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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

IN his statement a few days ago, Finance Minister Dr. Yaqoub Al-Rifai emphasized the importance of “collecting fees from citizens.” This is the right of the state. If the previous governments failed to collect arrears, it is not the fault of the citizens. However, the extraordinary circumstances the country has been facing since the COVID-19 pandemic must be taken into account.

Since 2020, many owners of industrial and ag-

O Ministers of Finance, Commerce and Industry ... A little more is better than nothing

ricultural plots, as well as ordinary citizens, have suffered difficult circumstances. Everyone knows this caused financial hardship, especially since they have obligations to banks, their employees and operational expenses. This puts pressure on them and leads to delays in payments, particularly rent for plots and holdings, and the resulting fines are added to their burdens.

Rights are like a sword hanging over the necks of citizens, investors, service providers, industrialists and others—no one denies or tries to escape from this reality. Nevertheless, when the state exerts pressure on them by suspending licenses, closing factories, confiscating land or even halting services, it increases their burdens and pushes

them to delay payments, especially since there is no directive from the Central Bank of Kuwait for commercial banks to be lenient in dealing with the borrowers.

Meanwhile, in neighboring countries, particularly the other Gulf states, there are many facilities for investors and usufruct rights holders, because the goals are continuity and encouraging people to spend by facilitating their business operations.

Unfortunately, the opposite has been happening in Kuwait since that ill-fated pandemic. The current war even exacerbated the difficulties and reduced commercial, industrial and agricultural activities, which prompted many business owners to reconsider and scale back their operations instead of ex-

panding them. The current regional circumstances necessitate encouragement.

Furthermore, some decisions have been made that put a heavy burden on investors, including the prohibition on selling plots or usufruct rights, even though their owners have built and invested significant sums in them for 30, 40 or 50 years. This undoubtedly limits investment.

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Justice Ministry hits ‘Kuwaitization’ goal

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Dr. Fawaz Boudi, acting Head of the Experts General Department at the Ministry of Justice, announced that the department has achieved 100 percent Kuwaitization.

This completes the first phase of the plan launched by Minister of Justice Nasser Yousef Al-Sumait in May.

Boudi stated that the Kuwaitization covered all expert positions like engineers, accountants and legal researchers. He emphasized that this step reinforces total reliance on qualified Kuwaiti nationals.

He added that the next phase will witness a more equitable and efficient redistribution of work among experts, implementation of periodic rotation, improvement of the quality and speed of finalizing technical reports, and completion of the digitalization of the services offered by the department.

It can be recalled that on May 9, Al-Sumait confirmed the launching of a comprehensive plan to develop the department, foremost of which is the total Kuwaitization of the department by the beginning of August, such that the services of all non-Kuwaiti experts in the fields of engineering, accounting and legal research would be terminated.

Kuwait nets 12 fugitives

Illegal taxi hustle ends for 2 Asians

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The General Traffic Department at the Ministry of Interior continued its security and traffic campaigns in various governorates, resulting in the arrest of 12 wanted individuals, including those who violated the Residency and Labor laws and others involved in different cases.

A security source disclosed that the field patrols, which covered all governorates, led to the arrest of individuals of different nationalities who are wanted by law. The source affirmed that the security campaigns are ongoing to apprehend all those proven to have violated the laws of the country and committed crimes. The source added that all those arrested in the recent campaign were referred to the concerned authorities.

Meanwhile, the Traffic Investigation Department arrested two Asians for illegally transporting passengers in their private vehicles. They were referred to the Traffic Detention Center and their vehicles were impounded.

According to a security source, the necessary legal measures were taken against the violators, who were referred to the relevant authorities. The source reiterated that illegally transporting passengers is a grave traffic violation.



Ministry of Interior photo
First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah speaks during a ceremony marking the appointment of two new assistant undersecretaries.

First Deputy PM urges stronger security coordination

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah on Monday issued two ministerial decrees appointing Major General Hamad Al-Munafi as Assistant Undersecretary for Public Security Affairs and Major General Fawaz Al-Roumi as Assistant Undersecretary for Support Security Services Affairs.

The Ministry of Interior said in a press statement that Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef also conferred the rank of major general on Al-Roumi following the Amir's decrees issued on Sunday, which appointed both officials.

