrong from there.

The following day he lost the lead to then-title rival Verstappen and ended the day with a double disqualification for him and McLaren teammate Piastri over a team setup issue.

Colombia backs coach with contract extension

Belgium hires van Bommel to lead the national team

BRUSSELS, July 25, (AP): Former Netherlands international Mark van Bommel has taken over as head coach of Belgium's national team following its run to the World Cup quarterfinals.

Van Bommel replaces Rudi Garcia, who it was confirmed this week would leave at the end of his contract on July 31.

"Belgium has outstanding players and enormous potential," Van Bommel said. "Together with my coaching staff, we want to build a team that is disciplined, ambitious and brave enough to compete with the very best."

Van Bommel has coached PSV Eindhoven, VfL Wolfsburg and Royal Antwerp FC. As a player he represented top European clubs including Barcelona, Bayern Munich and AC Milan. He was also in the Netherlands side which reached the final of the 2010 World Cup, losing to Spain.

He boosted his coaching reputation in Belgium by winning a league and cup double with Antwerp in 2023. That was Antwerp's first league title since 1957.

"Success is never guaranteed, but hard work, honesty and commitment are. We will give everything to help this team improve every day and make the Belgian people proud," Van Bommel said.

Boudewijn Zenden, Maarten Martens and Reinier Robbemond have been named as Van Bommel's assistants.

"I am truly delighted that Mark van Bommel and his assistants have agreed to take on this challenge. They are highly motivated and ambitious, and I am convinced that, with their international experience as both coaches and players, they will be perfectly placed to help our Belgian Red Devils continue to improve, achieve results and reach their full potential, both individually and as a team," Belgian soccer federation sports director Vincent Mannaert said.

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In this file photo, Royal Antwerp's head coach Mark van Bommel reacts during a Champions League Group H soccer match between Porto and Antwerp at Estadio do Dragao in Porto, Portugal. (AP)

12 draws, and eight losses, scoring a healthy 96 goals overall and conceding 44.

Colombia topped its group at the World Cup with wins over Uzbekistan (3-1) and Congo (1-0), and a 0-0 draw against Portugal. After defeating Ghana 1-0 in the round of 32, Colombia was eliminated in the last 16 by Switzerland, falling 4-3 in a penalty shootout following a goalless 120 minutes.

"Now is the time to recharge and continue developing this project," Lorenzo told 365scores. "We will keep building a stronger national team, maintaining our attacking style and pursuing clear objectives."

Reflecting on the World Cup, Lorenzo praised the defensive performance of his squad while lamenting the penalty shootout against Switzerland.

"The penalties against Switzerland were the most painful moment because our World Cup dream came to an end," Lorenzo said. "The team took the initiative in every match; we played with an ambitious, attacking mindset. We created more scoring chances than any of the opponents we faced."

Colombia will return to action in September, with its next opponent still to be confirmed.

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NEWS



Australia's winning women's 4x100 meter freestyle relay swimming team of Meg Harris, Shayana Jack, Alex Perkins and Mollie O'Callaghan celebrate during the medal ceremony during the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland. (AP)

Sports

Sheikh Mubarak hails Prime Minister's recognition of outstanding athletes

KUWAIT CITY, July 25: Kuwait Olympic Committee Vice President Sheikh Mubarak Faisal Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah praised the generous support and patronage extended by His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah for the ceremony honoring outstanding athletes.

Sheikh Mubarak said the initiative reflects the state's appreciation for the dedication and achievements of Kuwaiti athletes, while highlighting the continued backing the sports sector receives from the country's leadership.

In a press statement, Kuwait Olympic Committee Vice President described the Prime Minister's attendance and sponsorship of the event as a significant gesture that demonstrates Kuwait's commitment to supporting athletes and recognizing those who have brought honor to the country. He added that such recognition provides motivation to continue pursuing success and enhancing Kuwait's sporting presence at regional and international levels.

He also praised Minister of State



Kuwait Olympic Committee Vice President Sheikh Mubarak Faisal Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah

for Youth and Sports Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahema and Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Sports Bashar Abdullah for their efforts in organizing the ceremony, which celebrated athletes' accomplishments and promoted a culture of appreciation for those who contribute to Kuwait's sporting achievements.

Kuwait beats China to stay on course for fifth place

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

BEIJING, July 25: Kuwait claimed a deserved 36-31 victory over China in the 5th-8th place classification round at the 19th Asian Men's Junior Handball Championship, which concludes tomorrow in China.

The Blues delivered a strong performance across both halves, taking control of the match and sealing a five-goal win to remain in contention for the best possible finish.

