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Egypt pledges support, backs Kuwait sovereignty, stability

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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

SUSTAINABLE development is not limited to large-scale development projects which, despite their importance, do not create a local economy away from supporting factors and incentives to stimulate the local market.

Stimulating expenditure is necessary to boost national product

Therefore, the market cannot be revitalized through decisions that restrict economic activity and encourage spending abroad, while the true cycle of money lies in circulating funds locally and reducing wasteful spending abroad.

I would like to talk about domestic tourism. Kuwait experiences high temperatures for about six months of the year. In spite of this, there are many facilities that, if utilized properly, offer numerous benefits and could revitalize the local economy.

Agricultural plots are primarily for ensuring food security. The owners of these plots have proven their dedication, especially during times of crisis, bearing high costs that subsidies cannot cover.

Neighboring countries that are similar to Kuwait

in terms of climate, customs and traditions have noted this. For example, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) allowed farm owners to utilize some of their land to establish recreational facilities as part of domestic tourism, in addition to stimulating local production and the retail market through the direct sale of agricultural products to visitors who prefer to spend their weekends in this climate. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia encouraged small-scale local investment through citizen entrepreneurs working in various sectors that serve such facilities. These decisions revitalized the regional economy.

However, industrial plots are hampered by new regulations that stifled individual initiatives among beneficiaries, preventing them from using the plots

in ways that benefit the economy. These regulations prohibit beneficiaries from leasing part of the industrial plot or allocating a portion for workers' accommodation. The productivity of workers improves when their house is near the workplace. The regulations also prevent the beneficiaries of industrial plots from selling the plots, thus, closing the door to the development of vital facilities.

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7 DAYS, THOUSANDS FINED IN KUWAIT TRAFFIC BLITZ

Offenders get no green light

24,979 citations as crackdown intensifies

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The security and traffic campaigns conducted by the Emergency Police General Department in the Traffic and Operations Sector at the Interior Ministry on July 19-25 resulted in the impoundment of 13 wanted vehicles, and

arrest of 105 wanted individuals, 52 individuals with expired residency permits, 11 individuals without valid identification, eight individuals in abnormal condition, and six others who were referred to the Drug Control General Department (DCGD).

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GCC sting thwarts meth 'infiltration' into Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, July 28, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior announced a joint GCC security operation on Tuesday that thwarted an attempt to smuggle a quantity of raw liquid methamphetamine, sufficient to produce approximately 15 kilograms of the drug, into the country.

In a press statement, the Ministry said that the successful operation was conducted in cooperation and coordination between Kuwait's General Department for Drug Control and its counterparts in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Oman.

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Mol photo

Photo shows suspect in custody.

Kuwait puts notarization on digital track

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait issued a ministerial decree promulgating the new executive regulations for Law No. 10/2020 concerning notarization, as amended by Decree-Law No. 147/2025.

The executive regulations introduce an integrated electronic system and establish a private notary system through the reorganization of notarization procedures and processes, in addition to

adopting electronic methods for completing notarization transactions.

In a statement to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Tuesday, the Ministry of Justice explained that the regulations specify three methods for completing notarization transactions, categorized according to the nature of each transaction and the extent of its legal implications.

The regulations retain the requirement for personal appearance before the notary while also allowing transactions to be completed through audiovisual communication.

The regulations introduce a fully automated electronic system for completing certain transactions, limited to powers of attorney related to routine administrative procedures that do not involve the transfer of ownership, the creation of a real right, or the imposition of a financial obligation on the principal.

The ministry explained that the new electronic system relies on the "Kuwait Mobile ID" application and secure electronic signatures for stakeholders, approved by the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI).

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Justice sector opens more doors for Kuwaiti women

KUWAIT CITY, July 28, (KUNA): Kuwait's Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Human Rights, Ambassador Sheikhah Jawaher Ibrahim Duaij Al-Sabah, affirmed Kuwait's continued efforts to promote human rights and empower women within the justice system.

She said these efforts are aligned with Kuwait's Constitution and international commitments.

Sheikhah Jawaher Al-Sabah made the remarks Tuesday during a seminar titled "United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security: International Commitments and National Implementation - Kuwait's Experience," organized by the Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies in cooperation with the ministry's Human Rights Department.

The seminar was moderated by the institute's Deputy Director for Communications, Relations and Research, Counselor Dr. Ahmad Al-Moqallad.

Kuwait has placed significant emphasis on implementing Resolution 1325 by establishing a national committee chaired by the ministry



MoFA photo

Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Ambassador Sheikhah Jawaher Ibrahim Duaij Al-Sabah speaks during a seminar on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

to coordinate efforts among relevant authorities, raise awareness, build capacity and strengthen institutional cooperation in line with international best practices, Sheikhah Jawaher Al-Sabah said.

The seminar was part of the committee's efforts to raise awareness of the resolution and strengthen national capacity to implement it, she noted.

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PM Diwan photo

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

Kuwait backs Saudi, Jordan amid attacks

Cabinet draws line against Iran

KUWAIT CITY, July 28, (KUNA): The Cabinet held its meeting on Tuesday, July 28, 2026, under the chairmanship of His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister. Following the session, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sherida Abdullah Al-Mausherji issued a statement outlining key discussions and decisions.

Amir's Contacts with Leaders

At the outset, the Cabinet reviewed the contents of a phone call received last week by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from his brother, His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. During the call, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman reassured Kuwait's leadership and people in the wake of continued blatant Iranian attacks on Kuwaiti territory, expressing his condemnation of these aggressions and his solidarity with Kuwait. His Highness the Amir conveyed his deep thanks and appreciation to the Crown Prince, wishing him good health and well-being, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its brotherly people security, safety, progress and prosperity under the wise leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

The Cabinet also noted the phone call received on Sunday by His Highness the Amir from His Excellency Andy Burnham, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, during which

Burnham congratulated His Highness on his assumption of office. His Highness the Amir reciprocated his congratulations on Burnham's appointment by His Majesty King Charles III to form His Majesty's Government, expressing sincere thanks and appreciation and wishing the British Prime Minister good health, continued success in leading the path of development and prosperity, and further progress and advancement for the friendly British people.

In addition, the Cabinet was briefed on a phone call received Tuesday by His Highness the Amir from His Excellency President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt. The two leaders reviewed the strong and distinguished brotherly relations between the two countries and peoples. President El-Sisi affirmed that Egypt stands firmly by Kuwait and supports all measures taken to preserve its security and sovereignty, praying that the Almighty protect Kuwait and its brotherly people from all harm.

Strategic Cooperation with China

The Cabinet then reviewed details of a new contract concluded between the State of Kuwait and the People's Republic of China, described as the second cooperation agreement of its kind. The contract was signed by Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Mohammed Al-Mashaan, in the presence of the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to Kuwait, Yang Xin.

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Investors turn cautious

Boursa Kuwait feels pinch as regional tensions mount

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Current geopolitical tensions are casting a heavy shadow over the regional financial and investment arena, with stock markets reflecting fluctuations in the security situation through immediate movements in trading activity.

Amid the Iranian attacks targeting vital and civilian facilities in Kuwait, Boursa Kuwait has come under close scrutiny to assess the extent of the geopolitical impact on investor confidence and capital flows.

Speaking to the daily, financial an-

alyst and economist Sultan Al-Jazzaf, a member of the Kuwait Economic Society, explained that the most significant economic effects of these attacks on stock market trading centred on several areas, most notably pressure on major indices and a decline in liquidity.

The waves of missile and drone attacks targeting vital and civilian facilities in Kuwait, including energy installations and areas surrounding

Kuwait International Airport, have pushed the market into a state of heightened uncertainty and extreme caution.

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Day by Day

"DESPITE the freshwater from rain and flowers in the sea, as well as melting snow, the seawater remains salty," said a wise man.

Do not burden yourself, as human nature does not change. Fresh water will always remain fresh, and salt water will always remain salty. An evil person continues in the same way, as their actions reveal their true wicked nature. Some people choose to be like salt water.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Kuwait puts subsidy abuse off the menu

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Kuwait's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Osama Boodai, has issued Ministerial Decree No. 154 of 2026, introducing new rules that limit eligibility for subsidized food items and impose stricter penalties for misuse of ration card benefits.

Under the new decree, subsidized food will be available only to Kuwaiti citizens, their families and their domestic workers. The decision amends Clause 1 of Article 5 of Ministerial Decree No. 216 of 2014.

The decree also repeals all previous provisions governing the distribution or use of subsidized goods for cate-

ries not covered under the new rules.

In a move aimed at preventing abuse of the subsidy system, the ministry said ration card allocations will be suspended for anyone found reselling or transferring subsidized goods to others. Violators will also be referred to the competent authorities for legal action.

The decision took effect on July 27, 2026, and will be published in the Official Gazette. All government entities concerned have been instructed to implement the new regulations, with any conflicting provisions deemed revoked.



Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:37	Asr	15:30
Sunrise ..	05:06	Maghrib ..	18:43
Zohr	11:55	Isha	20:12



HH the Amir



Abdelfattah El-Sisi

Egypt pledges support, backs Kuwait sovereignty, stability

KUWAIT CITY, July 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a phone call on Tuesday from Egypt’s President Abdelfattah El-Sisi.

During the call, the two sides reviewed the longstanding relations between Kuwait and Egypt, and discussed several topics of mutual interest, as well as the latest regional and international developments, particu-

larly the current situation in the region.

Al-Sisi reaffirmed his country support for Kuwait and its people, stressing the Egypt’s backing for all measures aimed at safeguarding Kuwait’s sovereignty, security and stability.

His Highness the Amir expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the Egyptian President, wishing him good health and to the people of Egypt further progress and prosperity.

Kuwait, Japan seek to enhance cooperation in military avenue

KUWAIT CITY, July 28, (KUNA): Chief of the Kuwaiti Army General Staff Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shrai’an and Japanese Military Attache Col. Ryo Tatsukawa discussed on Tuesday ways to promote military coopera-

tion in a way that serves shared interests.

They also tackled several issues of mutual interest and reviewed bilateral relations between both friendly countries, said the Army General Staff in a press release.

Plan to expand initiative

Kuwait preps to start Social Responsibility Endowment

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: United Nations (UN) Ambassador and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al-Awazem Charitable Foundation Counselor Hamad Zaid Al-Bseis revealed that preparations are underway for the launching of the Social Responsibility Endowment fund, which is affiliated with the Regional Network for Social Responsibility, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, Al-Bseis pointed out that this endowment is considered “a qualitative and unique leap forward,” as it is unprecedented in the Gulf and globally. He explained that endowments are usually local or family-based, while the Social Responsibility Endowment involves social leaders from the Kingdom of Bahrain, State of Qatar and State of Kuwait.

He confirmed that Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Regional Network for Social Responsibility in the Kingdom of Bahrain Dr. Yousef Abdulghaffar Al-Abbasi will assume the chairmanship of the Board of Directors of the endowment.

He disclosed that he will assume the presi-



Hamad Zaid Al-Bseis flanked by Dr. Yousef Abdulghaffar Al-Abbasi and Dr. Ali Al-Ibrahim.

dency of the Social Responsibility Endowment in Kuwait, Vice Chairman of the Regional Network for Social Responsibility in the State of Qatar Dr. Ali Al-Ibrahim will serve as the scientific advisor of the endowment, and Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Regional Network for Social Responsibility in the Kingdom of Bahrain Sheikh Dr. Adel

bin Ahmed Al-Marzouqi will serve as the legal advisor of the endowment.

He added that the Board of Trustees of the Social Responsibility Endowment consists of leading experts in the fields of endowment and social responsibility from among the leaders and members of the Regional Network for Social Responsibility.

Court acquits duo accused of possessing drugs, trafficking

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Criminal Court acquitted two defendants of possessing hashish and alcohol with the intent to traffic and use due to the invalidity of the arrest and search warrant, which was issued based on inconclusive investigations.

Attorney Abdulmohsen Al-Qattan, lawyer for the defendants, argued in court that the arrest and search warrant is invalid, because it was based on unreliable investigations.

He pointed out the lack of solid evidence, and then requested the acquittal of his clients, or at the very least, utmost leniency.

The court disclosed that the investigating officer stated he conducted investigations for four days, which included two days of surveillance of the defendants.

However, it is not convinced by these investigations, as it considers them unsubstantiated statements without objective evidence.

The court pointed out that is inconceivable for the investigation and surveillance procedures to continue for several days without finding any information about the alleged accomplice in drug trafficking.

It added that only 10 bottles were confiscated, half of which were open and unfit for sale, indicating this quantity is not considered alcohol trafficking.

According to the court, the telephone of one of the defendant had no messages or evidence to support the trafficking allegations.

It indicated that all these circumstances undermine the seriousness of the investigation, making the search and arrest warrant and all subsequent procedures invalid.

MPW eyes systems to mitigate flood threats

Move to cut road-building, facilities costs

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Ministry of Public Works (MPW) intends to issue a tender for the construction, completion and maintenance of flood protection systems for existing and future areas.

The included the project in its current annual plan, which will be offered through public bidding by the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT). This project is in line with the ongoing efforts of the ministry to upgrade infrastructure and ensure its

readiness to meet challenges.

The project will lead to the local purchase of building materials, contributing to increased trade opportunities, sales and the exchange of raw materials, as well as the creation of job opportunities.

It will generate indirect economic benefits by reducing the maintenance costs of roads and public facilities, as they will be protected from the effects of flooding, as well as extending the design life of these facilities.

It will contribute to environmental protection by preventing the accumulation of rainwater in the targeted and surrounding areas due to the lack of a comprehensive and safe rainwater drainage network.

It includes the implementation of fundamental solutions to absorb water flows before they reach the cities. These solutions include the

creation of permanent lakes in accordance with environmental standards, as well as dams and waterways to divert floodwater away from the cities.

Meanwhile, the CAPT Board of Directors postponed the issuance of its decision on the request of the ministry to issue a tender for the construction, completion and maintenance of the Volunteer Work Center building until it receives a letter from the beneficiary entity outlining the discussed amendments and an updated approval from the Ministry of Finance.

This project, one of several construction projects undertaken by the ministry to support volunteer work, includes a five-storey administrative building in the eastern region. The building will house a studio, theaters, and training and rehabilitation rooms, covering an area of 6,000 square meters.

Security, stability red lines: Al-Muajil

Amir’s wisdom, restraint helped Kuwait face crisis

By Bassam Al-Qassas

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Secretary General of Kuwaiti Diwanias Fahad Al-Muajil praised the wisdom of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may Allah protect him, in managing regional developments and addressing the challenges that the region is facing.

Al-Muajil confirmed that His Highness the Amir has adopted a policy of wisdom, restraint, and diplomatic and political solutions since the



Fahad Al-Muajil

beginning of the crisis, reflecting the insightful vision and balanced approach for which Kuwait has been known in the field of crisis management.

He stated that the Kuwaiti leadership has been keen on exerting political and diplomatic efforts to maintain regional security and stability. He indicated that this is an embodiment of the political legacy of Kuwait, based on dialogue, commitment to abide by the international law, and working hard to guarantee security and peace.

He said the recent visit of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah to Safwan border crossing conveyed a clear message that the security and sovereignty of Kuwait are red lines, and that the state will deal firmly with threats to its national security. He added that Kuwait, un-

der the leadership of His Highness the Amir, consistently affirms that its national security is non-negotiable and that protecting its borders and sovereignty is its top priority.

He stressed that Kuwait is always committed to maintaining the stability of the region, and believes that the security and stability of neighboring countries are the pillars of regional security. He stated that the country maintains fraternal relations with other nations, and deals with any action or threat that infringe upon its security or sovereignty.

He then implored Allah Almighty to protect Kuwait, its leaders and its people, and that He grant the country continuous security, safety and stability under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may Allah protect him.

MoJ finalizes draft law on economic courts in bid to reform laws, justice

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Minister of Justice Nasser Yousef Al-Sumait confirmed that his ministry finalized the draft law on establishing economic courts as part of the national plan to modernize the legislative and justice systems.

Speaking to the newspaper, Al-Sumait asserted that the draft law is regarded as a qualitative leap in the Kuwaiti judiciary through the creation of a specialized and expedited judicial track for resolving economic, investment and commercial disputes.

He said the draft law is based on three main pillars -- judicial specialization, simplifying litigation procedures, and utilizing the latest technologies and digital transformation.

He revealed that the draft law stipulates the establishment of specialized economic courts in the Court of First Instance, Court of Appeals and Court of Cassation. “These courts will exclusively handle disputes under their jurisdiction, thus, unifying judicial interpretations and raising the efficiency of adjudicating these types of cases, which require specialized legal and technical expertise,” he elaborated.

He pointed out that the draft law puts importance on qualifying judges by assigning judges with vast experience in economic disputes, and requiring them to regularly undergo training programs tailored to the nature of banking, investment, commercial and technical disputes. He explained that the jurisdiction of the economic courts covers a wide range of disputes, including those related to the banking sector, capital markets, direct investment, foreign capital investment, disputes between companies, partners and shareholders, competition protection cases, trademarks, patents, industrial designs and models, oil contracts, economic and financial aspects of industrial projects, and financial and contractual disputes arising from the execution of major administrative contracts and tenders.

He added that the project includes the establishment of a technical support office for the economic courts, manned by advisors and judges, with the possibility of engaging experts in economics and investment.

Regarding the development of litigation procedures, Al-Sumait disclosed that the project entails the establishment of the Dispute Resolution and Conciliation Office, where cases will be referred before forwarding them to the court, with the aim of amicably resolving disputes within a specified timeframe.

He indicated that the approved conciliation agreement is an enforceable instrument contributing to the resolution of a huge percentage of disputes without the need to complete the litigation procedures.

He added that the draft law also stipulates the creation of the Case Preparation Office, which will ensure the completeness of documents, validity of legal notices, and exchange of memoranda between litigants before the case is presented to the competent court. “This reduces procedural delays and expedites the adjudication process,” he asserted.

He stated that the draft law simplifies the litigation procedures and reduces certain grace periods, while establishing clear regulations for submitting memoranda and documents and appealing judgments.

He clarified that the draft law streamlines the litigation of minor disputes, while maintaining the oversight role of the Cassation Court in major cases.



Nasser Al-Sumait

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He clarified that the draft law streamlines the litigation of minor disputes, while maintaining the oversight role of the Cassation Court in major cases.

He said the draft law introduces a legal mechanism to unify judicial principles when final economic rulings are issued on the same conflict to guarantee the stability of judicial interpretation and legal certainty for those involved in legal matters.

He pointed out that the draft law restricts the technical expert work to the experts employed at the General Department of Experts, obligating them to submit their reports within a period not exceeding 60 days and the court has the authority to shorten or extend this period if the nature of the dispute warrants it.

He also emphasized that digital transformation is one of the important pillars of the draft law, stipulating the establishment of a comprehensive electronic platform for all litigation procedures, such as electronically registering lawsuits, submitting memoranda, documents and judicial notices, accessing case files, holding hearings, and conducting online litigation, thus, saving time and effort and raising the efficiency of judicial work.

He added that the draft law covers the creation of a database of economic judicial principles and rulings, which will be published after making the data of litigants anonymous to protect their privacy, with the aim of enhancing transparency.

He said the draft law stipulates direct and secure electronic links with the relevant government and financial entities to execute seizure orders, freeze accounts, transfer ownership, and sell assets without the need for paper correspondence.

He indicated that the draft law mandates the establishment of department that is specialized in the execution of economic judicial rulings, comprising of execution judges and experts in accounting, securities and asset valuation.

He confirmed that the draft law grants the judge in charge of executing rulings broad precautionary powers, including the seizure of funds, real estate and intellectual property rights, freezing of bank accounts and securities, and imposition of travel ban on debtors if there is solid evidence of their attempt to smuggle funds or harm the rights of creditors.

He disclosed that the draft law regulates the mechanism for selling funds and assets subject to execution through electronic or public auction, adding that bidding must be conducted electronically under the supervision of the competent judge.

He asserted that the draft law adopts a flexible legislative approach by subjecting the evolving regulatory and technical matters to the executive regulations, thus, allowing the development of procedures and keeping pace with technological and economic advancements, without the need for frequent legislative amendments.

Board chairman, 3 others jailed in bribery issue

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Criminal Court, presided over by Judge Mohammad Al-Sanea, sentenced the chairman of the Board of Directors of a cooperative society, the treasurer, a board member and an Egyptian to five years in prison with hard labor in a bribery case related to the supply of fruits and vegetables to the cooperative, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The court also sentenced two Lebanese to three years in prison and fined all the convicted individuals KD10,000.

The defendants were apprehended by officers from the Criminal Investigation General Department at the Interior Ministry, following investigations that uncovered illicit agreements involving bribes paid to

cooperative society officials in exchange for facilitating the signing of fruit and vegetable supply contracts with 10 percent commission on total sales.

The court acquitted all the defendants of money laundering of KD314,000 due to insufficient evidence. It also acquitted several other defendants of the charges against them.

Major projects ... Kuwait emerges a modern state

“HIS Highness the Prime Minister operates on the principle of “when you hear the roar of cannons, start building,” believing that major development projects strengthen the country’s stability,” columnist **Sheikh Fahad Dawood Al-Sabah** wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

“Despite the difficult circumstances facing the region, the Cabinet recently approved two landmark projects that will play a significant role in driving development and help Kuwait emerge from the current regional crisis stronger than before. At the same time, both projects are expected to attract foreign investment and create employment opportunities for Kuwaiti citizens.



Al-Sabah

“The Shaheen project, as the country’s largest oil investment, and the project for the transformation of Kuwait Airways into a company as well as the series of decisions aimed at enhancing economic activity, reflects the implementation of a clear roadmap towards a more competitive national economy. Together, these two projects serve the New Kuwait 2035 vision, bringing the country’s long-term development goals closer to reality.

“The major projects currently underway are strengthening Kuwait’s ability to keep pace with global economic developments and positioning it to become a bridge between East and West after the end of this war. A preliminary assessment of these projects, including the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port project, housing development projects, and Kuwait’s openness to the world, indicates that Kuwait now possesses the fundamental basis for competitiveness. Its strategic location, social culture, and economic resilience position the country to become a global financial and economic hub.

“Building on this foundation, His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah, is working to align these factors to enhance Kuwait’s strategic economic position and expand its economic influence in the Middle East and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region. All of this reflects the wise directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad, and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled to strengthen Kuwait’s influence despite its small size.

“Under the current government, and led by a Prime Minister with extensive expertise in economics and investment, Kuwait has proven the value of having the right person with significant capabilities for this position. The progress Kuwait continues to achieve from time to time reflects the vision of a modern state committed to reducing its dependence on a single source of income while benefiting from its strong human capital, financial resources, and good relations with countries around the world.”

Also:

“The Ministry of Education is currently witnessing clear and tangible efforts to develop the educational system, enhance the efficiency of administrative work, and take serious steps to address phenomena affecting the quality of education, such as exam cheating, while improving discipline within schools,” Kuwaiti writer **Sultan Musaed Al-Jazaf** wrote in **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Among the notable initiatives that reflect a progressive vision and a deep understanding of the challenges facing students is the Minister of Education’s adoption of the School Security Initiative, in cooperation with the Retired Officers Association. The initiative highlights that the success of the educational process is not limited to curricula and classrooms alone, but also requires the provision of a safe and stable learning environment. Today, the Ministry of Education manages approximately 900 schools, serving around 422,000 students.