The minister congratulated the two as-

sistant undersecretaries on gaining the confidence of the political leadership and wished them success in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

He said the appointments reflect the ministry's approach to recognizing national competencies and serve as an incentive for security leaders and personnel to continue demonstrating dedication, excellence and professionalism while fostering a culture of achievement and developing future security leaders.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef stressed that the coming phase requires strengthened teamwork and enhanced coordination among the ministry's various sectors to improve insti-

tutional performance, meet the aspirations of the political leadership and reinforce the country's security system.

He also emphasized the importance of developing human resources, promoting an innovation-driven work environment, improving institutional efficiency, keeping pace with evolving security challenges and implementing the ministry's strategy to further enhance the readiness and effectiveness of the national security apparatus.

The ceremony was attended by Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Major General Abdulwahab Al-Wuhaib and several senior security officials.

Newswatch



InvestGB organizes panel discussion with Kuwait's investment leaders in celebration of 'Interns' Day'



NBK continues its leadership in human capital management with the highest global standards



Weyay partners with PAAET to support youth

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held a phone call on Monday with Türkiye's Minister of Foreign Affairs Hakan Fidan, during which they reviewed the latest regional developments and ongoing diplomatic efforts aimed at reducing tensions.

The two ministers also discussed ways to enhance security and stability in the region, as well as efforts to ensure the safety and freedom of maritime navigation. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held a phone call on Sunday with Egypt's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates Badr Abdelatty to discuss the latest regional developments.

The two ministers reviewed ongoing diplomatic efforts aimed at de-escalating tensions, enhancing regional security and stability, and ensuring the safety and freedom of maritime navigation. Kuwait's Foreign Ministry said in a statement. (KUNA)

Kuwait joins OPEC+ move to hike output

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): Minister of Oil Tariq Al-Roumi affirmed that Kuwait continues to support consultation within the OPEC+ alliance, stressing that collective action remains the cornerstone for maintaining balance in the oil market and responding flexibly to developments in the energy market.

In a statement issued by the Ministry of Oil following his chairing of Kuwait's delegation at two virtual meetings -- the meeting of the seven countries participating in the voluntary production cut adjustment agreement and the 67th meeting of the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC) -- Al-Roumi reiterated Kuwait's confidence in

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Water quality gets high-tech boost

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy participated in the Fourth Sustainability Camp -- a national initiative with the theme, "When Technology Meets Sustainability."

This is part of the ongoing efforts of the ministry to promote the rationalization of electricity and water consumption and to instill sustainability concepts among all members of society, especially the children and youths.

The ministry succeeded in navigating the first half of the summer and it remains committed to ensuring the stability of its services during the second half by taking several measures despite the challenges it is facing this summer.

It is focusing on raising public awareness about the judicious consumption of electricity and water, based on its belief that the rationalization of the consumption of such vital resources begins with the individual, thereby, preserving the natural resources and raising service efficiency.

It is keen on organizing various national and awareness events to deliver conservation messages through its teams, introduce participants to best practices in conservation, highlight the role of modern technologies and innovation in improving energy efficiency, and support the path towards sustainable development.

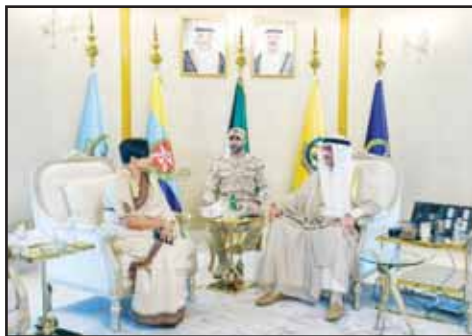
It continues to support national initiatives that promote sustainability and responsible consumption, and

Continued on Page 5

Defense Minister hosts outgoing Türkiye envoy, India ambassador



Ministry of Defense photos
Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah receives the Ambassador of Türkiye (left) and the Ambassador of India to Kuwait.



KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah received the Ambassador of Türkiye to Kuwait Tuba Nur Sonmez, on the occasion of the end of her tenure in the country.

In a press statement Monday, the Ministry of Defense stated that Sheikh Abdullah Ali Al-Sabah expressed his gratitude and appreciation for Ambassador Sonmez's efforts throughout her term, commending her contributions to supporting and strengthening cooperation between Kuwait and Türkiye, and wishing her continued success in her future endeavors.

In a separate meeting, the Defense Minister discussed with the Ambassador of India to Kuwait Paramita Tripathi, a number of issues of mutual interest and ways to enhance cooperation between the two friendly nations.



Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:42	Asr	15:30
Sunrise ..	05:10	Maghrib ..	18:39
Zohr	11:54	Isha	20:06

Iraq Invasion Anniversary

‘Steadfast nation overcame history’s most perilous time’

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Jahra Governor Hamad Jassem Al-Habashi said the anniversary of the brutal Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, which was commemorated on Sunday, is an occasion to honor a nation whose people sacrificed their lives for it.



Al-Habashi

Al-Habashi pointed out that through their faith, unity and unwavering support for their legitimate leadership, the people managed to overcome one of the most difficult times in the history of Kuwait, regaining its freedom and sovereignty, and raising its flag high and proud.

He stated “this sad occasion is not merely a recollection of past events, but an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment that the security and sovereignty of Kuwait, and the dignity of its people are inviolable, and that our national unity will remain our impregnable fortress against all challenges.

“Today, in light of the Iranian aggression against Kuwait, our national responsibility is renewed to strengthen our cohesion and stand united behind our wise leadership, protecting our homeland and preserving its stability.

“On this occasion, we remember with utmost reverence the righteous martyrs of Kuwait and the heroes of the resistance. We salute the men of our Armed Forces, affirming that Kuwait will remain, God willing, impervious to all aggressors, steadfast in its sovereignty, united by the will of its people, and proud under its leadership.

“I implore Allah Almighty to protect Kuwait and its people from all harm, and to perpetuate upon it the blessings of security, safety and stability, under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, may Allah protect them.

“May Allah Almighty preserve our homeland, making it strong, safe and stable, and to perpetuate upon it the blessings of glory and prosperity.”

Kuwait targets quality life, social well-being for aged



Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah and senior officials at the launching of ‘Companionship for Life Program’.



KUNA photos
A stage performance depicting the elderly during the launching of event.

Minister launches ‘Companionship for Life Program’ for elderly

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah confirmed that the ministry is keen on upholding the principles of social justice and preserving human dignity at all stages of life through the development of a comprehensive system of services and programs in line with the vision of the State of Kuwait.

Al-Huwailah made the statement during the opening of the Companionship for Life Program, which aims to enhance the quality of life and psychological and social well-being of the elderly.

The Awareness and Guidance Center in the

Social Welfare General Department organized the program.

She disclosed that the program offers a range of activities and services to promote social interaction, stimulate mental abilities, support mental health, and open new avenues for the elderly to participate in social life.

She said the program is being implemented in partnership with the Sheikh Abdullah Al-Nouri Charitable Society, underscoring the importance of integration between state institutions and civil society organizations in this regard.

She expressed her gratitude to the Social Welfare General Department for its ongoing efforts to develop high-quality initiatives and programs that improve social welfare services.

She also commended the Awareness and Guidance Center for its efforts in preparing and implementing the program, as well as the support of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Nouri Charitable Society and its active community partnership.

On the other hand, Director General of the Social Welfare General Department Dr. Jassim Al-Kandari pointed out that the program conveys a message of gratitude and appreciation to the senior citizens for their valuable contributions to society.

He said the Awareness and Guidance Center is in charge of preparing and implementing the program, using its expertise in psychological, social and awareness-raising aspects to provide a program that addresses the needs of senior citizens, enhances their mental health and social relationships, and boosts their participation in society.

Moreover, Chairman of the Sheikh Abdullah Al-Nouri Charitable Society Jamal Al-Nouri affirmed that the launching of the program is an embodiment of the authentic values of the Kuwaiti society in terms of compassion and respect for the elderly, and a practical demonstration of the commitment to improve the quality of their lives and their psychological, social and physical well-being.



Baskets full of shrimps in the fish market.

Shrimp season starts with bang; fish prices sensible

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Chairman of Kuwait Fishermen Union Abdullah Al-Sarheed revealed that about 13.8 tons of local shrimp were distributed to the markets at the start of the season for shrimp fishing in the economic waters two days ago.



Al-Sarheed

Speaking to the newspaper, Al-Sarheed disclosed that the shrimp prices range from KD33 to KD40 per basket. He said 600 baskets of shrimp were distributed on the first day of the shrimp fishing season, 500 of which were taken to Al-Kout Market and 100 to Sharq Market. He stated that on the second day, 442 baskets were distributed -- 300 to Al-Kout and 142 to Sharq. He expects these

quantities to double in the coming week, reaching about 20 tons per day, as fishing operations stabilize.

He pointed out that the second half of the year includes three main fishing seasons, beginning with the Mead season on July 1, followed by the Zubaidi season on July 16 and the shrimp season on Aug 1.