Kuwait will conclude its campaign tomorrow against Chinese Taipei in the playoff for fifth place. The team will be aiming to end the tournament with a victory after missing out on the semifinals and a place at the 2027 IHF Men's Youth World Championship.

Meanwhile, the Asian Handball Federation has announced the schedule for the 11th Asian Men's Junior Handball Championship, a qualifier for the 2027 IHF Men's Youth World Championship, to be held in Amman, Jordan, from Aug. 20-31.

Kuwait has been drawn in Group B alongside South Korea, Iran, Jordan, Syria and India. The team will



Players celebrate the victory over China.

open its campaign against Syria on Aug. 20, followed by matches

against Iran, India and Jordan, before facing South Korea in its final

preliminary-round fixture on Aug. 26.

Qadsia judokas shine with 6 medals



Qadsia judokas celebrate with their Arab Championship medals.

AMMAN, Jordan, July 25: Qadsia Club's judo team delivered an impressive display at the Arab Cadet Judo Championship in Amman, Jordan, claiming six medals, including four gold and two bronze.

The Kuwaiti club's athletes showcased their quality throughout the tournament, producing a series of strong performances to dominate the competition and secure multiple podium finishes, adding another notable achievement to Qadsia's growing list of sporting successes.

The result reflects the dedication of the club's administrative and coaching staff in preparing and developing young talent, reinforcing Qadsia's reputation as one of the region's leading judo clubs and providing momentum for future regional competitions.

No target date set for a verdict

CAS sets Oct 8 hearing for Senegal's appeal over stripped title

GENEVA, July 25, (AP): Senegal's appeal to regain the Africa Cup of Nations title it won in a chaotic final against host nation Morocco in January will be heard at sport's highest court on Oct. 8.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport said the hearing will be held behind closed doors at its headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland, with no target date set for a verdict.

CAS judges can typically take several months to announce their decision, and the AFCON case will be rigorously scrutinized after provoking a furor in African soccer and political circles.

Senegal beat Morocco 1-0 after extra time in an extraordinary final in Rabat on Jan. 18.

Morocco was awarded the title several weeks later when appeal judges for the Confederation of African Football ruled Senegal defaulted the game by leaving the field to protest a penalty kick being awarded to Morocco.

Preparing the appeal hearing was in process throughout the World Cup where Morocco reached the quarterfinals and Senegal stunningly lost in the round of 32 against Belgium after leading 2-0 late in the game.

"At this stage, CAS cannot state

when a final decision will be rendered but it will not be on the day of the hearing," the court said Friday in a statement.

The AFCON final drama erupted in stoppage time after the regulation 90 minutes with the score tied at 0-0.

Senegal players walked off the field and delayed play for 15 minutes when Morocco was awarded the

penalty that was eventually saved.

Senegal's star forward Sadio Mané was credited with helping persuade his team to complete the game.

That avoided the game being abandoned amid angry scenes in the stadium as Moroccan police clashed with Senegal fans. Tensions had risen when Senegal had a goal dis-

allowed in stoppage time, minutes before the penalty was awarded.

Morocco's missed penalty kick also entered soccer lore. Stepping up for what shaped as the final play of the game, Morocco forward Brahim Díaz attempted a delicate slow chip shot - known as a "Panenka" - that Senegal goalkeeper Édouard Mendy stood up to save easily.

Fallout from the final continued into May. Morocco's King Mohammed VI pardoned 18 Senegal fans who were jailed for up to one year because of the clashes in the stadium.

The CAF appeal ruling in March seemed to ignore the laws of soccer, which state the referee's decision on the field of play is final.

The judges, however, cited a CAF tournament rule that any team refusing to play "shall be eliminated for good from the current competition." Senegal's refusal to play lasted several minutes, though it did not force or persuade the referee to abandon the game.

The decision to strip the title from Senegal fueled a perception that Morocco, which will co-host the 2030 World Cup with Spain and Portugal, has increasing influence in international soccer politics.



In this file photo, Senegal supporters clash with security services after a controversial penalty was awarded to Morocco late on during the Africa Cup of Nations final soccer match between Senegal and Morocco in Rabat, Morocco. (AP)

Pogacar closes in on record-equaling 5th Tour title

Carapaz wins penultimate stage

ALPE D'HUEZ, France, July 25, (AP): Tadej Pogacar moved to within touching distance of a record-equaling fifth Tour de France title after finishing safely in the penultimate stage on Saturday.

The Slovenian star heads into Sunday's showcase finish in Paris with a lead of 6 1/2 minutes over Belgian rider Remco Evenepoel.

Barring mishap, Pogacar will join Belgian Eddy Merckx, Spaniard Miguel Indurain, and Frenchmen Jacques Anquetil and Bernard Hinault as the only men to win five Tours.