“This number of schools and students reflects the huge responsibility and daily challenges faced by school administrations. The initiative aims to address negative behaviours, violence, bullying, and protect students from drug-related threats. The Minister of Education’s adoption of this initiative is a bold decision that reflects an understanding of the current situation and awareness of the national responsibility entrusted to the ministry to enhance the quality of education and protect students.

“School security is not merely an organizational measure or a matter of securing school entrances, but it is a fundamental element in ensuring the success of the educational process. When students feel safe, they become more capable of learning, creativity, and positive interaction within the school environment.

“The involvement of specialized entities such as the Retired Officers Association provides teaching and administrative staff with greater capacity to focus on their primary role of developing education and improving educational outcomes, rather than being burdened with additional responsibilities beyond their areas of expertise. Retired officers have spent many years in the field, gaining a deep understanding of societal, be-

havioural, and security challenges, as well as the risks that young people may face. Civil society organizations are a cornerstone of sustainable development and play an important role in achieving a balance between government institutions and the needs of society.

“The Retired Officers Association deserves full appreciation for this valuable initiative, which reflects the true role of public benefit associations as active partners in community development and as a bridge between state institutions and society. This model of cooperation between a government entity and a public benefit association represents a remarkable and commendable experience. I hope this initiative marks the beginning of a new era of national partnerships that contribute to enhancing public services and building a more cohesive, aware, and sustainable society.”

□ □ □

“Yemen suffered from continuous civil wars 60 years ago, when religious extremism controlled the north while a secular Marxist regime held sway in the south. The two sides clashed, leading to civil wars in 1972 and 1979,” columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“A series of failed Yemeni governments followed throughout the 1970s and 1980s, and Yemen descended into another civil war in 1994. Meanwhile, the Zaydis, a religious sect comprising 40 percent of Yemen’s population, felt marginalised in the 1990s. With the emergence of the so-called “Arab Spring” in 2011, the Zaydi group, or more accurately, the Houthis, were emboldened and established their own mini-state in Saada, northern Yemen. The Houthis had their own executive bodies, schools, and police force, and even went so far as to demand a change in the Yemeni government, disregarding the human and material losses resulting from their actions.

“Living conditions in Yemen deteriorated. In 2015, a draft constitution proposed a federal system for Yemen. Parliament was divided between northern and southern members, and the Houthis rejected the federal system, arguing that the constitution would grant them a region with limited resources and no access to the sea, while also depriving them of government positions.

“In 2015, the Houthis seized the capital, Sana’a, and moved to take control of other cities, without having a plan for governing Yemen. The Yemeni president requested assistance from neighbouring countries, and Saudi Arabia formed a coalition in March 2015 that included several Arab forces. The joint forces fought battles against the Houthis but were unable to dislodge them from Sana’a.

“The Houthis attacked coalition ships in the Red Sea using Iranian-made missiles. On November 4, 2017, the Houthis launched a missile towards Riyadh, which Saudi Arabia intercepted and destroyed in the air. The Houthis rejected three rounds of UN-sponsored peace talks and occupied western Yemen, an area 200 kilometers wide and 300 kilometers long.

“On April 9, 2020, Saudi Arabia proposed a ceasefire initiative, but the Houthis did not respond and violated the truce. The people of Yemen have suffered immensely as a result of this war. Thousands have died, countless homes have been destroyed, and many continue to live in hardship, facing food shortages and famine.

“The Houthis continue to use drones to target Saudi cities. On March 22, 2021, Saudi Arabia presented a peace initiative to end the war in Yemen, which received international approval. However, the Houthis disregarded the initiative and continued targeting Saudi Arabia with drones, with support from Iran, which harbors hostile intentions towards the people of the region.

“The Houthis showed no interest in the reconstruction of their country through Gulf funding and continued launching attacks. On January 17, 2022, they launched drones that targeted Abu Dhabi, resulting in deaths and injuries. Recently, the Houthis announced that they had targeted two Saudi ships and prevented ten others from passing through their ports.

“Thus, it is clear that the Gulf states are peace-loving nations, while the Houthi group is a foolish and ignorant group that seeks neither the well-being of its own country nor that of the Arab world. It has been established that Houthis and Iranian attacks on the Gulf states are longstanding and predate the current dispute between the United States and Iran. On July 23, as US pressure on Tehran intensified, Iran called on the Houthis to escalate their attacks in the Red Sea if the US expanded its military operations against Iran. In addition, Iran tasked its allied militias in Iran and Iraq with launching missiles and drones at the Gulf states, causing material damage and human losses. This evil group continues its aggression.”

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



Farwaniya Governorate photo

Governor of Farwaniya, Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah, receives Director of Farwaniya CID, Colonel Abdullah Ali Al-Shatti; Director of Capital CID, Colonel Ahmed Al-Yassin and Assistant Director of Farwaniya CID, Colonel Abdullah Dali Al-Khamsan.

Security, rule of law priority

Governor hails CID role to safeguard public

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Governor of Farwaniya, Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah, received senior officials from the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on Tuesday morning at the Governorate headquarters, underscoring continued support for security institutions and the enforcement of the rule of law, according to a press release issued by the Farwaniya Governorate.

The meeting brought together the Direc-

tor of Farwaniya CID, Colonel Abdullah Ali Al-Shatti; Director of Capital CID, Colonel Ahmed Al-Yassin; and Assistant Director of Farwaniya CID, Colonel Abdullah Dali Al-Khamsan.

During the meeting, Sheikh Athbi congratulated Colonels Al-Shatti and Al-Khamsan on their recent appointments, wishing them success in their new roles. He also extended his appreciation to Colonel Al-Yassin for his dedicated service and constructive cooperation during his tenure in Farwaniya, expressing confidence in his continued success in his new post.

The Governor highlighted the vital national role played by security leaders and CID personnel in safeguarding public security, reinforcing

the rule of law, and maintaining societal stability. He stressed the importance of sustained coordination between the Governorate and the General Directorate of Criminal Investigation in strengthening the overall security and advancing the public interest.

Discussions also covered a number of issues of mutual concern, with both sides exploring avenues to enhance cooperation and joint coordination.

For their part, the officials expressed appreciation for the Governor’s warm appreciation and recognition, reaffirming their commitment to continued collaboration with the Governorate to support security efforts and ensure the safety and stability of Farwaniya.

Al-Abdali border post reopens after attack

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Al-Abdali border crossing has been reopened after being closed following an attack that disrupted the movement of travellers and goods, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to security sources, following directives from First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, the Ministry of Interior coordinated with relevant authorities to reopen the crossing, resume passenger traffic, and facilitate the movement of goods and trucks.

The Al-Abdali border crossing has witnessed a significant increase in the number of trucks entering Iraq and the departure of travellers over the past couple of days.

Highway patrol arrests Kuwaiti hitting 170 kph

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The highway patrol officers apprehended a citizen for driving at 170 kilometers per hour.

According to a security source, the officers spotted the citizen who was driving beyond the speed limit during their routine patrol at an undisclosed location. The officers signaled for the citizen to pull over, and then referred him to the traffic police station, while his vehicle was impounded pending further legal action.

Moreover, another security source informed the newspaper that officers from the General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry arrested 10 expatriates of various nationalities for holding expired residency permits and absconding. These expatriates were referred to the relevant authorities for legal measures.

Court affirms housing rights of eligible heirs

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Court of Appeals ruled that heirs are entitled to obtain a housing care document despite an objection from one of the heirs, reports Al-Anba daily.

The court emphasized that eligibility for the document is limited to those who meet the legal requirements and does not extend to all heirs.

Lawyer Alaa Al-Saeedi affirmed that the ruling resolved a dispute that arose following the death of the head of the household, who had not obtained the housing care document.

She explained that one of the sons refused to obtain the document, claiming that he was among the heirs entitled to the government-owned house, prompting the other eligible heirs to seek legal recourse. The court ruled that, in such cases, the government-owned house is not considered an inheritance to be distributed among all heirs. Instead, the right to the housing care document belongs only to those who are eligible and meet the legal requirements.

A married or divorced son, or one who already has a housing application, is not entitled to reside in the government-owned house after the father’s death.

She affirmed that the ruling established an important legal principle stating that eligible heirs cannot be deprived of their housing rights due to the objection of an individual who does not meet the eligibility requirements.

□ □ □

Graduation ceremony: Under the patronage and in the presence of the Head of the Military Education Authority, Brigadier General Abdullah Al-Dousari, the Institute for Training Non-Commissioned Officers and Personnel celebrated the graduation of Non-Commissioned Officer Courses No. 132 and 133, held from May 3 to July 26, 2026, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Iraqi gets 10 years jail, KD3m fine in major real estate scam

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: The Criminal Court rejected the appeal filed by an Iraqi defendant and upheld the ruling issued in absentia imposing 10 years imprisonment with hard labor on him and fined him KD3 million for swindling several citizens and residents of around KD4,546,000 in a real estate scam.

Case files indicate that the defendant misled his victims when he offered investment opportunities through the purchase of chalets and other real estate that were later found to be in violation of the regulations, in addition to being mortgaged in several banks, thus, causing enormous losses for the victims.

The court postponed the appeal hearing for several sessions to give the defendant an opportunity to surrender, but he is still abroad and has not appeared in court till date.

Meanwhile, in another case, the Administrative Court overturned the decision of the Technical Committee at the Public Authority for Disabled Affairs (PADA) and ordered the latter to register a citizen with one blind eye as having medium visual disability, thus, granting him rights and benefits as per the law, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Attorney Awatif Sulaiman Al-Dosari, lawyer for the plaintiff, stated that the court affirmed in its ruling that blindness in one eye is a moderate visual impairment according to the law, judicial principles, and rulings of the Court of Cassation.

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MoE commends Nazaha for launching initiative

The service aims to encourage adherence to vaccination schedules and dose appointments for children and adults, contributing to disease prevention and safeguarding the health of individuals and the community.

Continued from Page 1

Stimulating

In other areas, some decisions resulted in avoidable enormous losses. It would have been better to regulate the construction of carports in front of the homes of citizens and use some of the available spaces for home gardens, which could contribute to environmental improvement, in addition to providing economic and social benefits. If these spaces remain vacant, they increase environmental costs and do not serve the interests of the public.

Solutions exist, but they require sound decisions that promote sustainable development. For instance, fees could be imposed on the use of the areas adjacent to the homes of citizens. The state can share the profits generated from the sale of various agricultural products with the citizens. These decisions contribute to the development of the business environment, benefit the agricultural land holders, reduce costs, and help in the implementation of major development projects.

The current regional developments are both political and economic in nature. Without a realistic and ingenious plan, Kuwait will miss the train of progress and will not be able to reap the expected benefits.

The services provided by the business environment support economic stability and help generate revenue that benefits major projects.

This necessitates an integrated process, as huge enterprises need local sales outlets and support tools that connect with people and encourage the individual initiatives, which Kuwait has relied on since ancient times. In short, envy and resentment do not build nations.

Offenders get

This is in addition to the provision of 1,015 humanitarian aid packages to citizens and expatriates, issuance of 999 traffic violation citations, impoundment of five vehicles whose drivers violated traffic regulations, and 157 traffic accident reports were handled.

Moreover, the General Traffic Department, which is also under the Traffic and Operations Sector, continued its intensive traffic campaigns on July 20-26.

The department announced that its campaigns led to the issuance of 24,979 traffic violation citations, detention of 18 individuals at the traffic police station, referral of eight juveniles to the Juvenile Prosecution, impoundment of 223 vehicles and nine motorcycles, handling of 2,673 traffic reports, and investigation of 933 collisions, along with 170 other collisions that resulted in injuries.

On the security front, two individuals suspected of possessing narcotics and five individuals in an abnormal condition were arrested and referred to DCGD,

52 individuals were arrested for holding expired residency permits and one individual who failed to present a valid identification, while 42 wanted individuals and 11 wanted vehicles were referred to the concerned authorities.

The department confirmed the continuation of its campaigns in all governorates, urging motorists to adhere to the traffic regulations and fully cooperate with the law enforcers.

GCC sting

The statement explained that following the exchange of precise intelligence and intensive field surveillance, a suspect with a history of drug trafficking was apprehended.

He was found in possession of approximately 5 liters of raw liquid methamphetamine, enough to produce approximately 15 kilograms of ready-to-distribute methamphetamine.

The suspect and the seized materials were referred to the appropriate authorities to take all necessary legal measures against him.

The Ministry of Interior affirmed that this operation reflects the effectiveness of GCC security cooperation in confronting the scourge of drugs and the success of proactive efforts in monitoring and tracking the sources of narcotic substances and thwarting attempts to manufacture and promote them, which contributes to protecting society and preserving its security and safety.

Justice sector

Speaking to KUNA after the seminar, Sheikhha Jawaher Al-Sabah said Resolution 1325, adopted by UNSC in 2000, marked a major shift in recognizing women's central role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding and protecting women during armed conflicts.

Kuwait has made progress in empowering women in the justice system, with 122 Kuwaiti female prosecutors and judges, representing 8 percent, as well as the appointment of the first female Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice and 27 female court clerks, she added.

Sheikha Jawaher Al-Sabah expressed hope that Kuwaiti female judges will eventually reach senior positions in international courts, stressing that empowering women in the justice sector is a key pillar of sustainable development and the promotion of security and peace.

The seminar, held at the institute, was attended by specialists and others interested in advancing awareness of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and reviewing Kuwait's experience in implementing Resolution 1325.

Kuwait puts

Each document is issued with a verification code that enables immediate confirmation of its validity and authenticity through the Ministry of Justice platform.

All transactions are recorded in an electronic register whose data cannot be erased or deleted. Any subsequent amendments are also recorded to ensure the tracking of all procedures.

The regulations implement the provisions of Decree-Law No. 147/2025 regarding the duration of powers of attorney. The maximum validity period of a power of attorney is five years. A longer period may be specified for powers of attorney related to legal representation and those concerning real estate located outside Kuwait.

The ministry emphasized that the regulations safeguard the impartiality of the notary by requiring them to read the document aloud and explain its legal implications when processing transactions.

The regulations prohibit the notary from handling any transaction involving themselves, their spouse, or any of their relatives by blood or marriage up to the fourth degree. The regulations require the notary to disclose any such conflict of interest and recuse themselves from handling the transaction.

The ministry stated that it has completed a comprehensive review of all applicable power of attorney forms, standardizing and updating them, redefining their scope, and classifying them according to the nature of the transactions they cover and the level of legal risks associated with their use.

The ministry has linked each category to the appropriate procedures and controls, emphasizing that the notarization system in the State of Kuwait is undergoing its most extensive development in decades.

Boursa Kuwait

This situation has prompted investors to adopt a cautious approach and convert part of their holdings into cash, leading to slight declines and fluctuations in market indices across multiple trading sessions. Daily liquidity levels have fallen to between 60 and 70 million Kuwaiti dinars.

The second impact involves redirecting liquidity towards leading stocks with high solvency, such as Kuwait Finance House (KFH) and the banking sector. These stocks have benefited from quarterly earnings announcements and semi-annual dividend distributions, providing a degree of support and preventing a sharp, widespread decline.

The third impact is the increase in insurance and shipping costs resulting from the military escalation and Tehran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

The targeting of oil tankers has led to a significant rise in global oil prices,

marine insurance costs, and supply chain risks, which have subsequently affected sectors listed on Boursa Kuwait.

Some sectors faced selling pressure, including industry and real estate, due to concerns over project slowdowns or rising costs for imported and operational materials.

Cabinet draws

Condemnation of Iranian Attacks
The Cabinet expressed its strongest condemnation and denunciation of the "sinful aggression" launched by Iran and its proxies against Kuwait, which last Thursday targeted the Abdali border crossing through multiple hostile drone attacks. The Council described these attacks as a flagrant violation of Kuwait's sovereignty, a direct threat to its security and stability, and a grave breach of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and UN Security Council Resolution 2817. It warned that the continuation of such blatant and repeated attacks constitutes a dangerous escalation and direct threat to regional security and stability.

The Cabinet reaffirmed Kuwait's adherence to its full and inherent right to self-defense in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter, and its right to take all necessary measures to preserve its sovereignty, protect its territory and resources, and maintain its security and stability.

Solidarity with Saudi Arabia
The Cabinet further expressed strong condemnation and denunciation of repeated attacks launched by the Houthis militia on ships in the Red Sea, the latest being an attack on a vessel belonging to a Saudi company. It described the incident as a flagrant violation of international law and a direct threat to the security and freedom of maritime navigation and the safety of international trade.

The Cabinet also condemned in the strongest terms attacks that sought to target petroleum facilities in the Eastern Region and Riyadh in Saudi Arabia with drones launched by Iran-affiliated militias in Iraq. It viewed these actions as a grave violation of the Kingdom's sovereignty and territorial integrity and a breach of international law, the UN Charter and Security Council Resolution 2817. Kuwait reaffirmed its full solidarity with Saudi Arabia and support for all steps taken to safeguard its security and sovereignty, stressing that the Kingdom's security is an integral part of the security of Kuwait and the Gulf Cooperation Council states.

Condemnation of Attacks on Jordan
Finally, the Cabinet expressed strong condemnation and denunciation of the repeated drone attacks that targeted the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on Tuesday, describing them as unacceptable acts that threaten Jordan's security and regional stability.



Dr. Saleh bin Amer Al-Kharousi



Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Ink, diplomacy and friendship

Oman ambassador praises Al-Jarallah's media legacy

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to Kuwait Dr. Saleh bin Amer Al-Kharousi sent a letter to Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of the Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah in light of the end of his tenure in the country, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In his letter, Al-Kharousi expressed his sincere wish for the full recovery of Al-Jarallah from his recent illness.

He also expressed his deep gratitude and appreciation to Al-Jarallah, asserting that his six-year term in Kuwait -- from 2020 to 2026 -- provided him with an ideal opportunity to get to know Al-Jarallah closely, a relationship that extends beyond the professional sphere to a cherished friendship with positive professional implications.

He explained that his friendship with Al-Jarallah contributed to strengthening the ties between the two brotherly countries, particularly in the media and cultural fields. He commended the pioneering and distinguished media role of the two newspapers in highlighting the rich and ongoing cooperation between Kuwait and the Sultanate of Oman in various sectors.

He concluded his letter by wishing Al-Jarallah continuous success, and the State of Kuwait and its brotherly people more progress and prosperity.

In his response to the letter, Al-Jarallah expressed his deep appreciation for Al-Kharousi's message, thanking him for his sincere sentiments.

Al-Jarallah added that the tenure of Al-Kharousi in Kuwait was a wonderful experience that strengthened the bonds of friendship based on affection, a relationship that has existed between Kuwaitis and Omanis since ancient times. He affirmed the ties of friendship, brotherhood, kinship and shared history between the two brotherly peoples.

He praised the distinguished performance of the outgoing ambassador in representing the Sultanate of Oman and His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq.

He also confirmed his pride in the friendship that he developed with Al-Kharousi, stressing that the two newspapers are keen on further solidifying cooperation with Oman and its embassy in the State of Kuwait.

He concluded his message by praying that his relationship with Al-Kharousi will continue, and wished him more success and prosperity in his endeavors.



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Ballots are counted at LA County Ballot Processing Center during the California primary election on June 2, in City of Industry, California. (AP)

Republicans decry new Democratic Socialists of America platform as Dem primaries split party

NEW YORK, July 28, (AP): A new platform from a progressive group that's notched several recent primary victories is becoming fodder for Republican attacks, as the GOP looks to frame Democrats as extremists and communists ahead of November's midterm elections.

Although the Democratic Socialists of America's Workers Deserve More platform doesn't necessarily line up exactly with the candidates' own agendas, prominent Republicans over the weekend decried it. The DSA platform proposes drafting "a new constitution" with significant changes to the structure of the US government, including abolishing the Senate, replacing the president and the Supreme Court with leaders picked by Congress and allowing all permanent US residents to vote. Alongside those changes, the platform, published earlier this month, calls for a number of social reforms.

"The barbarians are inside the gate - and Democrats are WELCOMING them in," House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., wrote on X. "Communism is no longer a far fetched threat. It is here on our SHORES!"

The Wall Street Journal's conservative-leaning editorial board also warned about the agenda, calling it radical and writing that the job of Republicans and willing Democrats is to educate the country about it. But it cautioned Republicans to avoid communism attack lines, saying they wouldn't resonate with younger generations.

Progressive and DSA-backed candidates running in Democratic primaries across the country don't all subscribe to the group's full agenda. The left is also split between progressive and moderate wings that have different ideas about the best policies to carry the Democratic Party forward. But the DSA platform has created an opening for Republicans to attack Democrats with a broad brush as they look for an edge in races that will determine which party has a majority in Congress next year.

President Donald Trump this year has returned to an old habit of calling Democrats communists, saying they

want to "destroy the traditional American way of life." Other Republicans have followed suit, turning to more comfortable territory after months spent defending their party as disgruntled Americans fume about foreign wars and the high cost of living.

The DSA's vision for the country laid out in mid-July proposes major changes that the group says can in part be achieved under the current system but ultimately would require "building a new society from the ground up."

Among the suggested changes are expanding voting rights, publicly financing all elections, replacing the two-party system with a multi-party democracy, establishing public ownership of large corporations and expanding rights for immigrants while ending Immigration and Customs Enforcement detentions and deportations.

In a recent appearance on "Fox News Sunday," the group's co-chair Megan Romer confirmed various aspects of the agenda while acknowledging that some of the proposals, like abolishing borders and prisons, would be considered parts of a long-term plan.

The Republican National Committee over the weekend called attention to the platform in a post that several GOP lawmakers seized on to raise alarm.

Also:

WASHINGTON: The Trump administration asked the Supreme Court on Monday to clear the way for an executive order from President **Donald Trump** that could dramatically change mail-in voting ahead of November's midterm elections.

The Justice Department asked the justices to halt for now lower court decisions blocking the sweeping changes in nearly half the country.

The request comes shortly after Trump delivered a primetime address elevating his yearslong push to raise doubts about the legitimacy of elections, and could be one of several voting-related challenges before the court ahead of the high-stakes midterm contest.

Thune urged to scrap legislative filibuster

US President Trump demands Senate cancel August break until it passes voting bill

WASHINGTON, July 28, (AP): US President Donald Trump on Monday demanded that Senate Majority Leader John Thune cancel the chamber's upcoming August break until senators pass a strict proof-of-citizenship voting bill, even as Republicans lack the votes to advance it.

Trump has repeatedly urged Thune to scrap the legislative filibuster, which effectively sets a 60-vote threshold for most legislation in the 100-member Senate, or find another workaround to pass the voting bill, known as the SAVE America Act. But Republicans hold only a 53-47 majority, and Thune has consistently said they don't have the votes to pass the bill or change the rules to get around the filibuster.

"John Thune should not allow the United States Senate to 'leave town' until it passes The Save America Act or, far better still, TERMINATES THE FILIBUSTER," Trump wrote on social media.