He also confirmed the ample supply of fish in the local market at reasonable prices. He stated that the continuous flow of imported fish despite the regional tension ensures food security, particularly the availability of fish in the local market throughout the year.

He explained that the political and regional situation affected the catch of Mead in Kuwait and other Gulf countries, leading to a rise in the price of a basket of this type of fish, ranging from KD75 to KD160.

He affirmed that the local market has an abundant supply of Zubaidi, hence, the price per kilogram decreased from KD24 to KD9, while the price per basket now ranges from KD70 to KD100.

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Boodai said Monday that the decree-law on combating commercial concealment marks a major legislative step to strengthen Kuwait’s business environment through greater transparency and fair competition.

Boodai told KUNA on Monday the decree protects the national economy and ensures state benefits reach those who meet eligibility requirements.

He said the legislation goes beyond addressing commercial concealment in its traditional form by requiring disclosure of the beneficial owner of commercial activities, promoting equal opportunities and protecting law-abiding businesses.

He noted that recent practices had exploited incentives for small and medium-sized enterprises and other activities by concealing the beneficial owner or using nominees.

Such practices deprived eligible beneficiaries of opportunities and discouraged market entry by creating the perception of unfair competition, weakening economic activity and market diversity, he added.

Boodai said compliant businesses would be the primary beneficiaries of the law, while greater



Osama Boodai

transparency would also improve consumer confidence by making business ownership clear and facilitating complaints, guarantees and the protection of consumer rights.

He stressed the decree applies equally to all violators, regardless of status or nationality, and defines prohibited acts, liabilities and enforcement powers within a comprehensive legal framework.

The minister said the Ministry of Commerce and Industry will issue implementing regulations to clarify procedures, standardize enforcement and facilitate compliance while maintaining business stability and supporting legitimate activities.

He encouraged businesses to review and rectify their status before enforcement begins, noting that digital system upgrades, integrated data and interagency cooperation will strengthen oversight of commercial activities.

Boodai said the ministry will provide advisory services to help businesses understand the decree and review their compliance, while continuing to receive public feedback through its communication channels. He added the ministry is implementing its responsibilities under the decree and stressed that lending one’s name or commercial license enables illegal practices and deprives rightful beneficiaries of opportunities.

The minister said the legislation aims to establish a business environment where success is based on efficiency and compliance, strengthening investor confidence and ensuring state support reaches its intended beneficiaries.

Other Voices

Freedom, press, and the human rights authority

By Ahmad alsarraf

Last March, I wrote an article titled “Forgotten Human Rights,” in which I stated that despite the paramount importance of the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), it did not prevent violations; rather, such violations increased significantly. The situation could have been much worse.

In accordance with the principles of the Universal Declaration, we established the Human Rights Society in 2005. Due to strong pressure from some members of the National Assembly and Salafists, the government agreed to establish another “human rights” society. We now have two societies - one that accepts complaints and another that rejects them.

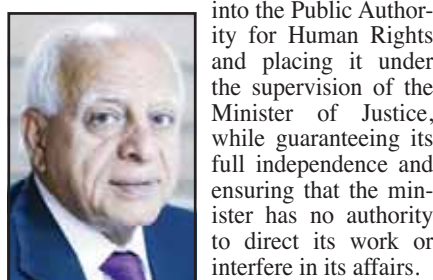
Years later, the government responded to international demands by establishing the “National Diwan for Human Rights” (NDHR) as an independent body and a link between civil society organizations, government agencies, and international organizations.

However, the NDHR has never been truly independent. As a result, Kuwait received a low rating from international monitoring organizations, as successive governments marginalized the role of the NDHR. It was striking to see how many members of the NDHR’s board of directors refrained from participating in its meetings.

The NDHR’s repeated affiliation with various ministries and the multiplicity of its governing boards ultimately led the Minister

of Justice to dissolve the NDHR and appoint a three-member committee, headed by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice, to carry out its duties - a move clearly inconsistent with the requirements of international organizations.

A decree was issued amending certain provisions of the NDHR Law, transforming it into the Public Authority for Human Rights and placing it under the supervision of the Minister of Justice, while guaranteeing its full independence and ensuring that the minister has no authority to direct its work or interfere in its affairs.



alsarraf

The decree establishing the Public Authority for Human Rights stipulates that members of its board of directors and its staff shall not be subject to accountability for actions undertaken in the exercise of their duties and powers.