"I have done a really good Tour. Some of our competitors had bad luck," said Pogacar, whose main rival Jonas Vingegaard crashed out of the race. "We made it through with the team and now there is just one last show left."

The 20th stage was won by Richard Carapaz for his second win at this year's race and third overall. The Ecuadorian rider overtook Sepp Kuss near the end as the American



Slovenian's Tadej Pogacar, wearing the overall leader's yellow jersey, celebrates on the podium after the twentieth stage of the Tour de France cycling race with start in Le Bourg d'Oisans and finish in Alpe d'Huez, France. (AP)

almost crashed out. Evenepoel also surged past Kuss near the line to take second place.

"There was a moment when I couldn't believe what was happening," Carapaz said. "This Tour de France has been incredible, with all the spectators and all the support I've received from Ecuador, where they'll be jumping for joy."

Pogacar chose not to launch one of his attacks like on Friday's 19th stage.

Stage 20 was a mammoth 171-kilometer alpine trek featuring three

hors catégorie climbs - the hardest category - and one category 1 climb.

After three weeks in the saddle, weary riders tackled hors catégorie ascents of Col de la Croix de Fer, Col du Galibier and Col de Sarenne, and the one cat 1 climb of Col du Télégraphe, making for 66 kilometers of hard climbing in total before a hilly finish to Alpe d'Huez.

Carapaz rode from the front in order to secure the polka-dot jersey awarded to the Tour's best climber. Pogacar's yellow jersey group was hanging back when Carapaz, Kuss, Spaniard Juan Ayuso and Australian Jai Hindley went over the Galibier together.

Pogacar's priority was ensuring his AE Team Emirates teammate Isaac Del Toro finished third in the rankings, and the Mexican rider is now more than two minutes clear of Frenchman Paul Seixas in fourth.

"It's been an honor to ride for Isaac today," said Pogacar, who gifted Del Toro victory on Stage 2. "Crossing the finish line together with him has been memorable."

Ayuso was dropped as the former Spanish Vuelta winner Kuss, Hindley and Carapaz - both former Giro d'Italia winners - battled for suprem-



Ecuador's Richard Carapaz celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the twentieth stage of the Tour de France cycling race with start in Le Bourg d'Oisans and finish in Alpe d'Huez, France. (AP)

acy in the Sarenne pass.

"It was really, really tough," Carapaz said. "Sepp, in particular, was a very tough nut to crack."

An exhausted-looking Kuss lost control of his bike going downhill when he mistimed a turn with five kilometers left and almost tumbled

over a roadside concrete barrier. Some netting cushioned him.

Carapaz rode swiftly past him to victory.

"It was absolutely brilliant to win here and in a distinctive jersey," Carapaz said. "I think I deserve it, because I've fought so hard in this

Tour de France."

Pogacar has won five stages on this year's race and 26 overall, meaning he would likely need to compete in at least two more Tours to beat British sprinter Mark Cavendish's record of 35 stage wins. Merckx won 34 and Hinault 28.

De la Fuente says Argentina's conduct after World Cup final was 'unacceptable'

GENEVA, July 25, (AP): As FIFA investigates Argentina's conduct after the World Cup final, Spain coach Luis de la Fuente has described the incidents as "intolerable and unacceptable."

FIFA asked one of its disciplinary prosecutors Monday to report back on testy on-field confrontations after Spain's 1-0 win in extra time Sunday to dethrone the defending champion.

Argentina midfielder Leandro Paredes physically tan-

gled with Spain players Eric Garcia and Gavi, and Spain captain Rodri was hit in the stomach as he ran past Argentina defender Nahuel Molina.

"It cannot be allowed," De la Fuente told Spanish public broadcaster TVE on Thursday, adding he did not see the incidents at the time while "celebrating with other people."

"In any case, I find it intolerable and unacceptable from players of that caliber, whom I had been praising

in the days before and who have a magnificent coach," the Spain coach said. FIFA has given no details of the remit for its investigator, or if witness statements could be sought from Spain players and staff.

Argentina assistant coach Roberto Ayala apologized Wednesday for his confrontation with Dani Olmo, which he described as a shove and not a punch.

De la Fuente praised his players in the TVE interview for how they handled the situation at MetLife Stadium.

"I want to highlight our behavior in the face of that kind of aggression and provocation," the coach said. "Our players always kept their composure and behaved like true professionals."

The Spain squad stood in a guard of honor for Argentina players walking to the podium to get their medals from U.S. President Donald Trump. Minutes later, when Rodri lifted the trophy, most of the Argentina squad turned their backs on the ceremonial moment.