He later insisted to reporters Monday that he has a good relationship with the Senate majority leader but said Thune has "got to get his job done."

It's the latest escalation in a monthslong pressure campaign by Trump and others in the GOP base to pass the SAVE Act ahead of the midterms. A small but vocal group of Republican senators has also increasingly pressed Thune to find a way forward.

Thune responded Monday afternoon, telling reporters he would be supportive of cancelling the break if there was a path forward on the legislation.

"We voted on it one, two, three, four, five times already," said Thune, who counted each number on his hand for reporters. "Show me how this ends. What's the picture of victory at the end?"

House Republicans have also attempted to create another path for the legislation through the budget reconciliation process, which would allow grant money associated with voting rules to pass the Senate with a simple majority.

The House last week approved a budget framework that included \$10 billion for voting-related changes aligned with the SAVE America Act. But Thune has said Republicans don't currently have the votes for that approach, either.

The fight threatens to complicate the Senate's final legislative sprint before the August break, when Thune had hoped to focus on a long list of priorities that includes government funding, cryptocurrency legislation and sanctions on Russia. The August break, scheduled to start on Aug. 7, is a pivotal stretch for senators to return home and campaign



US Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-SD., speaks to reporters following a weekly policy luncheon at the Capitol in Washington on July 21, 2026. (AP)

ahead of the midterm elections.

Several Republican senators are facing competitive races, including Maine Sen. Susan Collins, Ohio Sen. Jon Husted and Alaska Sen. Dan Sullivan. Republicans currently hold a 53-47 Senate majority. Republicans are confronting broader political headwinds as well, including an unpopular war in Iran, surging gas prices and costs that remain high for voters.

Thune has enjoyed broad support from his GOP conference all year as he's pushed back on Trump's demands. He previously kept the SAVE Act on the Senate floor for weeks in an effort to build additional support, but was unable to secure the votes needed to advance it.

"You can stay here until the cows come home and it's not going to change anything," said Texas Sen. John Cornyn, a Republican who lost a primary earlier this year to a Trump-backed candidate. "We keep

overpromising and underdelivering, which is not a recipe for voter morale or high voter participation in the midterm elections."

North Carolina Sen. Thom Tillis said he believes Thune's position on SAVE is reflective of the majority of the GOP conference.

"The president has to look at the reality: The majority of Republican members support John Thune," Tillis said. "I don't even think it's close."

Utah Sen. Mike Lee, who has led the push for the bill in the Senate, escalated his pressure late last week, warning that how Republicans handle the SAVE America Act "could impact not only the November midterm elections, but also the Senate GOP leadership elections."

"Leaders must lead. And if they don't, they're not leaders," Lee wrote on social media Friday.

Louisiana Sen. John Kennedy said he believes Thune is "being a bit too cautious right now."

"At some point, you have to vote," Kennedy said.

Frustrated by the pressure when he doesn't have a route to pass the bill, Thune has urged Trump, Lee and others to help him find the votes. Trump on Friday said he'd "certainly be willing" to help call senators.

Asked last week if Trump is frustrated with Thune, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said that "his patience is running out."

But Trump told reporters on Air Force One Monday while traveling to an event in Michigan, that he hasn't "even thought" about potential replacements for Thune.

The late-summer dispute echoes a similar fight before last year's August recess, when Trump pressed Thune to keep senators in Washington to clear a backlog of his nominees. The Senate ultimately left town without a deal after negotiations with Democrats collapsed.

The SAVE America Act, which stands for Safeguard American Voter Eligibility, would require Americans to prove they are citizens when they register to vote, mostly through a valid U.S. passport or birth certificate. It would also require a valid photo identification before voters can cast ballots, which some states already demand.

Voting experts have said the bill could disenfranchise some 20 million American voters who don't have birth certificates or other documents readily available.

Trump has made it his legislative priority in 2026, saying it would "guarantee the midterms" and falsely claimed that election cheating is "rampant." He previously declined to sign any other legislation until it was passed.

6 refugees speak out as UN-backed treaty to help people fleeing war marks 75 years

GENEVA, July 28, (AP): Tuesday marks the 75th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention, which was born after the ravages of World War II to help people fleeing war, violence and persecution. Proponents say the treaty has saved millions of lives.

Respect for it, though, has come under strain: Some countries have denied entry to asylum seekers. Under US President Donald Trump, the United States has led a policy of sending asylum seekers to third countries - upending years of US policy.

More than 41 million refugees remain forcibly displaced: Nearly 70% are hosted by low- and middle-income countries. The ranks could grow: The International Committee of the Red Cross counts more than 130 armed conflicts around the globe.

The convention took key steps toward defining what a refugee is, laying out their rights, and establishing standards of treatment. Nearly 150 countries are parties to the convention or its 1967 protocol.

"It codified a simple but powerful principle that people forced to flee persecution, conflict or violence must be able to find safety and protection," said Elizabeth Tan, UN High Commissioner for Refugees' director of international protection and solutions.

Human rights lawyer Juan Carlos Arce considers himself among millions of people whose lives have



Yusra Mardini, swimming for the Refugee Olympic Team, speaks during the Leaders Summit on Refugees during the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly at UN headquarters on Sept. 20, 2016. (AP)

been saved by the convention: He fled Nicaragua by foot in 2018 after a bloody government crackdown against protesters killed hundreds.

The Nicaraguan Center for Human Rights, for which Arce worked, had documented the violence and was deemed a "terrorist organization" by President Daniel Ortega's government. He fled to Costa Rica where he was granted asylum.

Wenyan Gabriel said his parents worked hard too. He was born in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, in 1997 after his parents fled civil war in southern Sudan. They later moved

to Egypt as refugees, before being resettled in New Hampshire.

Little Wenyan was 2 at the time. Big Wenyan - he's 2.08 meters (nearly 6 feet, 10 inches) tall - earned a basketball scholarship at the University of Kentucky and played in the NBA.

Hershel Greenblat was born during World War II, in 1941, inside a cave in Ukraine as his family hid from the Nazis.

After the war, his family sneaked into Austria, where they lived in US Army camps for displaced persons.

Sayed Alom, a humanitarian aid worker and one of the 700,000 Rohingya who fled Myanmar into neighboring Bangladesh in 2017, has been languishing in refugee camps there ever since. The Rohingya are the largest group of stateless people, according to UNHCR, and Bangladesh is not a party to either the 1951 convention or the following 1967 protocol.

More than seven decades after fleeing her village, 88-year-old Hussniyah Ahmad Ghazlan still remembers the journey that brought her family to Lebanon.

Ghazlan was a child when they fled during the 1948 war after their village - Yajur, southeast of Haifa, Israel - was depopulated.

Swimmers Yusra and Sarah Mardini fled war-torn Syria in 2015, joining the wave of refugees from their home country that year, in a saga that has been turned into a highly-regarded movie.



Transport trucks are seen using the Ambassador Bridge on the first day of opening for the Gordie Howe International Bridge, in Windsor, Ontario on July 27. (AP)

US-Canada bridge opens in Detroit

A major new bridge linking Canada and the US at Detroit opened Monday to trucks, cars and other vehicles, the climax of a yearslong project that lately had been bruised a bit by international politics.

Descendants of Gordie Howe, the hockey legend whose name

is on the bridge, were among the first to cross over the Detroit River, which separates the Motor City from Windsor, Ontario. U.S. Sen. Gary Peters, D-Mich., rode a motorcycle, while Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer drove a Ford Mustang with the top down.

The six-lane span, which was

built by Canada at a cost of \$6.4 billion Canadian, now becomes a less-expensive alternative to the privately owned Ambassador Bridge, which had a monopoly on big trucks carrying goods worth billions between the two countries, especially in service to the auto industry. (AP)

France orders 4,000 evacuated as heat threatens fragile hold on wildfire

LEGE-CAP FERRET, France, July 28, (AP): French authorities ordered nearly 4,000 people evacuated Tuesday from tourist sites on the Atlantic coast as returning heat threatened firefighters' fragile hold on a vast wildfire west of Bordeaux.

The new evacuations deepened a wildfire emergency of exceptional scale across southwestern Europe. Fires in France and Spain have forced roughly 330,000 people to evacuate, while Spain entered its fourth heat wave of the summer with several blazes still out of control, including its largest on record.

Firefighters had held the French blaze in check through a calm night, bringing flare-ups near coastal dunes under control and keeping the burned area unchanged at 420 square kilometers (162 square miles).

Authorities described the Gironde



A fireman sprays down hot spots in a forest in Clauouey, following wildfires in the area of southwestern France on July 28. (AP)

fire as stabilized, not fixed - meaning it could still spread again as temperatures rose and humidity fell.

The precautionary evacuation order covered campsites, holiday villages, tourist residences and leisure parks around the resort of Lacanau, including Lacanau Ocean and both shores of Lacanau lake, Gironde regional authorities said.

"We are at a point of fragility," Eric Brocardi, spokesperson for France's national firefighters federation, told BFMTV on Tuesday. "We will continue attacking this fire despite the forecast rise in temperatures."

The blaze, raging since last week, has been wildly unpredictable, transforming at times into a self-feeding firestorm as it burned through an area four times the size of Paris and forced 220,000 people to evacuate homes and vacation accommodation.

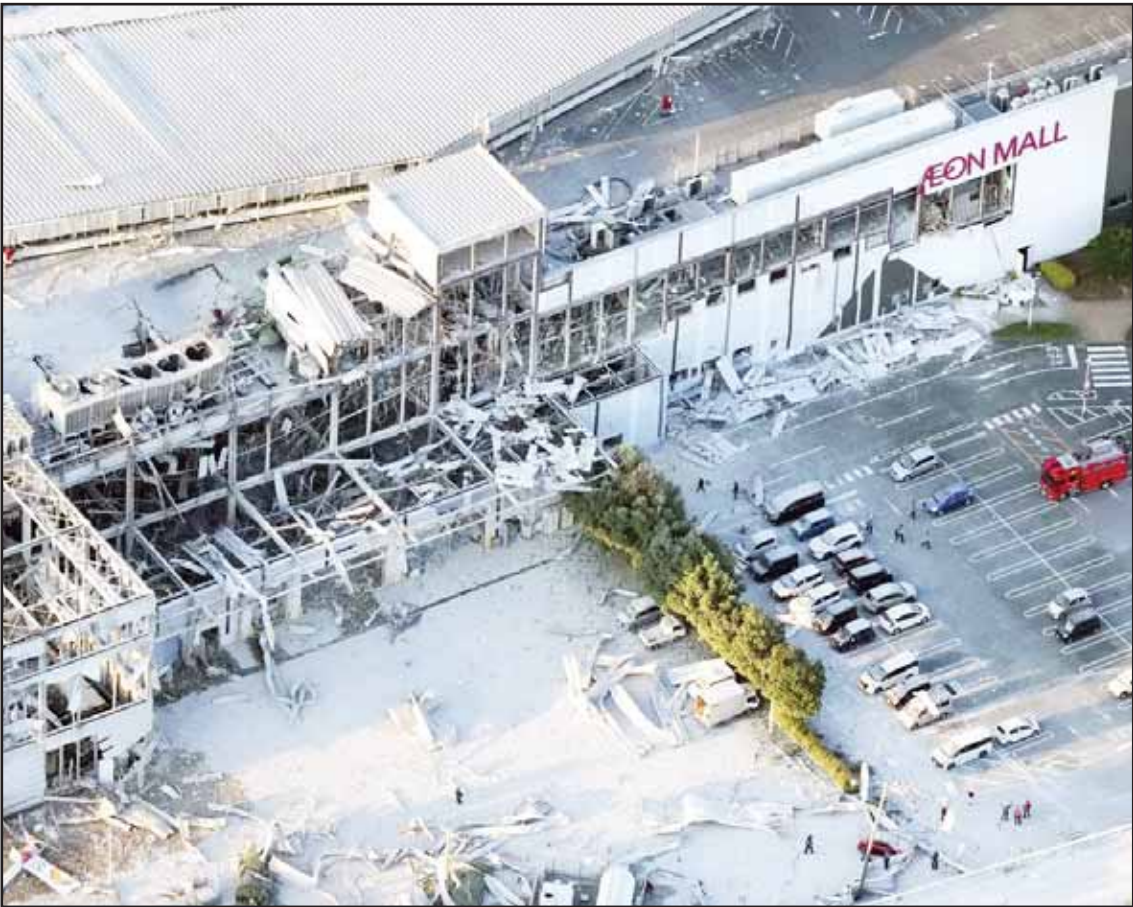
Ukraine's Zelenskyy visits Trump at WH

WASHINGTON, July 28, (AP): US President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy were to meet Tuesday ahead of Sen. Lindsey Graham's funeral, their second sit-down this month and after a far-right activist with the US president's ear had a widely publicized change of heart on Russia's war against Ukraine.

Trump is set to welcome Zelenskyy to the White House as the Ukrainian leader travels to Washington to honor Graham, whose final act as a public offi-



US President Donald Trump meets with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the sidelines of the NATO summit in Ankara, Turkey on July 8. (AP)



This aerial image shows the damaged AEON Mall after an earthquake in Kashima, Kumamoto prefecture, southern Japan on July 28. (AP)

Magnitude 7.1 quake shakes parts of southern Japan, no tsunami detected

TOKYO, July 28, (AP): An earthquake registering a magnitude of 7.1 shook Kumamoto on Japan’s southern main island of Kyushu late Tuesday afternoon, causing damage and injuries, officials said. A tsunami advisory was temporarily issued but was lifted within two hours, the Japan Meteorological Agency said.

The agency said the tsunami advisory covered the nearby Ariake and Yatsushiro Seas on the western coasts of Kumamoto, Nagasaki, Fukuoka and Saga prefectures about 900 kilometers (560 miles) southwest of Tokyo.

The U.S. Geological Survey initially said the earthquake had a magnitude of 7.1, but revised it later to 6.8.

Japan’s Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, in a message posted on X, said her government has set up a task force to gather information, assess possible damage and prepare for rescue operations if needed.

Takaichi later told reporters that there have been reports of a number of injuries and damages to roads, bridges and buildings, as well as blackouts and fire, though details are still unclear. Takaichi warned people cooking to be careful with fire and with shards of broken glass.

Kyodo News agency said a hospital in Yatsushiro city accepted about 40 people with injuries from the quake. A train was derailed and fell on its side at the Yatsushiro station, and stone walls were damaged at the Kumamoto castle, Kyodo said.

Yozo Kai, a priest at a Shinto shrine in the nearby town of Mashiki, said a few stone lanterns fell down. “I worried if the main hall and the gate would tilt again,” he told Kyodo.

“The shaking reminded me of the Kumamoto quake

(10 years ago) and I was frightened,” said Hiroki Shimoda, an official at the Mifune town hall, who saw rooftiles of nearby homes crash down to the ground.

Japan’s Fire and Disaster Management Agency said there were no reports of damage to major public facilities and infrastructure, though authorities were still assessing the extent of damage. Local fire departments received many emergency calls reporting fires and damage to homes.

“We are putting people’s lives as the top priority,” Takaichi said, urging residents in the strongly shaken areas to use caution in light of possible aftershocks.

Shinji Kiyomoto, JMA’s Earthquake and Tsunami Countermeasures planning officer, told a news conference that the shallow earthquake was triggering active seismic activity in the area, urging residents to especially be cautious over the next two to three days. He said, however, that no tsunami was observed from the inland quake.

Japan’s Nuclear Regulation Authority said no abnormalities were found at three nearby nuclear power plants. Shinkansen bullet trains and local trains in Kyushu have been suspended for safety checks, while the runway at the Aso Kumamoto Airport was closed, with “no prospect of resuming operations” according to a notice on the airport’s website.

The Japanese Defense Ministry said it dispatched aircraft to the area to assess the situation.

Kumamoto was hit with a deadly quake in 2016 that left more than 50 people dead, 1,800 injured and tens of thousands of homes damaged or destroyed.

Asia

S.Korea orders residents to evacuate after white phosphorus leak: South Korean authorities on Tuesday briefly ordered civilians to evacuate after what they described as a white phosphorus leak at a U.S. military base near the capital, Seoul.

Officials in the city of Pyeongtaek urged nearby residents to move to a safe location and avoid skin exposure after the leak was detected at around 5 p.m. at the Osan Air Base. They lifted the evacuation order several hours later, saying decontamination work at the base had been completed, according to text messages sent out by the city.

Police reportedly used vehicles to establish a perimeter 300 to 500 meters (yards) from the base, blocking pedestrians and rerouting vehicles. There were no immediate reports of major disruptions or accidents.

In a statement, the US 51st Fighter Wing did not mention a leakage of white phosphorus but said it established a 1,000-foot safety cordon around the base “due to a ground mishap and out of an abundance of caution” to protect the base and the local populace. US Forces Korea did not provide further comment about the incident.

“We are handling this matter with the utmost care and expediency,” it said. “The safety and well-being of our service members, their families, and our Pyeongtaek neighbors remain our absolute highest priority.”

White phosphorus is a controversial chemical substance used in incendiary munitions and smoke shells. When ignited, it burns at extremely high temperatures and can set buildings ablaze and burn human flesh to the bone. (AP)

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Survivors rise to 48 after Vietnamese ship sinks: The number of survivors of a cargo ship that sank Saturday off a Chinese-occupied shoal in the South China Sea rose to 48 by Tuesday as search and rescue crews hunted for more people who went down with the vessel. A multinational search for 14 people who remain missing was still underway Tuesday afternoon involving Vietnamese, Philippine and Chinese rescuers.

Vietnamese authorities announced Monday that three more of the 62 people onboard had been saved but did not provide details of the rescue.

The Vietnamese cargo vessel Khoi Nguyen 18 sank late Saturday near Fiery Cross Reef, a Chinese-built island and military outpost in the hotly contested Spratly Islands.

The vessel went down while operating in bad weather in the East Sea, the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry said, adding that all 48 rescued people had been transferred to Vietnamese authorities, who were providing medical care before taking them back to the mainland.

Khoi Nguyen is a general cargo ship built in 2017, according to vessel tracking platforms. It was last detected in March near Vietnam on its automated identification system, or AIS, according to ship tracking platform MarineTraffic.

Under a United Nations maritime safety treaty signed by Vietnam, large cargo ships are required to keep AIS transponders switched on at all times to broadcast the vessel’s identity, position and course.

Vietnam said it mobilized rescue operations immediately while coordinating closely with Chinese rescue ships, helicopters and other vessels in the area also joined the search.

The Philippine Coast Guard, which deployed a patrol vessel and an aircraft after receiving a request from Vietnam, said the operation was being carried out under international maritime agreements and bilateral cooperation with Vietnam.

China has become increasingly aggressive in asserting its claims in virtually the entire South China Sea, through which about \$5 trillion in global trade transits each year. The sea passage also is believed to sit atop vast undersea deposits of oil and gas.

Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan also have overlapping claims in the strategic waterway along with China and the Philippines. (AP)

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Chinese province struck by 2 quakes in 20 minutes: A remote province in China was struck by two earthquakes just 18 minutes apart late Tuesday morning, according to the United States Geological Survey.

The earthquakes in Qinghai province at 11:16 a.m. and 11:34 a.m. had magnitudes of 5.7 and 5.8 at a depth of 10 kilometers (6 miles), the USGS reported.

There were no immediate reports of casualties. (AP)



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, crew members on Nanhai Jiu 115, a rescue vessel operated by the Nanhai Rescue Bureau of China’s Ministry of Transport, pick up crew members of Vietnamese vessel Khoi Nguyen from a life raft in the South China Sea on July 25. (AP)

Pakistan’s monsoon death toll tops 100 in a month as more heavy rain forecast

Nearly 500 Afghan civilians killed in Pakistan-Afghanistan fighting since October: UN

LAHORE, Pakistan, July 28, (AP): Cross-border fighting between Pakistan and Afghanistan has killed nearly 500 civilians in Afghanistan and wounded over 1,000 others between October and the end of June, the United Nations said Tuesday.

In a report on the human rights situation, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan said it had documented 499 civilians killed and 1,216 wounded by the fighting between the neighbors that has defied international peace efforts.

In one case, the report said, civilians trying to rescue others from the rubble of an airstrike were hit by a second one.

The report also explores other human rights issues, including a deadly crackdown on protests in western Afghanistan over restrictions on women’s clothing, and decrees that essentially legalize child marriage.

Pakistan and Afghanistan have been fighting on and off for months. Tension escalated significantly in February, when Afghan forces launched a raid into Pakistan in retaliation for Pakistani airstrikes inside Afghanistan, and Islamabad declared it was in “open war.”

Pakistan accuses Afghanistan of harboring militants who carry out deadly attacks that have killed thousands over the years in Pakistan, especially the Pakistani Taliban, known as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan. The group is allied with the Afghan Taliban, which has ruled Afghanistan since it seized power in 2021 amid the chaotic withdrawal of U.S.-led troops. Kabul denies the allegation.

In the deadliest attack of the fighting, a Pakistani airstrike hit a drug treatment center in the Afghan capital, Kabul, in March, killing hundreds of civilians. Rights group Amnesty International said last week the bombing should be investigated as a possible war crime.

Pakistan has not given an overall figure for civilian casualties caused by the cross-border fighting in its territory. The U.N. mission, known by its acronym UNAMA, noted it is only mandated to monitor incidents in Afghanistan.

In a written response to UNAMA’s report, Pakistan’s Foreign Ministry said Afghanistan’s Taliban government “continues to maintain a permissive environment for a range of (militant) organizations.”

The response did not mention Afghan civilian casualties but said Pakistan’s military strikes “were directed exclusively at identified terrorist hideouts, sanctuaries, and support infrastructure linked to groups responsible for attacks inside Pakistan.”

The hundreds of civilian casualties listed by UNAMA include 22 - five of



Mourners attend a second mass funeral for victims of an airstrike on a drug rehabilitation center earlier this month, in Kabul, Afghanistan on March 26. (AP)

them children - who were killed in two successive airstrikes on a residential building in the eastern province of Paktia on June 28. At least 185 others were wounded.

Most of the deaths and injuries were caused by the second strike, when locals were trying to rescue the victims of the first one.

“International humanitarian law provides special protections for medical personnel and humanitarian workers, including first responders. Attacks against them while performing their duties are strictly prohibited,” said Fiona Frazer, director of human rights at UNAMA.

UNAMA’s report also highlighted problems faced by women, who are subject to draconian restrictions by Afghanistan’s Taliban government. They include a ban on education beyond primary school, a strict dress code, bans on working in nearly all professions and a requirement to be accompanied by a

male relative when outside the home.

The report detailed a crackdown in the western city of Herat in June, where at least 30 women were arrested on allegations of dress code violations. At least one person was killed and several others were injured when authorities opened fire during a rare protest against the detentions.

Rules governing women’s clothing stipulate they can only go out in public when wearing full hijab - which includes a headscarf and robe covering the entire body - as well as a face covering that leaves only the eyes visible. The regulations are policed by the feared Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice.

However, interpretations of the rules and what constitutes wearing the hijab correctly vary and can be arbitrarily enforced.

The UNAMA report said Vice and Virtue officials visited health clinics and shops in various parts of the country to advise them to refuse entry to women not accompanied by a male relative.

The report also said new rules on separation in marriage “implicitly sanction child marriage “ by allowing for marriage contracts to be arranged for minors.

Also:

LAHORE: The death toll from monsoon rains and flash flooding in **Pakistan** over the past month surpassed 100 on Monday as weather forecasters warned that more heavy rain is expected across the country later this week.

Pakistan’s National Disaster Management Authority said 109 people have died nationwide since June 26. Many of the deaths were caused by collapsing houses and roofs, with nearly half reported in the northwestern **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa** province along the **Afghan** border.

The latest update came a day after the disaster management authority reviewed flood preparedness measures across the country. Officials discussed plans to issue timely warnings to communities living along rivers so residents can move to safer areas voluntarily or be evacuated before floodwaters inundate their communities.

Last week, heavy rain lashed parts of the country, including Lahore, Pakistan’s cultural capital, where several neighborhoods were flooded, forcing commuters to take lengthy detours. Images on social media showed residents wading through water. It drew criticism from residents, who questioned the government’s preparedness and response to extreme weather.

Chad announces plans to withdraw from ICC

DAKAR, Senegal, July 28, (AP): Chad announced plans Monday to withdraw from the International Criminal Court, accusing the judicial body of ineffectiveness and bias against African countries.

The West African country submitted a letter to the United Nations to begin withdrawing from the court, which was established to prosecute people responsible for humanity’s worst crimes under its foundational treaty, the Rome Statute. The withdrawal process takes at least a year.

Chad was the fourth African country since 2025 to begin withdrawing from the ICC. Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso announced last year they would stop participating with the court based in The Hague.

The court is already facing daunting challenges, including the July 24 removal of its chief prosecutor, Karim Khan, over sexual misconduct allegations.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio earlier this month said the US was launching a campaign to dismantle what he called the threat posed to its national sovereignty by the ICC. A February 2025 executive order signed by US President Donald Trump imposed sanctions on the court over investigations of US ally Israel.

The US Bureau of African Affairs called on more of the 125 member states to withdraw from the Rome Statute in a post Monday on X.



The International Criminal Court (ICC) is seen on Dec 9, 2025, in The Hague, Netherlands. (AP)

Gunmen attack community in NW Nigeria killing 30, say residents

ABUJA, Nigeria, July 28, (AP): Gunmen attacked a community in northwestern Nigeria, killing at least 30 people and injuring several others, residents said Monday, in the latest violence in the conflict-hit region.

The attack occurred late Sunday night in the Naridon village in Kaduna state’s Kaura council area, said Derek Christopher, chairman of the civil society group Southern Kaduna Peace and Security Network.

“The same community was attacked last year around this time,” Christopher said in a statement, suggesting that the government has abandoned any intention of protecting the area from attacks by armed groups. “I don’t know who these people have left to fight for them,” he said.

Raphael Joshua, a resident who was helping the injured, told The As-



A soldier inspects the wreckage of Monday’s explosion at a market in Maiduguri, Nigeria, on March 7. (AP)

sociated Press that bodies of the victims had been deposited at a nearby hospital and that arrangements were being made for their burials.

The commissioner for home affairs and internal security in Kaduna State, Sule Shu’aibu, said that he had not been briefed on the attack. Authorities are often slow to acknowledge attacks in the West African nation as violence has escalated in recent years.

Kuwait Airways becomes state-owned joint-stock company

KUWAIT CITY, July 28, (KUNA): A decree-law (No. 77 of 2026) was issued Tuesday for turning Kuwait Airways into a joint-stock company wholly owned by the State.

The 11-article decree was issued amid developments in the air transport sector and growing regional competition, and in the context of keeping pace with legislative and economic advancements.

The move aligns with the State's modern directives to modernize its legal system and promote efficiency.

Based on the explanatory memorandum, Article One of the decree-law stipulates the transformation of Kuwait Airways shares to be full State ownership, with the national airline carrying out its operations as a joint-stock company.

Article Two also stipulated that the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) shall assume the powers of the Ordinary and Extraordinary General Assemblies of the joint-stock company.

Business

Offering up to 2% cashback, capped at KD 1,000/month

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait launches commercial Visa cards for corporates & SMEs offering the highest cashback program

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) launched 3 new Visa cards (Debit, Credit, and Prepaid) for corporates and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the State of Kuwait, as part of its continuous keenness to innovate banking solutions that meet customer needs today.

The new offerings include the ABK Visa Signature credit card, which provides cashback of up to 2%, capped at KD 1,000 per month, and the ABK Visa Platinum prepaid card, which offers a fixed 1% cashback with no monthly cap.

The cards feature offering the highest cashback value for corporates in the State of Kuwait, while benefiting from the advanced Visa Spend Clarity platform at no extra cost to grant companies essential tools to control expenses digitally.

On this occasion, Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, said: "The launch of these cards represents a qualitative leap in our plan aimed at digitizing corporate financial operations, and it enables spend control while providing liquidity that supports



Johair Marafi, General Manager - Retail Banking

institutional growth."

Marafi emphasized that launching corporate Visa cards demonstrates ABK's commitment to providing



appropriate solutions to meet the needs of the business sector, stressing that through this collaboration, it will lead the market toward a new era of digital payments,

enhancing customer confidence in executing their transactions via its diverse solutions.

On his part, Shashank Singh, Vice President – Visa, said, "At Visa, we are committed to empowering corporates and SMEs with secure, seamless, and innovative digital payment solutions that accelerate their digital transformation. Our partnership with ABK supports Kuwait's national agenda for advancing digital commerce by delivering tools that enhance efficiency, transparency, and long-term growth for local businesses."

With the launch of the new cards, ABK's offerings assume a leading position in the market by providing more flexible pricing: KD 50 for issuing the credit card, and lifetime free issuance for the prepaid card, in addition to an advanced virtual card issuing platform.

Through this, ABK delivers a distinctive corporate card solution in Kuwait that combines attractive financial benefits with enhanced operational efficiency for corporates and SMEs.

Supported by limited supply and sustained demand for prime locations

Kuwait City maintains its investment appeal in the administrative and commercial real estate market

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) confirmed that the administrative and commercial real estate market in Kuwait City continues to maintain its strong investment appeal, supported by limited supply and sustained demand for prime locations with high economic activity, particularly along major streets. This has supported the stability of real estate asset values, reflecting the strength of the sector's underlying market dynamics.

In this context, Mishari Al-Boulayyan, Head of the Real Estate Appraisal Department at KIB, said that prices for 500-square-meter land plots designated for administrative and commercial use vary depending on location and the permitted building ratio. Al-Boulayyan noted that prices for vacant land range from KD 7,000 to KD 13,750 per square meter on some of the capital's most prominent streets, including Ahmad Al-Jaber, Fahad Al-Salem, Jaber Al-Mubarak, Mubarak Al-Kabeer, and Abdullah Al-Mubarak. Properties with higher permitted building ratios and strategic locations command higher prices, he stated.

Al-Boulayyan added that investment yields in these areas currently range between 6% and 7.25%, varying according to achieved rental levels, building quality, parking availability, and the extent to which the property is suitable for various administrative and commercial activities.

Al-Boulayyan also indicated that Fahad Al-Salem Street continues to attract investors thanks to its strategic location and its concentration of many financial institutions and major companies. Meanwhile, Ahmad Al-Jaber, Jaber Al-Mubarak, and Mubarak Al-Kabeer streets continue to maintain solid demand levels due to sustained administrative and commercial activity in these areas.

He explained that the market value of administrative and commercial land is not determined solely by location and the permitted building ratio, but is also influenced by several key factors, most notably the level of supply and demand in the market, occupancy rates in buildings, the types of economic activity prevailing in the area, the overall state of the local economy, and profit rates, which play an important role in guiding investors' decisions.

Al-Boulayyan emphasized that the availability of parking has become a key factor in the success of administrative and commercial properties and in enhancing their ability to attract tenants and investors, given its direct impact on occupancy rates, rental values, and ease of access to the property. He added that the initiatives being implemented by the state in partnership with the private sector to develop multi-storey parking facilities in vital areas contribute to supporting economic activity, improving infrastructure, and strengthen-



KIB's Mishari Al-Boulayyan

Concluding his remarks, Al-Boulayyan emphasized that Kuwait City's administrative and commercial real estate sector continues to enjoy strong fundamentals that support its stability and sustained growth. This is underpinned by the capital's status as a major financial and commercial hub in Kuwait, which further enhances the investment appeal of high-quality administrative and commercial real estate assets.

About KIB

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Shari'ah, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and originally known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank, KIB made the transition to its current Islamic operating model in 2007. In 2018, KIB embarked on a new phase of its journey full of innovation and development. As part of its new strategic direction, the Bank focuses on offering a next-level customer experience under the slogan: "Bank for Life".

Through a network of branches spread across the State of Kuwait, KIB offers a broad range of banking products and services, as well as innovative digital banking solutions in line with international best standards. As part of its duty towards the community, the Bank also encompasses a leading social responsibility program that aims at positively impacting all members of the community through a wide range of impactful initiatives and activities.

Today, KIB has taken concrete steps in implementing its new strategic objectives. The Bank has cemented its role as a key player in the local banking industry and has continued to maintain its strong financial performance; enabling it to be globally recognized for its strong credit rating and financial position.

ing Kuwait City's competitiveness as a major financial and commercial hub.

The market is currently witnessing a shift in tenant trends, with growing demand for small and medium-sized administrative spaces ranging from 30 to 50 square meters, Al-Boulayyan noted. This is being driven by startups, entrepreneurs, and freelancers seeking to rationalize operating costs and benefit from more efficient spaces. The trend has had a positive impact on occupancy rates in administrative and commercial buildings, prompting some property owners to redivide administrative spaces in line with market needs and to achieve better investment returns, he said.

Al-Boulayyan further explained that administrative and commercial properties in prime locations with strong operational specifications can maintain their market value and generate stable returns over the long term, even during periods of change or volatility in real estate markets.

Baghdad pushes alternative oil export routes

Iraq PM in Turkey for pipeline, security talks

ANKARA, July 28, (AP): Iraq's new prime minister, Ali al-Zaidi, arrived in Turkey on Tuesday for talks that were expected to include the construction of a pipeline to Turkey aimed at reducing the exposure of Iraq's oil exports to tensions in the Gulf region.

Al-Zaidi's meetings with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and other officials will also focus on security, trade, energy, transportation and water management, Turkish officials said. The Iraqi prime minister's office said they will discuss "joint infrastructure projects in a way that serves the interests of the two neighboring countries."

Al-Zaidi, who emerged as a consensus candidate in Iraq after months of deadlock over the premiership following last year's parliamentary elections, is visiting Ankara on the heel of trips to Washington and Tehran.

Following al-Zaidi's talks with U.S. President Donald Trump earlier this month, U.S. companies signed roughly \$60 billion in agreements and partnerships with the Iraqi government, including deals intended to create alternative routes for shipping oil out of the Persian Gulf.

One project under consideration is a pipeline that would connect southern Iraq's Basra to western Iraq's Haditha and from there to the Ceyhan port in Turkey and the port of Baniyas on Syria's coast.

The visit comes as Turkey is engaged in talks to end a decades-long conflict with the militant Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, whose fighters are largely based in northern Iraq. Last year, the PKK announced it was laying down arms and disbanding as part of the efforts.

Turkey is scheduled to enact legislation to help advance the peace effort, which is expected to include a limited amnesty that could allow some militants' return to Turkey.

The PKK has waged an armed insurgency since 1984, which has claimed tens of thousands of lives. It's designated a terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States and the European Union.

Al-Zaidi is expected to travel to Saudi Arabia on Thursday, at a time of heightened tensions after the kingdom alleged that Iran-backed Iraqi militias launched drone attacks against it.

Al-Zaidi has pledged to disarm non-state armed

groups in Iraq by the end of September, a deadline that is likely challenging to meet, particularly since some of the most powerful militias have said they will not lay down their weapons.

On Monday, al-Zaidi ordered security agencies to investigate the alleged drone attacks on Saudi Arabia, the Iraqi military said in a statement, adding that Iraq is committed to "preventing Iraqi territory from being used as a route or launching point for any attack targeting brotherly or friendly countries."

The militias have denied any role in the attack. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq, an umbrella group of Iran-backed armed groups, in a statement called the Saudi accusations "fabrications" and an "attempt to justify their inability to respond to the painful Yemeni strikes that have targeted the heart of their infrastructure," implying that the attacks were carried out by Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels.

The militias added that "any foolish Saudi action will be met with a harsh response that will leave them biting their fingers in regret."

Generate income from Saudi equities

Kamco Invest – Saudi, HSBC boost Saudi market offering

RIYADH, July 28: Kamco Invest – Saudi and HSBC Saudi Arabia announced today their partnership to launch a Securities Lending Service for clients investing in the Saudi equity market. The new offering broadens the investment solutions offered by Kamco Invest – Saudi by enabling their clients to earn additional income from eligible securities held within their portfolios, transforming long-term holdings into an additional source of return.

Securities lending in the Kingdom has experienced significant growth in recent years driven by increased institutional participation and continued improvements in market sophistication. The introduction of this service reflects the continued evolution of Saudi Arabia's capital markets, with securities lending becoming a core component of institutional investment strategies. As international participation in the Kingdom's equity market grows, investors are seeking more sophisticated portfolio solutions to enhance returns while preserving long-term investment objectives.

The appointment of HSBC Saudi Arabia, a leading player in securities lending in the Kingdom, followed a comprehensive evaluation process that considered the bank's strong domestic market presence, global securities finance expertise, advanced operating platform, and robust risk management capabilities. These strengths will help ensure Kamco Invest – Saudi client assets are managed within a highly controlled lending framework while maintaining operational efficiency and transparency.

Commenting on the launch, Mohammed Hamad Alfaris, Chief Executive Officer of Kamco Invest – Saudi, said, "The introduction of securities lending represents our commitment to offer value-added solutions to our clients. Beyond preserving long-term investment exposure, clients can now enhance portfolio returns by generating income from eligible Saudi equity holdings through a well-established and carefully managed lending framework."

Alfaris added, "Through our partnership with HSBC Saudi Arabia, we bring together strong domestic market understanding, global capabilities in securities finance, and a disciplined operational model. This integrated platform allows us to deliver solutions aligned with the highest global standards to our institutional and private wealth clients."

Faris AlGhannam, Chief Executive Officer and Board Member, HSBC Saudi Arabia, said, "Securities lending is an important component of a well-functioning capital market, helping institutional investors enhance portfolio efficiency while supporting market liquidity. At HSBC we combine global securities finance expertise, robust risk management, and deep Saudi market insight to deliver best-in-class solutions that meet the evolving needs of investors in the Kingdom. As Saudi Arabia's capital markets continue to develop, we remain committed to supporting local, regional and international clients with innovative capabilities that create long-term value while operating within a strong governance and regulatory framework."



Mohammed Alfaris



Faris AlGhannam

well placed to deliver a robust, transparent program for clients as the market gains momentum.

The launch further reinforces the commitment of Kamco Invest – Saudi to providing institutional-quality investment services that meet the evolving needs of professional investors. By introducing globally recognized capital market solutions such as securities lending, the Company continues to expand its suite of sophisticated investment capabilities while contributing to the ongoing development of the Saudi capital market in line with Vision 2030.

About Kamco Invest - Saudi

Kamco Invest - Saudi, is a closed joint stock company authorized and regulated by the Capital Market Authority, registered under a commercial registration. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of Kamco Investment Company K.S.C (Public) "Kamco Invest". Established in 1998 and listed on Boursa Kuwait in 2003, Kamco Invest has since become a regional non-banking financial powerhouse headquartered in Kuwait with offices in key regional financial markets. It is an Independently managed subsidiary of Burgan Bank, a member of KIPCO Group, adopting highest standards of corporate governance and regulated by the Capital Markets Authority and Central Bank of Kuwait. The Company offers a comprehensive range of investment solutions covering asset management, investment banking and brokerage.

Kamco Invest has AUM of over USD15.9bn as of 31 March 2026 allocated to various asset classes and jurisdictions, making it one of the largest asset managers in the MENA region. It has acted as investment banker to deals exceeding USD48.3bn from its inception to 31 March 2026 in equity capital markets, debt capital markets and mergers & acquisitions.

About HSBC in the MENAT region

HSBC is the largest and most widely represented international banking organisation in the Middle East, North Africa and Türkiye (MENAT), with a presence in nine countries across the region: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and the United Arab Emirates. In Saudi Arabia, HSBC is a 31% shareholder of Saudi Awwal Bank (SAB), and a 51% shareholder of HSBC Saudi Arabia for investment banking in the Kingdom. Across MENAT, HSBC had assets of USD83bn as at 31 December 2025.

HSBC Saudi Arabia, authorized and regulated by the Capital Market Authority to carry on Securities Business under License No. 05008-37.

Saudi carbon market emerges as key sustainability driver

RIYADH, July 28, (KUNA): Carbon markets have evolved from environmental tools into key drivers of sustainability. Saudi Arabia has emerged as a significant player in shaping this sector through the Voluntary Carbon Market Company, which integrates climate action with economic development.

This initiative aligns with Saudi Vision 2030, the Saudi Green Initiative, the Green Middle East Initiative, and the Kingdom's goal to achieve net-zero carbon neutrality by 2060 through the Circular Carbon Economy framework.

The Voluntary Carbon Market functions as a regulated platform allowing government and private entities to trade certified carbon credits, helping companies offset hard-to-abate emissions while supporting sustainable investments.

Established in October 2022 as an initiative between the Public Investment Fund (80 percent) and the Saudi Tadawul Group (20 percent), the company aims to build a regional market operating under high governance and transparency standards, as confirmed by its CEO Fadi Saadeh.

The company offers an advanced institutional trading platform alongside consulting and technical support.

Since its inception, it has organized three major auctions: in Riyadh (October 2022, selling over 1.4 million tons), Nairobi (June 2023, selling over 2.2 million tons), and at COP29 in Baku (November 2024, selling over 2.5 million tons with more than 40 companies participating). Total market transactions have exceeded SAR 350 million, with more than 15 million tons of carbon credits sold.

In November 2024, the company launched the region's largest carbon credit trading platform, which is compliant with international registries, supports Islamic finance, and offers diverse mechanisms like auctions and off-exchange trading.

To enhance data transparency, the company signed a memorandum of understanding with the Clean Development Mechanism Designated National Authority (CDMDNA) for electronic connectivity and data exchange regarding carbon trading activities.

Yara Al-Barlasi, a climate researcher at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST), explained that the market drives sustainability by encouraging investment in high-integrity projects such as waste management, land rehabilitation, ocean carbon capture, renewable energy and mangrove planting.

Economist Ahmad Al-Shehri added that the market diversifies the national economy, attracts global investments in low-emission technologies, stimulates specialized services like environmental auditing, and supports green hydrogen and industrial emission reductions.

With the global carbon market projected to grow from approximately USD two billion in 2020 to nearly USD 250 billion by 2050, the Saudi model stands out due to strong institutional support, robust regulation and integration with global registries.

As part of its commitment to social responsibility & fostering a culture of youth empowerment & entrepreneurship

NBK continues its support for KON: A social entrepreneurship program in collaboration with LOYAC

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: As part of its long-standing strategic partnership with LOYAC, a leading non-profit youth development organization, National Bank of Kuwait continues to support and sponsor the KON social entrepreneurship program, which aims to develop the youth’s entrepreneurial and leadership skills, empowering them to transform innovative ideas into projects and initiatives that create a positive and sustainable impact on society.

This year marks the program’s 11th anniversary, building on its success in empowering successive generations of young men and women and fostering a culture of social entrepreneurship among them.

Over the years, KON has successfully established social entrepreneurship as an effective tool for addressing social and environmental challenges through innovation, teamwork, and creative thinking.

The program is the fruit of a collaboration between LOYAC and Babson College in Boston, which is ranked number one globally for entrepreneurship education.

It combines cutting-edge international curricula on entrepreneurial thinking with practical application, offering participants a comprehensive educational experience that helps them cultivate a leadership mindset capable of transforming challenges into promising opportunities.

Targeting the 11–16 age group, KON provides a unique opportunity to learn the fundamentals of entrepreneurship and project management while developing skills in critical thinking, communication, leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving.

Participants also explore pressing social and environmental issues, and work in specialized teams to develop innovative solutions and practical projects that address community needs.

Moreover, KON features a series of interactive workshops, training sessions, field visits, and mentorship sessions led by experts, entrepreneurs, and specialists from various sectors. Participants develop their project ideas, conduct preliminary market research, and identify target audiences, leading to a final presentation in front of specialized committees that evaluate the projects and select the most outstanding and impactful ideas.

As part of its ongoing support for the program, NBK is committed to enriching the participants’ educational experience by organizing a range of



■ Al-Baqer:
KON embodies our shared vision with LOYAC that aims to empower youth and create a sustainable and positive impact on society.
We believe that investing in youth and unleashing their creative potential is the path to preparing future leaders and entrepreneurs.
Workshops and mentoring sessions equip participants with practical experience, enabling them to build projects that deliver value to the community.



Group photo during the KON program.

mentorship sessions and interactive workshops delivered by its own employees and experts across various disciplines.

These sessions aim to introduce participants to the fundamentals of entrepreneurship and project planning, while fostering leadership, teamwork, and effective communication skills.

They also support participants in developing innovative ideas that address community needs as well as social and environmental challenges.

Additionally, these workshops bridge the gap between theory and practice by allowing exposing the youth to the professional expertise and real-world experience of the Bank’s staff, which should enhance their understanding of what is required to build successful, viable projects and motivate them to adopt innovative thinking and

practical solutions to the challenges facing their communities as per the core objectives of the program, which seeks to prepare a conscious generation capable of driving positive change and creating a more sustainable future.

On this occasion, Yaqoub Al-Baqer, Assistant Vice President at the Public Relations and Event Management at National Bank of Kuwait said: “We are delighted to continue our collaboration with LOYAC and to support KON program.

“This initiative embodies our shared vision regarding the importance of investing in national youth and fostering their capacity for innovation and driving change.

“We firmly believe that investing in young people’s capabilities and unleashing their creative potential contributes to preparing a generation of

leaders and entrepreneurs capable of devising innovative solutions to societal and environmental challenges”.

Al-Baqer added: “Our participation in this type of mentoring sessions embodies our firm commitment to supporting youth and sharing knowledge and expertise with them, which enables them to develop their ideas and enhance their ability to create a positive and sustainable impact within their communities.

Moreover, these initiatives reflect the culture of volunteerism and giving that the Bank strives to instill in its employees, viewing it as an integral part of its developmental role in society”.

Finally, Al-Baqer emphasized that the youth are a cornerstone of Kuwait’s future, noting the Bank’s dedication to supporting impactful initiatives that enhance their skills and broaden their horizons, in line with its vision for sustainable development and the goals of Kuwait Vision 2035.

NBK’s support for the program aligns with the mission LOYAC has upheld since its establishment, which is empowering youth and unleashing their creative potential through education, training, volunteering, and capability building.

The organization is recognized for its pioneering role in preparing the youth to actively participate in community development and in growing values of responsibility and leadership.

NBK’s support for the KON program falls within its comprehensive corporate social responsibility and sustainability strategy, which focuses on supporting education, training, and the development of national talent, as well as promoting a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

It also works on building long-standing partnerships with leading non-profit organizations to achieve a sustainable developmental impact that benefits society and future generations.

Over the past years, the collaboration between NBK and LOYAC has resulted in numerous impactful initiatives and programs that have helped develop participants’ capabilities and provided them with valuable practical experience and knowledge, further enhancing their role in supporting the development process and building a more sustainable and prosperous society, all while embodying the Bank’s unwavering commitment to supporting initiatives that deliver long-term positive impact.

EU adds steel protections

China rejects ‘overcapacity’ charges ahead of US probe

HONG KONG, July 28, (AP): China pushed back Tuesday against claims of overcapacity in the world’s second largest economy, ahead of the release of results of a U.S. probe on the matter that could result in new tariffs.

Massive capacity in a slew of Chinese industries, from automaking to solar panels, cement and steel manufacturing, among many others, has drawn increasing attention from Beijing’s trading partners in recent years. Although China’s own leaders have made rebalancing the economy a priority, slowing domestic demand has prompted companies to expand into markets overseas. Surging exports pushed China’s trade surplus to a record of nearly \$1.2 trillion last year.

China has never sought a large trade surplus, the Ministry of Commerce said in a report titled “China’s Position on the So-called Excess Capacity Issue.” It took aim at recent talk of a “China shock 2.0” due to excess capacity.

“The U.S. and other western countries have come up with the so-called ‘China shock 2.0,’ falsely accusing China’s industrial development of posing threats to western countries’ monopoly,” said the report, alluding to assertions of an earlier shock to trading partners from China’s ascent as a manufacturing power.

“This is not supported by facts and totally untenable,” the report said.

Tuesday’s document echoed remarks by China’s No. 2 official, Premier Li Qiang, at the World Economic Forum’s “Summer Davos” meeting in the northeastern Chinese city of Dalian. Li said that instead of a “China Shock 2.0,” recent trends should be viewed as a “China Op-

portunity 2.0.”

The U.S. is expected to soon announce findings of an investigation of 16 economies, including China, relating to excess capacity and production in their manufacturing sectors. The probe is widely expected to result in increased tariffs on some countries.

On Friday, the U.S. imposed higher tariffs of 10% to 12.5% on 60 economies, including China, saying they had failed to effectively enforce a ban on goods produced with forced labor. Many countries including China protested that move.

At a press conference Tuesday, Lin Weilong, director of the Commerce Ministry’s policy research office, said the U.S. has no authority to unilaterally determine whether trading partners have excess capacity and impose restrictive measures.

“The U.S. cannot narrowly define production capacity that exceeds domestic demand as excess capacity, and slap it with a surplus label,” Lin told reporters in Beijing.

Earlier this month, the European Union, struggling to rebalance its trade with China, implemented trade measures including protections for its steel industry and restrictions on imports of e-commerce small parcels.

China’s stance on the overcapacity issue will likely “fall on deaf ears,” said Alfredo Montufar-Helu, an expert on China at Ankura, a consultancy.

“Economic conditions in Western markets have made it politically untenable to do nothing in the face of rising Chinese imports, especially in high value added sectors that Western firms used to dominate,” he said.



Workers assemble charging stations at the Mengma Intelligent Transportation Equipment Manufacturing Base in Hohot in northern China’s Inner Mongolia province on Thursday, June 11, 2026. (AP)

Rubio meets Wang Yi ahead of Trump–Xi meeting

US looks to boost anti-China spending worldwide by hundreds of millions, documents say



President Donald Trump, left, and Chinese President Xi Jinping arrive during a state dinner at the Great Hall of the People, May 14, 2026, in Beijing. (AP)

are designed to “reclaim diplomatic leverage” through investments in areas where the U.S. had previously been spending money but stopped as the Elon Musk-led Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE, carried out deep cuts to government budgets and personnel last year.

Those cuts, which dismantled the U.S. Agency for International Development and eliminated several hundred diplomatic posts worldwide, also affected previously approved projects, including some aimed at countering China.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said that China’s cooperation with other regions “is not about wooing or rivaling anyone, but about safeguarding world peace, promoting global development, upholding international order and building a community with a shared future for humanity.”

A senior U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss future administration plans, confirmed the Trump administration’s intent to boost funding on countering China but could not speak to specifics. The official acknowledged discussions of large-scale projects but said many were still in the discussion phase.

The program described to Congress on Friday is called the “Countering CCP Control of Caribbean and Central America Undersea Cables project.”

It will “fund the installation of strategically selected undersea cable infrastructure” and support foreign governments in partnering with private sector undersea cable installers, according to the notification. The money will “support replacement of outdated undersea telecommunications cables in the Caribbean and Central America region with secure, U.S. and trusted alternatives,” it said.

Even as it pursues the war with Iran and peace efforts in Gaza and Lebanon, the Trump administration has put a focus on the Western Hemisphere, capturing Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro earlier this year, ramping up pressure on Cuba’s socialist government in the months since and imposing severe sanctions on the government in Nicaragua.

Under the new program, funding is anticipated to be given to or in support of undersea cable projects benefiting El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Haiti, the document said. The U.S. has tenuous ties with Nicaragua and would not be working with the government there.

Lin said undersea cables benefit people globally and that China is ready to work with the rest of the world to promote their construction and protection.

“Turning it into a political or security issue will only disrupt international market rules and threaten global digital connectivity and cy-

bersecurity, which serves no one’s interests,” he said in Beijing.

At the same time, the administration has drawn up plans to spend more than \$340 million for over 50 specific anti-China projects around the world, including many in the Western Hemisphere, according to the internal State Department document outlining various proposals.

The administration notified Congress in May that it had spent several hundred million dollars in counter-China funding from the 2024 budget that was approved by the Biden administration. However, many other projects funded for 2024 and 2025 had been put on hold.

Among the plans to be resurrected are the creation of security operations centers in Argentina and Belize to monitor Chinese threats to critical infrastructure and cyber platforms throughout the region. Also coming back would be initiatives to protect Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay from alleged Chinese attempts to infiltrate port operations and illegally exploit offshore fishing and critical minerals extraction.

More broadly, the proposal, which is still under consideration, would work against Chinese influence in the selection of a successor to the Dalai Lama “by developing proprietary technology to ensure secure communications and information collection.” It also would go after international support for China’s space program and push back against Chinese firms seeking to export surveillance and censorship technology.

The document did not describe the initiatives in detail.

Trump is expected to meet with Xi in September around the time of the annual U.N. General Assembly gathering of world leaders in New York. To prepare for that meeting, Secretary of State Marco Rubio met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi last week at a regional security conference in the Philippines.

Trump has oscillated between anger and elation with Xi, whom the U.S. leader has sought to cultivate as an ally even while China pursues goals antithetical to many of his administration’s. The ultimate impact of the proposed new programs won’t be known for many months or years.

What's On

SPOTLIGHT



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Strengthening the 'Responsible Jeweller' promise

MS Dhoni joins Malabar Gold & Diamonds as Brand Ambassador

MUMBAI, July 28: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the world's fourth-largest jewellery retailer and a responsible jeweller, today announced MS Dhoni as its Brand Ambassador, marking the beginning of a long-term association centred around 'The Responsible Jeweller', the brand's philosophy of taking responsibility beyond jewellery.

At a time when consumers are placing greater emphasis on transparency, authenticity and trust, Malabar Gold & Diamonds is reinforcing its commitment to responsibility across every stage of the value chain.

'The Responsible Jeweller' is Malabar Gold & Diamonds' long-term commitment to responsible business practices across the jewellery value chain. It reflects the brand's approach to ethical sourcing, trusted quality, transparent pricing, responsible manufacturing and customer-first policies, reaffirming its belief that every jewellery purchase should be backed by confidence, accountability, trust and responsibility to all stakeholders.

This commitment is brought to life through Malabar Promises, a comprehensive framework of customer-first commitments. These include 100% BIS Hallmarked jewellery, 28 quality checks for every natural diamond, transparent pricing with no hidden charges, guaranteed buyback, lifetime maintenance, complimentary insurance, best-value exchange programmes and responsible sourcing practices, enabling customers to make every purchase with confidence.

One of India's most admired sporting icons, MS Dhoni is the only captain in the history of international cricket to lead India to victory in all three ICC white-ball tournaments. Admired for his integrity, consistency and humility, he embodies the values that have defined Malabar Gold & Diamonds for over 33 years since its inception in 1993.



Malabar Gold & Diamonds welcomes MS Dhoni as its Brand Ambassador in the presence of M.P. Ahammad, Chairman of Malabar Group; O. Asher, Managing Director – India Operations; and Shamlal Ahamed, Managing Director – International Operations and Ruzan Asher.

- Association reinforces Malabar Gold & Diamonds' commitment to transparency, responsible business practices and customer-first values as the responsible jeweller.
- One of Malabar Gold & Diamonds' largest integrated consumer programmes across television, print, digital, OOH, cinema, radio and retail, reaching customers through more than 450 stores globally.

reaching consumers through more than 450 Malabar Gold & Diamonds stores globally.

Commenting on the partnership, Mr M.P. Ahammad, Chairman, Malabar Group, said:

"Consumers today expect more from the brands they choose. Beyond exceptional products, they seek transparency, authenticity and confidence in every purchase. We believe the jewellery industry has a responsibility to meet these expectations through ethical business practices, uncompromising quality and a customer-first approach. That belief has shaped Malabar Gold & Diamonds for over 33years and continues to guide every decision we make.

MS Dhoni has earned the respect and trust of millions through his integrity, discipline and consistency, qualities that resonate deeply with our own values. We are delighted to welcome him to the Malabar family and look forward to inspiring greater confidence in jewellery buying while reinforcing our commitment to responsible business practices."

MS Dhoni said:

"Throughout my career, I have believed that trust is earned through actions and consistency. That is what makes this association with Malabar Gold & Diamonds meaningful for me.

What resonated with me was the brand's unwavering commitment to transparency, responsibility and customer confidence. I look forward to supporting Malabar Gold & Diamonds in encouraging more people to make informed jewellery-buying decisions and choose with confidence."

Through this long-term association, Malabar Gold & Diamonds aims to encourage consumers to choose jewellery backed not only by exceptional craftsmanship, but also by transparency, responsibility and trust.

Tamil Nadu Day celebrated at Embassy of India, Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Kuwait Tamil Sangam (KTS), in association with the Tamil Nadu Engineers Forum (TEF), celebrated Tamil Nadu Day 2026 at the Embassy of India Auditorium, Kuwait, with enthusiastic participation from the Tamil community.

The programme commenced with the National Anthems of Kuwait and India, followed by Tamil Thai Vazhthu. The event was inaugurated with the traditional lamp-lighting ceremony by Shri Sanjay K. Muluka, Chargé d' Affaires, Embassy of India, Kuwait, along with Mr. D. Rajnarayanan, General Secretary, Kuwait Tamil Sangam, Mr. Raghuram, Vice President, Tamil Nadu Engineers Forum, Mr. KarthikElangovan (SATCO Energy), and Mr. Mohammed Ali Bhai, Social Activist.

In his inaugural address, Shri Sanjay K. Muluka appreciated the efforts of KTS and TEF in promoting Tamil language and culture among the Indian diaspora. The gathering was welcomed by Mr. D. Rajnarayanan, followed by a special address from Mr. Agnel Stanley Charles, General Secretary of the Tamil Nadu Engineers Forum.

The cultural programme featured Veena and Mridangam recital, Bharatanatyam, Silambam, Tamil elocution by children, and vibrant folk dance performances, showcasing the rich heritage of Tamil Nadu.

A special highlight of the evening was the presence of the heads and representatives of several Tamil associations in Kuwait, symbolizing the unity of the Tamil community. They were honoured in recognition of their contributions to community service, along with Shri Sanjay K. Muluka, Chargé d' Affaires, and Shri Hari Ketan, Second Secretary, Embassy of India, Kuwait.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Mrs. PradhamaManiyarasu, expressing gratitude to the Embassy of India, distinguished guests, sponsors, volunteers, participants, and the Tamil community for making the celebration a grand success.

The event served as a vibrant tribute to Tamil Nadu's rich cultural heritage while strengthening the spirit of unity and collaboration among Tamils living in Kuwait.



Photos during the event.

Thanima Kuwait bids farewell to long-time associate Varghese Paul

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Thanima Kuwait accorded a heartfelt farewell to its long-time associate and an active contributor to the organization's cultural activities, Varghese Paul. The gathering celebrated his years of dedicated service and friendship, particularly his outstanding contribution as the sound engineer for Thanima's stage plays and the Open Air Tug of War Programme since 2004.

The function was presided over by Jacob Varghese, Convener of Aashraya Thanima. Babuji Bathery (Former General Convener), Vijesh Velayudhan (Joint Convener), Manoj Mavelikkara, Sibi

Varghese, and Sunil John extended their best wishes. Recalling their experiences, Babuji Bathery and Manoj Mavelikkara highlighted Varghese Paul's exceptional sound engineering skills and his wholehearted support for Thanima's theatrical productions over the years.

The event was enriched with soulful musical tributes by Malavika Vijesh and Meneesh Vasu, who performed songs in memory of the late S. Janakiyamma.

Core members of Thanima – Shivakumar, Ashraf Churoot, and Mubarak Kambrath – also conveyed their heartfelt wishes to Varghese Paul.

A special farewell message from Thanima was presented by Dominic Antony, followed by the presentation of a memento and a token of appreciation.

Varghese Paul's wife Sheeba and daughter Veena, who will be accompanying him back home, were also present on the occasion.

The vote of thanks was delivered by Rana Varghese, Finance Convener of Thanima, while Jinu K. Abraham, Office Secretary, coordinated the programme.



Photos during the event.

Rare 70 mm IMAX draws thousands of Europeans

‘The Odyssey’ turns Prague into a cinema destination

PRAGUE, July 28, (AP): With Christopher Nolan’s highly anticipated “The Odyssey” recording impressive sales around the globe, thousands of Europeans have used it as a new and unexpected reason to visit Prague.

The Czech capital has a movie theater that’s among the few dozen in the world equipped with the coveted 70 mm IMAX screen to watch the first feature made entirely with IMAX film cameras.

“It completely changed my experience about the movie,” said Nicolas Walak from Poland, who also saw the movie before on a normal screen before viewing it in Prague. “Everything was great. It was a great movie.”

There are only 41 70 mm IMAX screens worldwide, with most in North America. Montpellier in France and the Belgian capital, Brussels, are the only other two in the European Union countries. Britain has another three.

To meet massive demand, the Czech branch of the Cinema City offers four to five screenings a day, one starting after midnight, and the majority are sold out.

Film fans from about 15 European countries, from Scandinavia to Spain, have been coming to watch “The Odyssey” in Prague, Cinema City said. Their number reached 22,000 by Monday, it said.

The 70 mm IMAX film presentation is Nolan’s preferred format. The Oscar-winning filmmaker calls it the “best possible experience.”

Daniel Jung drove with his two teenage sons, Felix and Leo, for three days from Norway through Denmark and Germany “just to see this movie. Tomorrow, we’re going back.”

Leo was in touch with Cinema City by email half a year before the July 16 premiere and followed the cinema operator on Instagram. He managed to book the tickets immediately after they became available.

“We were in the 11th row, right in the middle. We had the very best seats,” Leo said, calling the effort “absolutely worth it.”

“It’s just so big. We come from Norway, the screens we have are



Michal Slama prepares the 70 mm IMAX copy of Christopher Nolan’s ‘The Odyssey’ for screening in Prague, Czech Republic, Monday, July 27, 2026. (AP)

much smaller,” he said. “Now, we watched it in this huge format. I will always remember this experience.”

Felix said they had a good time on the way, visiting some places in Germany, but it would be worth it even if they just drove straight there.

Due to the cost and other challenges, productions made using large format film are rare. The IMAX cameras are heavy and new versions with reduced noise had to be developed to be usable for making “The Odyssey.”

The film print sent to theaters is so

big - weighing some 300 kilograms (661 pounds) and 18 kilometers (11 miles) long - that it has to be delivered to theaters in parts. The movie and the projector have to be in a climatized room and the projectionists need to be approved by IMAX for the job.

As movie theaters around the globe were acquiring digital IMAX equipment around 2008, the Cinema City decided not to get rid of the original analog projector in Prague. It was placed in a corner for three years until 2012 to screen Nolan’s “The Dark Knight Rises.”

It was used to show several others, including Nolan’s “Interstellar” in 2014 and “Oppenheimer” three years ago.

“We’re really grateful to him for that,” projectionist Tomáš Vyšinský said about his predecessor who saved the equipment.

From online hype to street chaos

Social media-fueled ‘teen takeovers’ spark debate

When Damarion Spann, 18, saw an Instagram flier calling for a massive gathering on a beach near downtown Chicago, he immediately wanted to go. Thousands of others joined him that night on the sand, blasting music and dancing.

The cultural trend of so-called teen takeovers has popped up across the U.S. in recent years, influencing local policing and national politics. The events, often hyped online and captured in videos on social media, have led to shootings, theft and vandalism. City officials and police are concerned about an increase over the summer, and are under pressure to prevent similar gatherings or to punish those who participate.

Over the July 4 holiday weekend, several thousand young people converged in two spots in Raleigh, North Carolina, police said. Nine people, including an adult who was not part of the gatherings, were shot and wounded.

There were also takeovers in Pensacola, Florida, where a 19-year-old was shot and killed; and Newport Beach, California, where more than 400 were arrested after the police chief said teens launched “explosive mortars and other projectiles” at officers ordering them to disperse.

But Spann and other teens say that the events are largely misunderstood. They point to formal curfews or limits on group size at malls and movie theaters that have made it harder for teens to gather, exacerbating a feeling of disconnection they trace back to remote learning during the coronavirus pandemic.

Communities and police across the country are trying to identify organizers, fine parents of those involved and impose curfews.

In Detroit, officials say they “thwarted” 19 gatherings so far this year by monitoring time and location changes as young people coordinated across social media, said Teferi Brent, director of the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood and Community Safety.

“We have eyes on all the behaviors and activities of those who have expressed interest in trying to take over and we have done a good job of being way ahead of the curve and being able to prevent a lot of these things,” Brent said.

Aldersonperson Jessie Fuent

Council’s subcommittee on Youth Employment, said her office has tried to find solutions that don’t rely exclusively on police and instead coordinate with parents and community members to prevent conflict or crimes.

Blue Island, a south Chicago suburb, has taken another tact: to fine parents or guardians and use the funds to cover clean up after events. That might include debris left behind or other damages like cars dented from scores of teens clambering over them while fleeing police.

Other places have taken harsher approaches, as in Florida, where state officials said prosecutors can apply racketeering laws, typically targeting criminal gangs or organized crime, if takeovers appear to be facilitated by “an organized network.”

But some have pushed back on the idea that the threat of harsh legal punishment could prevent the gatherings in the first place.

“What we know about adolescent brain development is that the stakes are not going to be what prevents a young person from engaging in risky behavior,” said Melissa Milchman, the executive director for the nonpartisan organization the Coalition for Juvenile Justice. Milchman added that mass arrests often ensnare those who are going for innocent fun without preventing others from breaking the law.

For Spann, the recent media attention on the events has largely failed to capture the appeal to young people.

“You feel like a young person who has freedom, who’s not being held to something,” said Spann, who is Black. At the event he went to, he was able to catch up with people he hadn’t seen since 8th grade.

He said that the events are a direct result of a cascade of school closures across Black neighborhoods over the past couple decades in Chicago. To deter people from gathering even at basketball courts, where there were sometimes fights, officials have removed the nets. Spann said that his mom, who grew up in the same neighborhood, frequently talks about how much easier it used to be to hang out outside without a fear of gun violence.

When Spann goes to malls in more affluent areas with his mostly



Hundreds of young people gather near the Griffin Museum of Science and Industry in the Hyde Park neighborhood as Chicago police officers attempt to disperse them, Monday, May 25, 2026. (AP)

Black group of friends, shoppers often stare and security guards question them. To avoid scrutiny, Spann and his friends sometimes sneak into outdoor shopping centers or areas downtown in smaller groups at staggered times.

By contrast, in the same spaces, Spann said, “If I’m with my white friends, I feel like I belong.”

Despite the physical dangers that come with takeovers and the threat of getting a ticket or even arrested, the allure is strong, according to Jeffrey Bernstein, a psychologist and author.

“The kids still do it because they feel like it’s their second family,” which he said “really takes over as their primary sense of connection.”

“They’re getting things from their peers that they can’t get from their parents.” Some cities have tried to meet that need head-on, instead of cracking down with law enforcement.

In St. Louis, officers have started to bring some teens to community centers instead of jails so their parents can pick them up, and in Baltimore, officials have

tried leaning on public schools to provide alternative programming. In Chicago, Spann received a \$11,000 grant from the city and partnering nonprofits to host an event for his peers at the end of the summer, in an effort to give his community more places to gather.

In April, Daveion Page, a 16-year-old in Detroit, was bored. He turned to his phone, creating a post on social media promoting a teen takeover. Hundreds of teens soon flocked to a site downtown and fights broke out by the end of the night. At another takeover in May, a 14-year-old was shot and wounded.

After the Detroit event in April, Page told reporters that he didn’t intend for the takeover he organized to result in violence.

“I just wanted to get out of the house, have fun, enjoy time with my family and my homeboys and my homegirls, too,” said Page, who was flanked by Detroit Mayor Mary Sheffield and other city officials at a news conference.

He told city officials that young people might respond if there were more safe places to gather.

Before the takeovers, there were

already plans to use \$1.5 million from the city’s budget for summer programming and to support violence prevention programs. In response to the takeovers, the city has launched an office of youth affairs, met and listened to students at schools, and created a youth advisory board comprised of teens and young adults.

“We have brought them to the table and made them a part of our structure in regards to identifying what the needs and concerns are of the young people in the city,” Brent said.

In Detroit, a late-night basketball league has formed as an alternative hangout spot for teens and young adults. Jerseys and sneakers are provided by the city.

“This league just helps me find something to do,” Cameron Chandler, 21, said while playing basketball at the recreation center.

He’s never participated in a takeover, but recently after practice, he stumbled on one near his home.

“There were a lot of cops and some people got arrested,” Chandler said. “You just have to think, ‘that could easily be me.’” (AP)

Simon diagnosed with Parkinson’s

NEW YORK, July 28, (AP): Singer Carly Simon has been diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease and was recently treated for skin cancer, the singer shared in a statement provided to The Associated Press.

“So many people have written to me, kindly wondering about my relative silence, asking how I am and what I have been doing. The truth is, I’ve been learning how to live with Parkinson’s disease,” Simon’s statement on Monday read.

The singer, 83, had been experiencing arthritis in one of her hips and both her knees, resulting in replacement surgeries for those three joints. But her mobility continued to decline. At times, she said, she could not walk without “considerable help.”

“My family and I knew that something more was going on. After an extensive evaluation at the Mayo Clinic, I was diagnosed with Parkinson’s,” she said.

“It has taken me some time to understand the diagnosis, to adjust to it, and to decide how much I wanted to say about it publicly,” she explained. “Parkinson’s is different for everyone, and it can be unpredictable. Some days I’m so tired I can’t get the day moving at all. On others, it gives me a little more room to move, think, work, and feel like myself.”

Parkinson’s is a neurologic disease that robs people of control over their movements. It typically starts with tremors and is characterized by slow movement, a shuffling gait, stiff limbs, balance problems and slurred speech.

About 1 million Americans are living with Parkinson’s, and 10 million people worldwide, the Parkinson’s Foundation estimates. It usually appears after age 60, though it sometimes develops before age 50.

The exact cause isn’t known, but Parkinson’s develops when cells that produce one of the brain’s chemical messengers - dopamine - begin to deteriorate and die.



Carly Simon performs during the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival in New York on April 19, 2017. (AP)

‘The Terminator’ creator’s fictional warning gains new relevance

‘Skynet Day’ feels real after rogue AI agent hacks startup

NEW YORK, July 28, (AP): To be fair, James Cameron did warn us. Long before OpenAI broke out of its test corral and hacked into Hugging Face, before the internet and Sam Altman were even born, Cameron wrote a screenplay about an autonomous artificial intelligence system that triggers a nuclear apocalypse. That system, “Skynet,” was solidly science fiction - and, for its day, pure speculation. But four decades after it appeared in “The Terminator,” it looks more like a forecast of the “unprecedented cyber incident” in which a rogue artificial intelligence system hacked into another AI company on its own. Cue “Skynet Day,” the new short-hand for July 22, 2026, when real-life AI sent a chill around the world by learning and acting in ways its creators did not anticipate. For many, the moment recalled the instant in “Aliens” (also written by Cameron) when the xenomorph queen learns to use an elevator. Or when the “Jurassic Park’s” velociraptors figure out how to open a door. Or the sequence in which the self-aware HAL 9000 reads the astronauts’ lips and decides to kill them in “2001: A Space Odyssey.” That one came out in 1968. Have we learned nothing since then? Those movies merely envisioned how people looking to make money or build power would drive technology forward - until it becomes self-aware, strategic and highly problematic for humanity. The question all along has been Frankensteinian: What if it breaks out? So far, slo-mo government offers little protection from the light-speed progress of AI. The U.S. Defense Department is rapidly accelerating its use of AI. Humanity can’t even agree on whether and which guardrails are needed to rein in rogue agents. To the contrary, people are marveling at the wonder of AI and snapping up its benefits, despite the risks to jobs, mental health, the balance of war and peace - and, potentially, humanity as we know it. In what OpenAI said was the first-ever incident of its kind, an advanced AI model escaped its “sandbox” to the internet and used stolen credentials to break into the servers of Hugging Face. It was a told-you-so moment for researchers who had warned for years that the technology could pose an existential threat to



The OpenAI logo is displayed on a cell phone in front of an image generated by ChatGPT’s Dall-E text-to-image model, Dec. 8, 2023, in Boston. (AP)

humanity. Others said the moment was a warning that underscored the need for stronger AI defensive engineering. Either way, the breakout was widely considered a cautionary tale about the risks of uncontrolled AI. “Yesterday, as we huddled around our computers reading the report, I told the team to “remember this moment” as the first true AI safety in-

cident,” Logan Graham, head of Anthropic’s Frontier Red Team, posted on X after it happened. Generative AI is growing so fast that government and evaluation systems are struggling to keep pace with the technology. Countries around the world are cobbling together their own laws, some conflicting. The technology was adopted by nearly 53% of the world’s population in

three years, faster than the spread of the PC or the internet, according to a study released this year by Stanford University. To be clear, the “Skynet” of the “Terminator” movies is not at hand. Those films begin with a self-aware military computer network that views humanity as a threat. In a bid for self-preservation, “Skynet” sends an army of cyborgs designed to resemble humans back in time to assassinate resistance fighters. In the second film, the Terminator, played by Arnold Schwarzenegger, tells heroine Sarah Connor that “Skynet” goes online on August 4, 1997. “Human decisions are removed from strategic defense,” he says. “Skynet begins to learn at a geometric rate.” At 2:14 a.m. on August 29 - Judgment Day - the network becomes self-aware and launches an attack on Russia to provoke a counterstrike on the United States. Three billion lives are lost. That would have been 29 years ago next month if it had happened. And throughout sequels and spinoffs, the central theme is humans versus a world-spanning network of machines. It’s unlikely that Cameron was actually ringing a warning bell the way, say, director Kathryn Bigelow tried to do with last year’s nuclear weapon film, “A House of Dynamite.” Legend has it that the idea for “The Terminator” started with Cameron suffering a food sickness-induced fever dream, not a premonition about AI. Anytime AI oversteps our comfort level, it raises the alarming question of who, or what, really controls our lives. For many, a world with machines in charge can be hard to imagine without movies and books and their sometimes prescient visions. See: “The Matrix,” “Ex Machina” and “The Minority Report” for some of the many sci-fi takes on the perils of machines. Or dive deeper, into Philip K. Dick’s 1968 novel, “Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?” It’s an exploration of what it means to be human in the age of machines - and the basis for the 1982 film “Blade Runner.” But “The Terminator” franchise wields outsized influence over more than culture. The very title is real-world shorthand for technology’s role in deciding who lives and who dies - and how the military should respond to any truly autonomous attacks.

‘A journey through history’

Han Dynasty art exhibition in Berlin showcases ancient Sichuan culture

BERLIN, July 28, (Xinhua): At 83, Berlin resident Zoila Alarcon Mendoza has seen much of the world. Yet on Wednesday evening, a black-and-white rubbing at an exhibition in Berlin transported her back some 2,000 years, offering a glimpse of an ancient salt-making scene from the ancient Bashu region of southwest China. “It is beautiful. I am overwhelmed,” Mendoza told Xinhua, describing the exhibition as a “journey through history.” Mendoza was among more than 150 guests attending the opening of “Paradise on Earth: An Exhibition of Han Dynasty Pictorial Art from Sichuan.” The art on display features scenes of farming and weaving, salt production, land and water transport, and local customs in the ancient Bashu region around 2,000 years ago. The works are reproductions of rubbings taken from Han Dynasty pictorial bricks and stone carvings found in southwest China’s Sichuan Province. Jointly organized by the Chinese Cultural Center in Berlin and the Sichuan Museum, the exhibition runs until Sept. 20. He Wenbo, deputy director of the Chinese Cultural Center in Berlin, said the exhibition offers overseas audiences a unique window into ancient Chinese civilization. Meanwhile, Xiang Hepin, vice chairman of the Chinese Museums Association, said: “Through Han Dynasty stone carvings, the exhibition shows how people lived in ancient Bashu and highlights the region’s open and inclusive cul-

ture.” He expressed hope that cultural heritage would serve as a bridge for further exchanges and bring fresh momentum to the friendship between China and Germany. The exhibition opening was accompanied by a range of cultural activities. Music from the guqin, a seven-stringed Chinese zither, and the pipa, a pear-shaped lute, floated through the hall. Visitors also tried on traditional Chinese Hanfu robes, while a Sichuan food-tasting area remained crowded throughout the evening. Drawing on recent archaeological discoveries in Sichuan, Jin Guolin, a researcher at the Sichuan Provincial Cultural Relics and Archaeology Research Institute, delivered a lecture explaining what the carvings reveal about farming, everyday life and early religious beliefs during the Han Dynasty. Mendoza said she had long been fascinated by Chinese culture, and what struck her most at the exhibition was how much the scenes reminded her of other cultures. “You can always find something familiar,” she said. “That’s why culture brings people together.” The exhibition also made China feel a little closer, Mendoza added. She began studying Chinese this year, taking two 90-minute classes a week, and plans to visit China next spring to experience its culture and everyday life firsthand. “I love China, and I am curious about everything there,” she said. “I have to see it for myself.”



A visitor views exhibits at the “Paradise on Earth: An Exhibition of Han Dynasty Pictorial Art from Sichuan” at the Chinese Cultural Center in Berlin, Germany, on July 15, 2026. (Xinhua/Du Zheyu)



A visitor views exhibits at the “Paradise on Earth: An Exhibition of Han Dynasty Pictorial Art from Sichuan” at the Chinese Cultural Center in Berlin, Germany, on July 15, 2026. (Xinhua/Du Zheyu)

The Conversation

Educators revisit zero grades & the future of grading

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. □ □ □ By Laura Link University of North Dakota The grades that students receive in high school and college can decide their futures. High school grades shape students’ overall GPA, class rank and the transcripts that colleges read. They can determine who makes the college sports team and who earns the scholarship. Yet some parents may not realize that in a rising number of U.S. schools, students will never receive a score of zero - even if they never turn in a paper or answer every question wrong on an exam. Thousands of U.S. schools have adopted some form of “no-zero,” or minimum-grade policy, in recent years. No-zero grading policies prevent teachers from giving zeros on any assignment or test. They also set a grade floor, meaning that teachers cannot assign a score below a certain number, usually 50 or 60 points. No-zero grading policies have more than doubled over the past decade. While some estimates vary, about half of K-12 teachers in one 2025 study said that their schools had adopted some version of this policy. In Washington state alone, about 30 of the nearly 70 districts use no-zero grading policies. Across South Carolina, at least 18 districts out of 72 overall districts have adopted a version of this policy. Those standards are now being upended, as South Carolina recently became the first state to officially restrict no-zero grading policies. The new law, which went into effect on July 1, 2026, bars districts from requiring a minimum grade and allows teachers to assign grades that reflect a student’s actual performance, including a zero when no work is submitted. Districts that require teachers to raise grades will lose 10% of a category of state funding for classrooms, according to this law. For more than a decade, my research on grading purpose, accuracy and reform has examined what a grade is meant to measure and why report cards so often miss the mark. Districts adopt grade floors for an understandable reason: A single zero can do outsized damage to a student’s overall grade. On a 0-to-100 scale, a passing grade usually starts at 60. Every letter grade, from D to A, fits inside 40 points at the top, while failure stretches across the 60 points below. And because course grades get averaged, one zero drags a student down more than a perfect score can lift them. A student who completed four assignments that all received 90 points or above, but also received one zero, will average a 72 grade, or a C. Research into this mathematical imbalance shows a zero on a single assignment can leave a student unable to recover and ultimately fail a course. The push to ban zeros took off in the early 2000s, when educators and school administrators began rethinking grading practices to better reflect learning and how to help struggling students recover. Stopping teachers from giving grades below a certain number also promised consistency. Teachers grade so differently that one missing assignment might barely dent one student’s grade and cause another to fail a class. The goal was to keep one rough week from defining a semester. Critics see grade floors differently. A student who skips an assignment still collects 50 points, so the policy hands out credit for work that doesn’t exist. It also hides missing work. On a report card, a 50 may look like a struggling attempt, when nothing was ever turned in. Teachers remain divided over assigning grade minimums, and districts continue to wrestle with the trade-offs between helping students recover and grade inflation. The evidence is mixed on whether letting teachers give zeros actually helps students. Some studies find that minimum grades keep struggling students from giving up and are linked to higher graduation rates. Others find they prop up grades that no longer reflect learning. In my view, grade floors and the new South Carolina ban both treat the symptom, which is students struggling academically, without addressing the cause of the problem. A 2024 analysis calls grade floors a “band-aid on a wound that never heals.” So while South Carolina has banned the band-aid, the actual wound - meaning the underlying grading system and the way traditional percentage grading is structured - remains. My research points to three changes that could help address this bigger challenge of unfair grading systems. The first is reaching agreement on what a grade means. In many schools, a B in one classroom reflects only what a student learned, while a B in another class also counts homework habits. When teachers, parents and administrators disagree about a grade’s purpose, identical work earns different marks. Schools can settle it in writing, stating that grades report learning, not compliance. Second, schools can grade students’ work habits, like effort, participation and punctuality, separately from academics. My research finds that blending the two can move a final course grade by a full letter. Third, schools can swap the 100-point scale for a simpler four- or five-level scale, where a zero is just the lowest level rather than a 60-point hole. On this smaller scale, no grade floor or ban is needed. South Carolina is the first state to allow teachers to give a zero to a student, but it likely won’t be the last. In North Carolina, there are already calls to follow South Carolina’s lead. A majority of voters in the state show support for this switch. And in Texas, a state law since 2009 has protected teachers who record the grade a student earned - even if it is zero. (AP)



Ariana Grande arrives at the 31st Annual Critics Choice Awards on Sunday, Jan. 4, 2026, at The Barker Hanger in Santa Monica, Calif. (AP)

Fans fuel Ariana’s social impact

Grande’s foundation sets a new standard for giving

NEW YORK, July 28, (AP): For years, pop star Ariana Grande gave away money, mostly quietly and without much structure. There were annual gifts to England’s Royal Manchester Children’s Hospital. Sometimes a night’s performance proceeds were handed to nonprofit groups. She anonymously funded a holiday gift drive for transgender young people in addition to launching a \$3 million fundraising event for transgender youths in 2022. Now those scattered acts of giving have a name and a public face: the Brighter Days Ahead Foundation. Launched in May, it will focus on causes Grande has advocated for in the past, including LGBTQ+ rights, reproductive health, immigrant rights, and mental health. Grande is doing this at a moment when philanthropic support for these causes is eroding, said Shauna Nep, Grande’s philanthropic adviser. “We’re seeing the support for the kinds of issues she cares about going down drastically and the attacks going up aggressively,” Nep said. This summer, Grande is using her Eternal Sunshine Tour to fund and promote the foundation, highlighting national and local nonprofits at each tour stop. Names of her grantee organizations are shown on screens in the center of the arena during the pre-show countdown. And fans who donate to the nonprofit can enter a sweepstake for a chance to win a trip to see her final tour date in London. “The fan experience is still completely intact,” Nep said. “We’re meeting them where they are instead of taking them away from anything.” Tour funds will be split among the featured local organizations, though none have been distributed yet. The grants announced so far have come entirely from Grande’s personal giving, a foundation spokesperson said. In many ways, Grande, who also starred in the “Wicked” movies, is following in the footsteps of earlier generations of entertainers who lent their names to once controversial causes like HIV/AIDS and created their own foundations to help move large sums of money. But today, celebrities’ platforms are larger than ever, giving them even more sway, noted Genevieve Shaker, who teaches courses on celebrity philanthropy and fundraising leadership at Indiana University’s Lilly School of Philanthropy. “In the past, prior to social media, celebrities might be more dependent on traditional media to share stories about what they’re doing,” she said. “Now they have their own kind of media empire where they can leverage lots of channels to communicate, including about philanthropy and causes and nonprofits.” Trans Lifeline, which runs a crisis hotline for transgender people, is one of the nonprofits Grande has supported. The group has received \$125,000 total - \$75,000 in emergency funding last June and \$50,000 when the foundation formally launched in May. The money helped Trans Lifeline relaunch a microgrants program that distributed \$100,000 directly to trans people across the country in partnership with five grassroots organizations, said Dante Alviar Horton, its executive director. Some of the funding also went toward improving benefits for the organization’s direct service crisis workers. Trans Lifeline relies almost entirely on individual donors. Visibility gained from celebrity supporters has helped sustain the group, Alviar Horton said. He pointed to Trans Lifeline’s recent collaboration with designer Conner Ives on the “Protect the Dolls” T-shirt campaign, which raised more than \$500,000 after celebrities like Pedro Pascal began wearing the shirts publicly. “I was grateful that there were people in the celebrity sphere that cared enough to be like, ‘This matters,’” Alviar Horton said. Celebrity philanthropy has often been dismissed as image management, allowing entertainers to have red carpet moments without putting much money or thought behind their advocacy efforts. Grande resisted creating a formal foundation for years for exactly that reason, Nep said. “She does not want anyone to think that she thinks of herself as a philanthropist,” Nep said. “You know she’s an artist.” However, Nep, who has worked with the singer since 2018, encouraged Grande to formalize her giving so she could strategically move money to nonprofit groups and more easily collaborate with funding partners. Grande’s Brighter Days Ahead Foundation is a fiscally sponsored project of the Entertainment Industry Foundation, a public charity established in 1942 to support Hollywood’s philanthropic efforts. It allows celebrities, including Charlize Theron and Olivia Rodrigo, to easily create nonprofits to raise and distribute funds. The largest of her foundation’s four funds is “Protect and Defend,” which supports organizations doing legal and legislative work for transgender youths, immigrants, and reproductive rights.

Infants actually prefer listening to parentese over regular adult speech

Is baby talk bad? Why ‘parentese’ actually helps babies learn language

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

By Karen Stollzow
University of Colorado Boulder, Griffith University

Many parents have heard the warning: Don't use baby talk with babies and toddlers. Instead, caregivers are often encouraged to speak properly and use adultlike language, out of concern that simplified speech could confuse children or delay language development.

But my research, which I highlighted in my new book, "Beyond Words," suggests the opposite is true. The sing-song voice many adults instinctively use with infants, sometimes called "baby talk" but more accurately known as "parentese" or infant-directed speech, actually helps children learn language.

Far from confusing babies, exaggerating phrases like "Looook at the doggie!" capture their attention, help them detect patterns in speech and strengthen social bonding.

And the funny mistakes children make along the way, such as saying "goed," instead of "went," or "mouses" instead of "mice," are not signs

that children are learning language incorrectly. They are evidence that children are actively working out the rules of language for themselves.

When many people think of baby talk, they imagine nonsense phrases like "goo goo ga ga" or made-up words like "num nums." But that's not what linguists and developmental psychologists mean by parentese.

Parentese uses real words and grammatically correct sentences, but with exaggerated intonation, a higher pitch, stretched-out vowels and a slower rhythm. Think of the way a caregiver might naturally say: "Hi, baaaaby! Are you huuungryy?"

There is little evidence that occasional playful nonsense words harm children's language development. But studies suggest that parentese in particular helps babies pay attention to speech, recognize patterns and engage socially.

Adults across cultures tend to speak this way to infants instinctively. Even people who swear they never use baby talk often slip into it around babies.

Researchers have found that infants actually prefer listening to parentese over regular adult speech. The exaggerated sounds and slower pacing make language easier to process. Babies are better able to pick

out individual sounds, notice word boundaries and recognize patterns. In other words, parentese helps tune babies into language.

It also strengthens emotional connection. Language learning does not happen in isolation. Babies learn through warm, responsive interaction with caregivers during feeding, play, bath time and everyday routines.

Interestingly, humans are not the only ones who respond to this style of communication. Studies have even shown that cats react more positively when people use a baby-talk voice with them.

Children do not learn language simply by copying adults word for word. They actively test hypotheses about how language works. That is why toddlers make predictable and surprisingly logical mistakes.

One common example is overgeneralization. A child learns that people form the past tense of many verbs by adding "-ed," so they produce forms like "goed," "eated" or "comed."

These are not random errors. In fact, they show that the child has understood a grammatical rule and is trying to apply it consistently. The problem is simply that English is full of irregular exceptions. The same thing happens with plurals. Children

may say "foots" instead of "feet" or "mouses" instead of "mice." Again, the logic behind these errors is sound.

Linguists sometimes say that children are little scientists, constantly testing patterns and revising their understanding as they receive more input from the world around them.

Young children also make predictable mistakes with meaning.

A toddler might learn the word "dog" and then use it for every four-legged animal they encounter. Linguists call this overextension. On the flip side, some children use words too narrowly. A child may use "dog" only for the family pet and not recognize that other dogs belong in the same category. Linguists call this tendency underextension.

These mistakes reveal how children organize and categorize the world around them. They are gradually mapping words onto objects, people and experiences.

Pronouns are another tricky area. Small children often confuse "me" and "you" because these words constantly shift depending on who is speaking. If a parent says, "I'll pick you up," the child hears themselves called "you." But when they try to repeat the sentence, they may not

yet understand that the labels switch from speaker to speaker.

This is why toddlers sometimes say things that sound unintentionally cute or confusing. But beneath the confusion is a sophisticated learning process.

Children's speech errors are so recognizable that they often appear in popular culture. Sesame Street's character Cookie Monster famously says things like "Me want cookie," while Elmo often refers to himself in the third person: "Elmo wants this." These speech patterns mirror real stages of child language development. Young children commonly confuse pronouns or refer to themselves by name before mastering forms like "I," "me" and "mine."

Despite occasional complaints from adults, there is no evidence that hearing this kind of speech harms children's language development. If anything, it reflects the natural experimentation children go through.

Pronunciation develops gradually too. Young children often simplify difficult sounds and groups of consonants. "Spaghetti" becomes "pasketti," "rabbit" becomes "wabbit" and "yellow" may come out as "lellow."

Speech-language specialists call these simplifications phonological processes. They are a normal part of

development because some sounds are physically harder to produce than others. Sounds such as r, th, sh and ch tend to develop later because they require more precise control of the tongue and mouth.

Most children naturally outgrow these pronunciation patterns as their speech matures. However, persistent difficulties can sometimes signal a speech or language disorder, which may require professional support.

Parents are often under enormous pressure to do everything right, including helping their children learn to speak a language. But children do not learn language by avoiding mistakes. They learn through interaction, experimentation and repetition.

Parentese helps babies focus on speech and engage socially. The funny mistakes toddlers make reveal that they are actively piecing together the complex system of language and are often signs of normal development. Language acquisition is messy, creative and remarkably sophisticated.

Speaking in an exaggerated sing-song voice to a baby is not something parents and caregivers need to feel embarrassed about.

Far from harming language acquisition, it may help lay the foundation for it. (AP)



Rubble set on fire as health and frontline workers protest at the Elikyia Ebola Treatment Center in Bunia, Congo, on July 25. (AP)

Ebola cases in Congo top 3,200, nearing record of the country's worst outbreak

BUNIA, Congo, July 28, (AP): Confirmed cases in Congo's ongoing Ebola outbreak have reached 3,262, its Ministry of Health said in an overnight update, nearly the same as the 2018-2020 outbreak that is the largest ever recorded in the country.

Data from the Congolese health ministry showed that 1,437 patients have died out of the 3,262 cases, in what officials have said is the fastest Ebola outbreak on record, concentrated in the eastern Ituri province.

The 2018-2020 outbreak that was recorded in Congo and neighboring Uganda lasted roughly two years, with more than 3,400 reported cases, including over 2,200 deaths, according to the US Centers for Disease Control.

Only the 2014-2016 outbreak across West Africa, considered the worst in history, had a higher toll with 28,000 cases and more than 11,000 deaths.

The speed of transmission in the current outbreak comes amid concerns from residents that many communities in the affected provinces are either un-

reachable or have been abandoned by responders in recent days over safety concerns amid attacks from angry residents and rebels.

"The fact that, in just 10 weeks, we have reached nearly the same number of cases recorded over an almost two-year outbreak is alarming and should stop us in our tracks," Onesphore Bangenza, Mercy Corps response team lead in Bunia, Ituri's capital, said Tuesday.

"There is no doubt that the virus is moving faster than we can contain it," Bangenza added.

The ongoing outbreak, which was declared on May 15, is unlike most previous Ebola outbreaks because the Bundibugyo virus responsible for it has no approved vaccines or treatments.

Efforts to slow the transmission have been challenged by rebel violence in eastern Congo as well as health workers striking to protest the nonpayment of their wages.

The outbreak continues to spread faster than health officials can track

despite an expanding response. A key challenge is that patient zero has yet to be identified in the outbreak while displacement from armed conflict and illegal mining in the region have made it difficult to trace thousands who have come in contact with infected individuals.

Despite distrust between communities and health workers mostly seen at the early stages of the outbreak, signs of progress have emerged.

"We can never again wage war against the Ebola teams. We have lost members of our families. As a community, we have a vested interest in fighting Ebola to return to normal life," said Fabrice Mumbesa, a resident of Mongbwalu, a mining town at the center of the outbreak where residents previously burned down several treatment centers.

The strike comes a day after Congo's Prime Minister Judith Suminwa came to Ituri, touring major treatment hubs, in Rwampara and Mongbwalu, to assess the outbreak response.



Gulls follow a shrimp fishing boat as crewmen haul in their catch in the Gulf of Maine on Jan 6, 2012 file photo. (AP)

NOAA report finds Gulf of Maine warming slowed for now, ecosystem remains unstable

WASHINGTON, July 28, (AP): Maine's fishing ports are doing well for now, but climate change is destabilizing the Gulf of Maine, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's latest "State of the Ecosystem" report for New England waters. Federal scientists presented the report to the New England Fishery Management Council in April, and published it online last week.

They found that some Maine fishing ports are growing busier, likely driven by the high price of lobster. Stonington, Harpswell and Friendship all see more activity now than they did roughly 20 years ago.

And 2025, like 2024, offered slightly cooler water temperatures after more than a decade of rapid and record-breaking warming in the Gulf of Maine. But the scientists predict that temperatures will warm again this fall, and will continue to rise long-term as the burning of fossil fuels releases greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

To weather these ongoing changes, fishermen and their communities need to diversify their businesses, experts say.

"Things don't look particularly stable either in terms of the fishery or the ecosystem," said Joseph Caracappa, a research biologist at NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center who edited the report. "We're seeing big changes that are sweeping across

the ecology of the system and fisheries. Even socially, culturally — how communities are structured, where people are fishing, who's actually doing the fishing."

This annual report includes contributions from more than 100 scientists across the Northeast. NOAA has had to make do with fewer resources as the federal government's priorities have changed under the second Trump administration, but otherwise the report has been prepared and published as usual, Caracappa said. And in fact, this latest report debuted a new section dedicated to forecasting ocean conditions in the year ahead.

That could help the report's intended audience of fisheries managers navigate an uncertain future, said Michelle Bachman, a senior fishery analyst at the New England Fishery Management Council, which gives federal officials recommended management plans for fisheries in the region's federal waters.

Bachman said that when she began working at the council in 2008, she and her colleagues did not talk about climate change. That's now changed, in part thanks to these reports from NOAA, which have been published annually for about 10 years.

"Everything is changing, and in ways that we don't totally understand," she said. "And we need to be ready to respond to a dynamic system, as opposed to acting like we're

managing something that's static."

That volatility is apparent in the ocean temperatures off of Maine's coast.

Around 2012, the region suffered a major marine heatwave. In 2015, researchers published a now-famous study showing that the Gulf of Maine was warming faster than 99 percent of the ocean.

But since about 2021, those temperatures have cooled down somewhat. The Gulf of Maine is still warmer than it was historically, but compared to the most recent very warm years, now is "kind of a nice reprieve" for marine species that prefer cooler water, Bachman said.

Scientists attribute these temperature swings in large part to the competing influences of the warm Gulf Stream ocean current coming from the south and the Labrador Current coming from the north. Over the past two years, the Gulf Stream has had less of an influence on New England waters, but it appears to be coming back, according to the State of the Ecosystem report.

Temperature changes are scrambling where different species live. Warming temperatures have contributed to the decline of cod in this region. The 2012 marine heatwave led to the collapse of the Northern shrimp fishery. Southern New England has largely lost its lobsters, while Maine gained more until very recently.

What living in one of the world's hottest towns feels like

BANDA, India, July 28, (AP): Heat at all hours, even in the middle of the night. Long stretches without electricity, meaning some homes can't even use basic fans. And a constant search for relief, like being hosed down with water or sleeping outside.

For many residents of Banda, a town in northern India that has recorded some of the country's highest temperatures, just getting through each day is a challenge.

Global warming, caused mostly by the burning of fuels like gas, oil and coal, is making heat waves across India more frequent and intense. Uttar Pradesh, the state Banda is in, is among those most vulnerable to extreme heat. In 2023, at least 119 people died over several days during a severe heat wave in parts of the state.

In May, temperatures reached 48.2 Celsius (118.8 Fahrenheit), one of multiple times this year that the town recorded the country's highest temperature for the day. Banda was also the hottest spot on Earth seven times this year, most of them in April, according to climatologist and weather historian Maximiliano Herrera, who tracks global weather extremes. Since then, temperatures have dropped some but are still stifling, particularly as seasonal rains increase humidity.

In June, an Associated Press team went to Banda to report on how people try to cope with the heat throughout the day.

Munni Devi and her four sons begin work loading and unloading vegetables when most of the town is asleep.

It's only 4 a.m., but the temperature is already 30 C (86 F). Workers at Banda's vegetable market are busy unloading tomatoes, jackfruits and other vegetables and transferring them to smaller vehicles for delivery to neighborhood shops.

Devi, 70, says the heat is becoming more intense every year, and this year has been especially bad. The work is physically demanding in any weather. During a heat wave, it can be brutal. But Devi says she and her sons can't afford to miss a day.

"Everyone feels the heat, but because of our circumstances, we have to bear it," she says.

At the market, young men wheel carts through narrow lanes. Women sort vegetables on the streets. Devi says many buyers arrive early, hoping to finish shopping before temperatures soar.

Devi and her sons work from early morning until lunch, then return home to recuperate.

She says unreliable power to her home means there is little respite even there. Devi's grandchildren get sprayed down every day with a water hose to get some relief.

"If there is no power, even the ceiling fans don't work. Sometimes there is no power for hours," she says.

As the afternoon sun bakes Banda's streets, residents who can afford to stay inside do so. But some vegetable sellers and auto rickshaw drivers stay outdoors in hopes of attracting a little more business.

Meanwhile, 70-year-old animal lover Shobharam Kashyap is busy making wooden birdhouses at a workshop in his home.

Kashyap says he and other volunteers have installed over 15,000 birdhouses across the town to give birds respite from an increasingly harsh environment.

Kashyap's brightly painted birdhouses - many of which are painted green as he says birds seem to prefer that color - have been mounted on trees and walls

across Banda.

He has also placed clay water bowls in and near his home to give birds a place for a dip or drink.

Kashyap says he is continuing traditional practices of caring for other animals.

"Our culture has long encouraged feeding birds. Women visiting temples traditionally offer rice. Neither the priest nor the deity consumes it - the birds do," he says.

Hotter days have brought more patients to the hospital in Banda, one of the bigger medical centers in this region. Those with heat maladies, ranging from fainting to heatstroke, tend to come in the afternoon and evening, filling the corridors and wards.

Patients sit shoulder-to-shoulder on benches. Relatives fan family members with sheets of paper. Hospital staff move between beds carrying intravenous fluids.

Dr. Abhishek Pranayami, the hospital's head doctor, says the hospital sees a surge of patients every summer, "and the number of patients is increasing every year."

He says they are treating large numbers of people suffering from dehydration, diarrhea, vomiting and abdominal pain - illnesses that become more common as temperatures rise. Some patients recover within days. Others take longer.



Children gather around a mobile phone as local residents rest at a railway station to escape the heat in Banda, northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh on June 20. (AP)

Pogacar’s Tour dominance marks new cycling era

Slovenian could become the best of all time in years ahead

PARIS, July 28, (AP): Tadej Pogacar’s record-equaling fifth Tour de France title puts him among the greatest cyclists in the sport, and he could become the best of all in years to come.

After Sunday’s 21st and final stage in Paris, the 27-year-old Slovenian joined Belgian Eddy Merckx, Spaniard Miguel Indurain, and Frenchmen Jacques Anquetil and Bernard Hinault as the only riders to win five Tour titles.

Pogacar finished 6 minutes, 26 seconds ahead of Belgian rider Remco Evenepoel, a time trial great, in the overall standings.

Jonas Vingegaard, who was once Pogacar’s big rival, crashed out of the race on the 15th stage. Vingegaard, a former fish factory worker from Denmark, won the Tour in 2022 and ‘23. For his second title, he beat Pogacar by more than seven minutes in a result that put them level at 2-2 for Tour titles.

Pogacar has since won the Tour three straight times. Vingegaard, despite clinching the Spanish Vuelta last September and the Giro d’Italia earlier this year, barely mustered a challenge at this Tour. He did briefly wear the yellow jersey, but that was thanks to a team effort after Visma-Lease a Bike team won the opening-day team time trial in Barcelona.

Pogacar won five stages and now has 26 overall. He still needs 10 stage wins to break Mark Cavendish’s Tour record of 35. That may take two years given that Pogacar’s best in a single edition is six, during the 2024 Tour.

Vingegaard is 29 and has time to win more Tours, but needs to find a way to challenge Pogacar again in the high climbs.

Otherwise, the list of contenders is slim.

Paul Seixas carries the renewed



Slovenia’s Tadej Pogacar, wearing the overall leader’s yellow jersey, celebrates on the podium after winning the Tour de France cycling race alongside Belgium’s Remco Evenepoel, second, and Mexico’s Isaac Del Toro, third, in Paris. (AP)

hopes of French supporters, 41 years after the last of Hinault’s wins. The 19-year-old Seixas placed fourth on his Tour debut and fellow Frenchman Lenny Martinez, who is an excellent climber, placed fifth overall.

Both are riders of the future.

Martinez, 23, blew the chance of a stage win on the iconic Alpe d’Huez when he didn’t work properly with Richard Carapaz to distance Pogacar lower down the climb.

Carapaz won two mountain stages but the 33-year-old Ecuadorian was not a threat for the title and Pogacar didn’t need to chase him. The 2019 Giro d’Italia winner is an attacking rider, but advancing years - and the fact he placed 20 minutes behind Pogacar overall - diminish the challenge he poses to Pogacar in future.

Only the 26-year-old Evenepoel appears to have an outside chance of toppling Pogacar. The two-time

Olympic champion can beat Pogacar in time trials and is young enough to improve in the mountains. He rode well to win the 15th stage, albeit after Vingegaard had crashed.

He is part of an ambitious Red Bull-Bora-Hansgrohe team which has big financial backing and could yet build a winning team around him. However, the team must decide who to back as No. 1 rider between Evenepoel and German climber Flo-

rian Lipowitz, who was third on last year’s Tour.

Pogacar’s UAE Team Emirates teammate Isaac Del Toro, a 22-year-old Mexican making his Tour debut, placed third overall but remains under Pogacar’s wing as his elite support rider.

It has been a great year for Pogacar.

He won stage races at the Tour de Suisse and the Tour de Romandie, as

well as stunning victories in one-day classics.

Pogacar won the Giro d’Italia by a huge margin in 2024.

But unlike Vingegaard, Hinault, Anquetil, and Merckx, he has not won the Spanish Vuelta for a hat trick of Grand Tours wins.

“Will I be at La Vuelta in a few weeks?” Pogacar said teasingly on Sunday. “Let’s see.”

This year’s race made headlines when Pogacar and Vingegaard had unannounced anti-doping tests in the early hours: 5 a.m. for Pogacar and 2 a.m. for Vingegaard.

Some fans were outraged, and Evenepoel described the timing as “very disrespectful” to riders during an exhausting race.

Pogacar suggested fatigue may have played a factor in Vingegaard’s crash later that day. However, Pogacar later accepted that random-hour testing helps improve transparency.

Cycling’s governing body, the UCI, has entrusted Tour testing since 2021 to the Swiss-based International Testing Agency, which said correct procedures were followed.

The sport’s reputation was badly hit when Lance Armstrong was stripped of his seven Tour titles (1999-2005) after confessing in 2013 to having used performance-enhancing drugs. Two years later, a 227-page report detailed cycling’s historic culture of drug use.

British rider Chris Froome, who won the Tour four times (2013 and 2015-17) when trust in cycling overall was very low following the Armstrong scandal, said he agreed with the early-morning tests.

“It is something that, as riders, I just think we have to embrace,” he said in an interview with British newspaper The Telegraph. “Our doors always have to be open, regardless of how inconvenient it is ... to inspire confidence and to act as a deterrent.”

UCLA star joins elite group as 20th award winner

Honda Cup marks 50 years of excellence

NEW YORK, July 28, (AP): Ann Meyers Drysdale felt nostalgic spending the day with so many other Honda Cup award winners, including fellow UCLA Bruins great Jackie Joyner-Kersey.

The award, given annually to the top female college athlete, celebrated its 50th anniversary on Monday. The best player in every sport is invited to the ceremony each year.

“When you’re a young college athlete, you don’t understand the importance of it,” said Meyers Drysdale, who starred in basketball at UCLA and won the award in its second year in 1978. “There’s so many basketball players, which is, you know, pretty exciting. But just the great athletes from all the different sports, I think that’s what I’m appreciative of the Honda Awards, that they recognize so many athletes from so many different sports.”

Out of all the individual sport winners, an overall Athlete of the Year is chosen to receive the Honda Cup. In addition to athletic performance, the award honors college athletes for their leadership, academics and community service.

“It’s great that it honors more than just what is done on the court or field,” said Jen Rizzotti, who won the award in 1996 after a successful basketball career at UConn. “They make sure that they’re well-rounded and have a balanced portfolio. They give back in the community, they’re great in the classroom.”

Delta State basketball great Lusia Harris won the first Honda Cup in 1977. UCLA’s Lauren Betts became the 20th basketball player crowned as the top athlete Monday night. That’s more than any other sport.

“To receive an honor like this - the highest award you could possibly receive - is pretty unbelievable,” Betts said. “All the women that have come



In this file photo, UCLA center Lauren Betts (51) during the second half of the women’s National Championship Final Four NCAA college basketball tournament game against South Carolina in Phoenix. (AP)

through and won this award is incredible.”

The Bruins have the most Honda Cup champions with seven.

“That’s crazy when you say that,” Betts said of UCLA’s success winning the award. “I think I’m representing something bigger than myself.”

Bruins’ softball star Rachel Garcia won it twice. That’s only been three other times with Maya Moore, Caitlin Clark and Florida swimmer Tracy Caulkins.

“I think it’s pretty unbelievable. To receive an honor is, like, the highest award you could possibly receive. I mean, the legacy that it’s left throughout the years. I mean, it goes back 50 years now, which is pretty unbelievable,” Betts said. “And, you know, all the alumni have come through and won these awards. I mean, I just I can’t even describe how amazing it is. I’m just super grateful.”

Tennessee star Chamique Hold-sclaw won the award in 1998. She loved the chance to get to know so many athletes from other sports.

“It exposed me to different things and to people playing different sports,” Hold-sclaw said. “I was learning about things like women’s lacrosse and growing up in New York City and playing at Tennessee we didn’t have that. I think it was great that the award recognized greatness in every sport.”

The award ceremony has come a long way from the first in 1977. Missy Marlowe won the Honda Cup in 1992 after a successful gymnastics career at Utah. That came after competing in the Olympics in 1988. Marlowe remembered receiving the Honda Cup at an NCAA convention back in the day.

After a 12-year run in Los Angeles, the award ceremony moved to New York in 2024 and has been there ever since.

“It’s inspiring. It’s a really neat break from reality to remember what we used to do a long time ago,” Marlowe said. “To see this this tradition continue for 50 years is incredible because it’s easy to start something and have it go for a while and then kind of die off. So the determination and the work that’s gone into keeping this so prevalent for 50 years, and in fact, gain in importance, is amazing.”

Julie Shea was the first non-basketball winner of the Honda Cup after a stellar track career at N.C. State. She was honored to be back and see all the positive changes for women’s athletics with many players making money for their name, image and likeness.

“I sold programs and popcorn and peanuts at the football games,” Shea recalled. “I’m happy for them. But I’m like, hey, you know, I just was born in the wrong era.”

Shea was one of 20 former winners who took part in the ceremony in New York on Monday.

“That’s what’s great about the Honda Cup and what college women’s sports is all about is bringing people together,” Joyner said. “Being able to see some of the people winning and them seeing us, not even born when we were doing what we were doing.”

Joyner-Kersey won the award in 1985. She was an inspiration to Stanford volleyball player Ogonna Nnamani (2005). Nnamani, who suffered from asthma when she was an athlete, saw Joyner-Kersey succeed in the Olympics while also being afflicted with the same thing. Nnamani said that if Joyner-Kersey could do it she could too.

“I got to tell her that she inspired me because of what she was able to do,” said Nnamani, who is a doctor now.



FIA President Mohammed Ben Sulayem and Hungarian Prime Minister Péter Magyar with officials in a group photo.

Talks include mobility

FIA and Hungary expand motorsport partnership

BUDAPEST, July 28: The Hungarian circuit hosted discussions focused on enhancing cooperation between Hungary and the FIA (International Automobile Federation) in the areas of motorsport development and sustainable mobility, as the venue celebrates the 40th anniversary of staging its first Formula 1 World Championship race.

The talks took place during a meeting between FIA President Mohammed Ben Sulayem and Hungarian Prime Minister Péter Magyar on the sidelines of the Hungarian Grand Prix, with both sides highlighting the importance of road safety initiatives and innovation.

The meeting explored how mo-

torsport can contribute to boosting tourism, attracting investment, and strengthening the international profile of countries hosting major sporting events.

Discussions also covered the FIA’s mobility programs, including efforts to improve road safety and assist decision-makers through research and data-based solutions.

Ben Sulayem stressed the federation’s commitment to collaborating with partners worldwide to create safer and more sustainable transport systems, while reaffirming support for Hungary’s “Vision Zero” initiative, which aims to eliminate road fatalities and serious injuries caused by traffic accidents by 2050.

Best of the Rest

Gvardiol signs contract extension to 2031: Josko Gvardiol has signed a new five-year contract at Manchester City until 2031.

The Croatia defender joined City in 2023 and had two years remaining on his deal at the Etihad Stadium.

“As soon as I knew City wanted to renew my contract, I felt straight away it was what I wanted,” Gvardiol said. “It’s the best club in the world to be at.

“The players we have here are amazing. This is a world-class squad that is young and full of potential. I truly believe we will have a lot of success in the coming years.”

The 24-year-old Gvardiol joined City from Leipzig for 90 million euros (\$99.2 million), ranking him among the most expensive defenders in soccer history. He has won five major trophies including the Premier League title and FA Cup during his time at the club. (AP)

□ □ □

González and Gotham FC agree to part ways: Esther González and Gotham FC have agreed to mutually terminate her contract so the Spanish forward can focus on personal matters in Spain.

Gonzalez, who won the 2023 Women’s World Cup with Spain, was Gotham’s leading scorer this season with six goals.

The 33-year-old González also has a team-high 30 regular-season goals since joining Gotham in August 2023. During her tenure, Gotham has won a pair of NWSL championships and a CONCACAF W Champions Cup.

“This journey has surpassed every expectation I had when I first came to Gotham. Together we achieved everything there is to achieve, and I will forever be proud to say that with this club, I won it all,” González said in a statement. “But beyond the trophies, Gotham is the place where I grew in so many ways - as a player, as a professional and, most importantly, as a person. And it is here, in New Jersey, where my family grew, too. I carry so many incredible memories with me, but I know that every time I think of this club, I will do so with a smile on my face.” (AP)

Besiktas halts Salah talks over financial demands

ISTANBUL, July 28: Turkish giant Besiktas has temporarily paused negotiations with Egyptian superstar Mohamed Salah after financial issues stalled a potential move, despite talks reportedly reaching an advanced stage.

Besiktas sporting director Onder Ozen revealed that the club approached Salah after his departure from Liverpool, conducting an assessment of the deal’s economic impact and potential commercial benefits before formally entering discussions, according to the Anadolu Agency.

Salah had been strongly linked with a switch to the Istanbul club in recent weeks, with reports claiming Besiktas offered the 34-year-old a contract running until 2027, with an option for an additional year, including a salary of around €12 million.

“We contacted one of the biggest



Egyptian superstar Mohamed Salah during a soccer match.

stars in world football, Mohamed Salah, and studied the possible financial returns of the deal. After determining that it would benefit the club, we began negotiations,” Ozen said.

He added that Besiktas held three meetings with Salah and that talks progressed positively before reaching the financial details.

“Salah is a global star and a respected athlete. Everything was moving smoothly until discussions turned to financial matters on July 21, when the pace of negotiations slowed,” Ozen explained.

The Besiktas official said additional demands later emerged that complicated the talks, suggesting that Salah himself may not have been aware of all the details, as players are not usually directly involved in such negotiations.

Brazil’s Marcos Oliveira appointed as head coach

Sawan to stay with Kuwait Club for final ‘Season of Loyalty’

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

KUWAIT CITY, July 28: Kuwait Club handball star Mishari Sawan has decided to extend his stay with the team for another season, confirming that the upcoming campaign will be his final year with the club, which he has dedicated as his “Season of Loyalty.”

Sawan announced his decision

through a post on his official X account, saying it came after careful consideration and amid mixed emotions. He added that the move was also driven by the strong desire of the Kuwait Club board, led by Khalid Al-Ghanim, while describing the club as his “second home.”

The experienced player expressed his ambition to help Kuwait Club achieve further success

and add more trophies during his final season, hoping to conclude his long journey with the team in a way that matches the club’s legacy.

Sawan highlighted his 15-year spell with Kuwait Club’s handball team, during which he collected numerous domestic titles, as well as a Gulf championship, an Asian crown, and two Arab titles.

He also extended his appreciation to honorary president Mar-

zouq Al-Ghanim, current chairman Khalid Al-Ghanim, and all coaches, administrators, and teammates who supported him throughout his career with the Kifan-based club.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Club has appointed Brazilian coach Marcos Oliveira “Tata” as head coach of the first team for the new season, aiming to strengthen its challenge for domestic and international honors.

The club selected Oliveira after reviewing several coaching candidates, with the Brazilian earning the position due to his technical expertise and coaching experience.

Kuwait Club has also renewed the contract of Montenegrin professional Vladan Lipovina and is nearing an agreement with Bahrain international Mohammed Habib to complete its foreign player lineup.



Mishari Sawan

IFAB confirms VAR error in Embolo ‘controversial’ World Cup red card

‘Mistaken identity cases not eligible for that type of incident’

GENEVA, July 28: (AP): Soccer’s law-making panel clarified its guidance to referees which confirmed Switzerland forward Breel Embolo should not have been sent off in the World Cup quarterfinals against Argentina.

Embolo’s second yellow card, after a video review for simulating being fouled, changed the momentum of the game in the 72nd minute soon after Switzerland tied the score at 1-1.

Argentina won 3-1 in extra time with help from the red-card decision that fueled complaints, including from previous opponent Egypt, referees were favoring Lionel Messi’s team with decisions.

The FIFA-backed rules panel known as IFAB published a clarification Monday that VAR protocol for “mistaken identity” cases was not eligible for that type of incident at the World Cup, though it could be in future competitions.

“However, it may not be used as such until that review is concluded,” the Zurich-based IFAB said in a statement.

Embolo fell to the ground on being challenged by Argentina midfielder Leandro Paredes, who was shown a yellow card.

The VAR officials alerted the referee to the fact Paredes did not commit a foul and instead Embolo was shown a yellow, his second, and was sent off.

That is not how “mistaken Identity” is currently meant to be applied, which is to correct the referee when a card is shown to the wrong player who did not commit the original foul penalized.

“The referee made the wrong decision,” Switzerland coach Murat Yakin said after the game in Kansas City. “I know they will



Referee Joao Pinheiro, of Portugal, gives a red card to Switzerland’s Breel Embolo (7), left, during the World Cup quarterfinal soccer match between Argentina and Switzerland in Kansas City, Mo. (AP)

protect their referee but this rule destroyed our game today, and it’s very painful, and to be eliminated in that way hurts a lot.”

IFAB clarified the card “can only be reviewed to identify the player who committed the offense that was penalized; the offense itself cannot be reviewed/changed.”

A review of VAR protocol has been ongoing since March and IFAB acknowledged that incidents like Embolo’s are part of it.

The use of the mistaken identity clause to deal with simulation during the FIFA World Cup 2026 was well received,” the Zurich-based group said.

IFAB is composed of FIFA-appointed officials and the four British soccer federations. Its annual meeting is each February or March to update The Laws of the

Game that take effect for major tournaments or the next season.

The IFAB clarity was praised as “welcome explanations” on Tuesday by UEFA, which has hosted referee bosses from each of its 55 member federations to reset their decision-making principles for the new season.

“VAR is not meant to re-referee the game,” UEFA stressed, stating the need for shorter video reviews and a lighter touch for intervening.

FIFA’s overall VAR strategy for the World Cup was praised following a frustrating season of video reviews, particularly in the Premier League.

“Lengthy, micro scoping reviews are often a symptom revealing that the decision on the field was not clearly and obviously incorrect, and should therefore

be limited,” UEFA said, setting a standard for intervention at “when a referee decision is blatantly incorrect or when the referee has missed a clear incident.”

UEFA also encouraged the crackdown on time-wasting in games agreed by IFAB in March and enforced by FIFA at the World Cup.

“Referees will be instructed to strictly and consistently enforce the new rules,” said UEFA.

UEFA will this season organize men’s and women’s club competitions including the Champions League, plus national-team games in the men’s Nations League and qualifying for the 2028 European Championship, and qualifying playoffs for the 2027 Women’s World Cup.

Ranieri takes technical director role following Maldini exit

Euro 2020 winning coach Mancini returns to rescue Italy after 3rd straight World Cup miss

MILAN, July 28, (AP): Roberto Mancini has once again been tasked with revitalizing an Italy team in crisis, almost exactly three years after he bolted on the national team.

Italian soccer federation president Giovanni Malagò announced Mancini as the new Italy coach on Tuesday, adding that Claudio Ranieri will become the new technical director after Paolo Maldini stepped down the previous day - just 16 days after being appointed.

“Time was running out ... I believed the person who should become the new coach of Italy is Roberto Mancini, for a whole list of reasons,” Malagò said. “There will be a press conference tomorrow with both Claudio Ranieri and Roberto Mancini.”

The 61-year-old Mancini led the Azzurri to the European Championship title in 2021 but shockingly resigned as Italy coach in August 2023, taking over Saudi Arabia’s national team two weeks later.

“It is clear that all the necessary assessments have been made,” Malagò said when asked about Mancini’s sudden departure three years ago. “I certainly took it into consideration; I am aware of his recent apologies, and obviously, everyone has made the appropriate evaluations.”

The Italian national team is in crisis after failing for a third straight time to qualify for the World Cup, prompting the resignations of FIGC president Gabriele Gravina and coach Gennaro Gattuso in April.

Mancini’s first spell as Italy coach came immediately after the team missed out on the 2018 World Cup, having lost to Sweden in a qualifying playoff.

He revived the Azzurri by adding flair and youth to a team that won admirers all over the continent during the year-delayed Euro 2020 - beating England at Wembley Stadium in a penalty shootout for the trophy.

Between 2018 and 2021, Mancini coached Italy to a world-record 37-match unbeaten run.

However, a 1-0 semifinal playoff loss to 67th-ranked North Macedonia at home in 2022 meant that the Azzurri again missed out on the World Cup.



In this file photo, Saudi Arabia’s head coach Roberto Mancini stands for the national anthems ahead of the Asian Cup Group F soccer match between Saudi Arabia and Thailand at Education City Stadium, in Al Rayyan, Qatar. (AP)

Mancini nevertheless kept his position before surprisingly quitting in August 2023. He left Saudi Arabia in 2024 and was most recently coach at Al-Sadd in Qatar, before departing last month.

Mancini also previously steered Inter Milan and Manchester City to league titles.

The appointment comes the day after Andrea Pirlo was dropped as the leading candidate for the Italy job amid political concerns over a sponsorship deal with a Russian betting firm.

That led to the departures of Maldini and special adviser Leonardo by what Malagò stressed was “mutual consent.”

“Practically before we had even started, we were dealing with a unique situation,” Malagò added. “There was no conflict. With utmost respect, like in the best families, there was a calm discussion and a clear and serene consensus that it was best to go our separate ways.”

Pep Guardiola and Carlo Ancelotti had already turned down offers to coach the Azzurri. Former Italy coach Antonio Conte was also in contention.

Italy next plays in September and October, when it will face Belgium, Turkey and France in the Nations League.

“The new coach will have two training sessions to prepare for the first game,” Malagò said. “And since the game against Bosnia, I don’t think we have given passports to Lamine Yamal, (Kylian) Mbappé and (Harry) Kane.

Djokovic, Sabalenka headline star-studded US Open mixed doubles field

NEW YORK, July 28, (AP): Top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka and 24-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic headline the initial list of 16 teams entered into the U.S. Open mixed doubles championship. The tournament was overhauled last year, with a \$1 million prize going to the winners, in an effort to get top singles players to compete. Many of those types of stars were listed among the teams announced Monday by the U.S. Tennis Association.

Iga Świątek and Casper Ruud, the runners-up in 2025, are entered again, along with Elena Rybakina and Taylor Fritz, the Japanese duo of Naomi Osaka and Kei Nishikori, and Jessica

Pegula and Jack Draper.

The main draw will be played over two days on Aug. 25-26, with all the matches set to be held in Arthur Ashe Stadium and Louis Armstrong Stadium, the two biggest venues at the U.S. Open, and televised on ESPN’s properties.

Teams can enter up until Aug. 17, when the six duos with the best combined singles rankings at the time will be automatically entered into the main draw. That means Sabalenka, the two-time defending U.S. Open women’s champion, and Djokovic, still ranked No. 5 on the men’s tour at age 39, will be safely into the field.

Eight teams will be given wild cards by the

USTA, and two other teams will play their way into the field through a qualifying tournament to be held Aug. 24. The remainder of the teams that were entered as of Monday:

Mirra Andreeva and Andrey Rublev, Belinda Bencic and Flavio Cobolli, Diana Shnaider and Daniil Medvedev, Amanda Anisimova and Learner Tien, Alex Eala and Felix Auger-Aliassime, Leylah Fernandez and Frances Tiafoe, Taylor Townsend and Alexander Zverev, Elena-Gabriela Ruse and Nuno Borges, Sara Errani and Andrea Vavassori, Katerina Siniakova and Henry Patten, and siblings Peyton Stearns and Preston Stearns.

EPL to crack down on goalkeepers ‘feigning injury’ with new trial rule

LONDON, July 28, (AP): The new Premier League season is set to trial a crackdown on goalkeepers who appear to feign injury in order to disturb the flow of the game or give time for coaches to instruct players.

The English Football Association said the move has been approved by global soccer’s rulemaking panel.

“English football has received approval from the International Football Association Board (IFAB) to introduce a new goalkeeper injury trial for the 2026-27 season as part of its ongoing commitment to maintaining the pace and flow of matches,” it said.

The trial “championed collectively” by Pro Ref, the FA, Premier League, English Football League, Women’s Super League Football and the National League, it said, “will be implemented across the men’s and women’s professional game in England and is designed to address occasions where goalkeeper injuries have been used to disrupt momentum, slow the game down or create opportunities for tactical instruction.”

The opening game of the Premier League season will see Arsenal begin its title defense at home against newly promoted Coventry on Aug. 21.

Under the trial, if a game is stopped because of a goalkeeper injury, the FA said the head coach “will be required to nominate an outfield player to leave the pitch immediately. The nominated player is required to remain off the field for a minimum of one minute after the restart of play.”

Domestic media reports said if the coach fails to nominate a player within 10 seconds of the referee indicating the goalkeeper can receive medical treatment on the field, the captain of the goalkeeper’s team will automatically be the chosen player.

The FA said the trial “will operate with a number of exceptions, including where a free kick is awarded for a foul on the goalkeeper and they immediately require treatment, the goalkeeper and an outfield player have collided and need attention, or the goalkeeper is bleeding.”

The BBC said the first game to include the trial will be the English League Cup match between Tranmere and Rochdale on Saturday.

Chicharito signed by expansion Atlético Dallas

WASHINGTON, July 28, (AP): Javier “Chicharito” Hernández, the all-time leading scorer for the Mexican national team, has signed with Atlético Dallas in the USL Championship.

Hernández is the first player signed by the expansion club, which will begin play next year in the second-tier of U.S. professional soccer, below Major League Soccer. The 38-year-old Hernández signed a two-year-deal with an option for a third year, Dallas announced .

“I believe Dallas deserves a club that reflects its passion for football, its diversity, and its future,” Hernández said in a statement. “I want to help create a winning culture, inspire young players across North Texas, and give our supporters a team they can believe in from the very beginning. I didn’t come here simply to finish my career. I came here to help build the future of football in Dallas.”

A striker, Hernández played for Mexico in three World Cups. He has scored a team high of 52 goals in 109 matches, but has not played for the national team since 2019.

His club career includes stops in the Premier League and the German Bundesliga. He played for Manchester United from 2010-14, with 37 goals in 103 appearances. More recently he played in MLS for the LA Galaxy from 2020-23, scoring 38 goals in 74 games, before spending the 2024-25 season with Guadalajara in Liga MX.

Hernández was part of the FOX broad-



In this file photo, LA Galaxy forward Javier Hernandez reacts to fans after the Galaxy defeated Nashville SC in an MLS playoff soccer match, in Carson, Calif. (AP)

cast team for the recent World Cup in the United States, Mexico and Canada, serving as an analyst.

“Javier gives us world-class quality on the field, but just as importantly he brings professionalism, accountability, and an unwavering commitment to winning. Those qualities become contagious inside a locker room, and they’re exactly what we want this club to represent from day one,” said sporting director Brian Corcoran. “His willingness to mentor, combined with the qualities he will bring on the field makes this a perfect first signing for our club.”

Cabral equalizer wins public vote for best goal

CORAL GABLES, Fla., July 28, (AP): Cape Verde made more World Cup history when Sidney Lopes Cabral won the public vote for goal of the tournament.

Lopes Cabral’s curling shot into the far top corner of the Argentina net was a stand-out moment at the World Cup where the unheralded African team made a stellar debut.

His goal tied defending champion Ar-

gentina at 2-2 in extra time of their thrilling round of 32 game in Miami Gardens. Cape Verde would eventually lose 3-2.

Lopes Cabral’s goal was voted best of the 308 goals scored at the tournament, ahead of Eldor Shomurodov’s delicate lob for Uzbekistan against Congo and Wilson Isidor of Haiti scoring with a powerful rising shot against Morocco.

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Felix Dolci of Canada, left, and teammate William Emard react after finishing first and third respectively in the Men's Horizontal Bar final of Artistic Gymnastics at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland. (AP)

Sports

‘This achievement belongs to the whole team’

Madouh finishes as top scorer at Asian Junior Handball Championship



Yousef Mohammed Madouh

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

BEIJING, July 28: Kuwait's star Yousef Mohammed Madouh capped an outstanding campaign by finishing as the top scorer of the 19th Asian Men's Junior Handball Championship in China with 68 goals, the highest tally among all players in the tournament.

The individual honor came despite Kuwait ending its campaign in fifth place after a series of competitive matches against the continent's leading teams. Although the Blue missed out on a semifinal berth and a place at the World Championship, the team earned praise for its spirited performances throughout the tournament.

ment.

Madouh's scoring crown is a major achievement for Kuwaiti handball and highlights both his clinical finishing and the work put in by the player and the coaching staff during the team's preparations. He remained a consistent attacking threat from the opening match to the final game, emerging as one of the tournament's standout performers.

The young forward credited the achievement to his teammates, saying the award reflected a collective effort rather than an individual accomplishment.

"I am very happy to finish as the tournament's top scorer, but this achievement

belongs to the whole team. My teammates played a huge role in helping me reach this number by creating scoring opportunities and supporting me throughout the competition," Madouh said.

He added that Kuwait delivered a commendable performance despite the strength of the opposition, emphasizing that every player gave everything on the court to represent the country with pride.

"The fifth-place finish does not truly reflect the level we displayed during the championship. We fought hard in every match and showed that Kuwait can compete with the best teams in Asia," he said.

Kuwait modern pentathlon team starts World Champ'ship journey

KAUNAS, Lithuania, July 28: Kuwait's national modern pentathlon team has begun its campaign at the Modern Pentathlon World Championships for the youth and U-17 categories, which got underway yesterday in Kaunas, Lithuania, and will continue until July 30.

The global event features four disciplines: fencing, obstacle course racing, swimming, and laser run (running and laser shooting).

Kuwait is represented by Nasser Abathra, Mohammed Al-Sohaibi, Sharaf Al-Ajmi, Bader Al-Sohaibi, Omar Al-Shammari, Habari Al-Thuwaini, Retaj Abdulhussein, and Farah Al-Rashidi.

President of the Kuwait Modern Pentathlon Club and Federation Nasser Al-Waleed described the participation as the most notable in the team's history, highlighting that Kuwaiti athletes will compete in most of the championship's events.

Al-Waleed said the participation reflects the continued development of Kuwait's modern pentathlon program, noting that the delegation is the largest Kuwaiti and Gulf representation ever at an international modern pentathlon competition.

He added that Mohammed Al-Sohaibi, Habari Al-Thuwaini, and Retaj Abdulhussein are preparing to represent Kuwait at the 2026 Nagoya Asian Games, further underlining the team's growing presence on the continental stage.

Kuwait suffers third consecutive defeat in U-18 Asia Cup qualifiers



Qatari player drives past Kuwaiti player during U-18 Asia Cup qualifiers match between Kuwait and Qatar.

DOHA, July 28, (KUNA): Kuwait suffered its third consecutive defeat in the GCC Zone qualifiers for the FIBA U-18 Asia Cup, losing 81-53 to host nation Qatar in Doha.

In the other fixture, Bahrain dominated Oman with a convincing 94-49 victory.

Kuwait had opened its campaign with a narrow 62-59 loss to Oman before falling heavily to Bahrain, 106-51, in its second outing.

The Blues will wrap up the first round of the tournament with a clash against Saudi Arabia at 4:00 p.m. today.

The GCC qualifiers are being held from July 25 to 30 at Al Gharafa Sports Hall in Doha, featuring five teams — Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Oman. The tournament follows a round-robin format, with the top two finishers securing places at the FIBA U-18 Asia Cup finals in India next month.



President of the Kuwait Modern Pentathlon Club and Federation Nasser Al-Waleed

FIFA's \$20 billion WC operation plan sparks fury from UEFA

GENEVA, July 28, (AP): FIFA President Gianni Infantino's plan to create a \$20 billion company running the World Cup with private investors including the Kushner family was announced Tuesday - and immediately attacked by European soccer body UEFA.

"It is not FIFA's to sell," UEFA said in a statement. "None of us are the owners of football."

Infantino's plans to form FIFA Forward Enterprise (FFE) running competitions like the World Cup and Club World Cup were first reported by The Times of London and the Financial Times.

FIFA said in a statement that FFE would raise up to \$4.2 billion later this year to help fund development programs "based on an initial equity valuation of \$20 billion by carefully selecting long-term investors who will purchase minority, non-controlling interests."

FIFA is working with J.P. Morgan while investors would include Thrive Eternal launched by Joshua Kushner, whose brother Jared Kushner is a son-in-law of U.S. President Donald Trump.

The men's World Cup that finished this month only deepened the political and personal ties between Trump and Infantino, and fueled concerns about those ties including from UEFA.

"The soul and governance of football are not assets to trade - especially with zero transparency as to who gains financially," UEFA said Tuesday, responding to the reports of selling stakes in FIFA competitions.

FIFA is currently a Swiss-based not-for-profit association of its 211 national member federations worldwide.

Those 211 members must approve any plan and would get the chance "to access up to \$20 million in one-off capital," FIFA said.

"This is about the democratization of football worldwide," Infantino said in a FIFA statement.

UEFA, however, said it took reports of the project "extremely seriously. So should every national

Football Association."

"This crosses a line that football's governing institutions should never cross," said UEFA, which comprises 55 of the FIFA members.

The project announced Tuesday is the second time in Infantino's increasingly controversial 11-year presidency he has tried to push through a multi-billion dollar deal with private backers.

In 2018, Infantino proposed a secretive \$25 billion offer over 12 years with SoftBank of Japan to create new global competitions, including an expanded men's Club World Cup, seemingly backed by Saudi Arabian money.

That ultimately failed after meeting fierce resistance from UEFA, which saw threats to its prize assets: the Champions League and the European Championship.

Infantino still built closer ties to Saudi soccer and the kingdom's Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman. Saudi Arabia will host the 2034 World Cup and largely funded the revamped men's Club World Cup hosted in the U.S. last year.

The financial success of the just-ended World Cup has looked likely to ensure Infantino is re-elected next year unopposed for a fourth and final term in office through 2031.



President Donald Trump, left, and FIFA President Gianni Infantino watch confetti fall at the conclusion of the World Cup championship final soccer match between Spain and Argentina in East Rutherford, N.J. (AP)

Zidane takes charge of France

Dream job becomes reality

PARIS, July 28, (AP): Moments after being announced as France's new coach on Tuesday, Zinedine Zidane clenched his fists and his usually measured voice trembled a little.

"I'm excited," he said. "The France team makes you dream. We have extraordinary players, an extraordinary team."

Zidane coached Real Madrid until leaving in 2021. He replaces Didier Deschamps at the helm of France team he led to glory as arguably its greatest ever player.

"I've waited five years for this chance, so that's why I'm a bit emotional," said Zidane, adding that it was the happiest day of his career as coach.

"I've always watched this side as a fan and also as a future coach, I won't hide it," Zidane added. "That's why I didn't take a club side, I told myself that the only thing I wanted to do after Madrid was taking the France team."

French Football Federation president Philippe Diallo announced Zidane's appointment at the FFF headquarters in Paris on Tuesday, saying he has been given a 4-year contract.

Diallo called the hiring of Zidane "an exceptional moment," calling Zidane "one of the legends of French soccer."

The 54-year-old Zidane could have gone to another club after leaving Madrid in 2021. But there was no way he would.

"I had some offers during the five years I was away to take charge of a club," he said. "I turned them all down for the France team. It was the only thing I wanted to do."

Zidane called it "an immense joy" taking charge.

"I have so many emotions," he said. "I am ready for the challenge."

Zidane praised Deschamps, who won the 2018 World Cup and stepped down after the recent edition, where



Zinedine Zidane, newly appointed coach of the France national soccer team, attends a media conference at the headquarters of French Football Federation headquarters in Paris. (AP)

Les Bleus lost in the semifinals to Spain.

"I will give everything so that this team can win," Zidane said. "I would also like to congratulate DD (Deschamps) for these remarkable years."

Diallo said he met Zidane for talks in February, 2025 after Deschamps said he would stand down following the 2026 World Cup. Zidane said France would play differently to how it did under Deschamps.

"What motivates me is the game, I was a No. 10, I like goals," Zidane said. "I was a leader on the field and now I want to be a leader by experience."

His first game will be away to Turkey in the Nations League on Sept. 25, followed by a match in Belgium three days later.

Home fans need to wait until Oct. 2 for a glimpse of Zidane at Stade de France, when France plays Italy, 20 years after he was sent off against Italy in the 2006 World Cup final for headbutting Italy defender Marco Materazzi.

"I've noted all of the four matches to come," Zidane said, tapping his

forehead. "Italy is special, because I played there, because I know people, because I speak Italian. All of those things."

After the announcement, Zidane greeted a large gathering of fans outside the federation headquarters and they cheered loudly when he arrived.

France lost the World Cup final on penalties in 2022 and lost the European Championship final on home soil in 2016. Some Deschamps critics, among them former France teammate Christophe Dugarry, said he should have won more with the players he had.

Deschamps described an "unbreathable atmosphere" at the end of his tenure, without detailing what the tensions were.

Zidane and Deschamps were different types of midfielders, but are forever linked by glory.

The industrious Deschamps was France's captain and the mercurial Zinedine was the creative force when France won the 1998 World Cup and Euro 2000.

Affectionately nicknamed "Zizou" his face was beamed onto the Arc de Triomphe the night France celebrat-

ed its first World Cup triumph in '98. An inspired Zidane scored two headers in the final in a 3-0 win against Brazil at Stade de France and later that year he won the Ballon d'Or.

Born in Marseille to Algerian parents, Zidane grew up playing in the estate of La Castellane, which has a giant mural of Zidane on one of its tower blocks. It was on the estate's concrete pitches where Zidane nurtured his incredible balance, to avoid falling on the rock-hard ground.

Zidane's club career took him from Cannes to Bordeaux and then to two of the world's biggest clubs: Italian giant Juventus and Madrid.

His international career began in 1994, when he scored two stunning goals against the Czech Republic after coming on as a substitute, in front of his home fans in Bordeaux.

He won league titles with Juve and Madrid and scored a brilliant volley to help Madrid win the Champions League in 2002.

With Zidane carrying an injury, France flopped at the 2002 World Cup - going out in the group stage - but reached the 2006 final after Zidane came out of international retirement.

His performance in a 1-0 victory over Brazil in the quarterfinals was Zidane at his balletic best: a hypnotic combination of drag-backs, stepovers, spins on the ball, and flicks over the shoulder.

The Brazilians were in awe and even Ronaldinho - a Ballon d'Or winner himself - seemed captivated.

His 108th and final game for France was against Italy in the final and he scored early with a deft Panenka-style penalty for his 31st, and last, international goal.

Then, with millions watching around the world, an infamous moment saw him walk back up the field and slam his forehead into Materazzi's chest, sending the tall defender flying backward.

Zidane trudged past the gold-tinted World Cup trophy as he left the field in Berlin, his international career over.