The Public Authority for Human Rights is also tasked with promoting a culture of human rights, strengthening its values, encouraging respect for relevant international conventions previously ratified by Kuwait, and safeguarding the public rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution.

The Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Human Rights consists of five full-time members selected for their competence, integrity, and expertise, thereby rein-

forcing its independent and civil character. Government representatives are not entitled to participate in voting. The decree also stipulates that a separate budget shall be allocated to the Public Authority for Human Rights.

States are based on three authorities - the executive, judicial, and legislative branches. In many developing countries, the executive authority constantly seeks to dominate the other branches. As a result, governments cannot have a complete understanding of everything occurring within the country except through the views of the opposition, when it exists, or through reports published by various media outlets, including the press.

Consequently, governments may remain unaware of complaints, corruption, and abuses of power. Suppressing criticism protects officials, including the most corrupt, from accountability and ultimately weakens the governments.

It is essential for governments to provide sufficient space for all individuals to express their opinions and to ensure press freedom, allowing the media to report, investigate, and criticize. The press should be recognized as a watchdog of government and as an essential component of the right to freedom of expression, which is among the most closely connected human rights. The media, including the press, play a vital role in assessing the quality of life and reflecting the level of public trust in the credibility of the government.



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98 patients benefit as fund provides financial aid to ill

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh, Chairman of the Cancer Patients Fund and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Cancer Control Society, revealed that 98 cancer patients benefited from the services of the fund from January until the end of July 2026.

According to Al-Saleh, the total financial aid allocated to support patients unable to work due to illness or those who faced exceptional humanitarian circumstances exceeded KD250,000. He affirmed that the fund continues to provide financial support to patients to help them with their living expenses, so they can focus on their treatment.

He said the fund provides assistance to non-Kuwaiti patients whose circumstances necessitate permanent

return to their home countries by contributing to the travel expenses and providing financial support to help them meet their basic needs in the initial phase of their return.

He revealed that the total number of beneficiaries of the fund since its establishment until the end of 2025 has reached 3,556, emphasizing that such an achievement was made possible through the generosity of the donors.

He added that the fund continues to receive and review applications according to the criteria to ensure that aid reaches the most in need patients.

He then expressed his gratitude to the donors, supporting institutions and companies, and the Secretariat General of Endowments for their vital role in the implementation of the programs of the fund and in expanding the scope of its humanitarian services.

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KFAS program to inculcate interest in science, technology, engineering

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) concluded the 10th edition of its Generation Science Program for 2026, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The program was implemented in two phases -- one for preparatory and the other for high school students. It included an interactive learning experience that featured a variety of activities like scientific lectures, applied workshops, practical experiments, group challenges, and field trips to scientific, academic and cultural institutions.

KFAS stated that the Generation Science Program is part of its efforts to cultivate interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) among children and youths, and to promote research and innovation by providing a stimulating learning environment. It added that the program is designed to suit the age and cognitive level of the participants in each phase.

The preparatory school phase focused on cultivating passion for science and developing thinking, communication and experiential learning skills.

The high school phase provided students with more in-depth content in the areas of scientific and creative thinking, planning, idea generation and problem-solving, in addition to developing teamwork, communication and idea presentation skills.

According to KFAS, the program involved Kuwaiti academics, scientists and researchers who contributed their scientific and research expertise to deliver rich content.

During the program, designed for 20 groups of high school students, scientific and innovative projects based on the national priorities were presented, thus, strengthening the connection between learning and issues related to society and development.

KFAS clarified that the program is not limited to providing scientific knowledge, as it also focuses on developing the personal skills of participants, such as enhancing self-confidence, critical thinking, collaboration, and the ability to express ideas and transform them into scalable projects and initiatives.



Students, academics and researchers take part in the program.

KFAS photo

Support vowed for charities

KASCO, KRCS to strengthen cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): Chairman of the Kuwait Aviation Services Company (KASCO) Dr Abdulaziz Al-Shabib and Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Director General Fawaz Al-Mazrouei discussed Monday ways to strengthen cooperation in support of humanitarian and community initiatives.

Al-Shabib told KUNA the two sides reviewed a number of charitable projects aimed at serving the community and promoting social responsibility and humanitarian work in Kuwait.

He reaffirmed KASCO's commitment to expanding partnerships with national institutions,



Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Shabib

KUNA photo

government bodies and public benefit organizations to support community development and sustainable growth.

He said the company is ready to provide all

forms of support to KRCS and contribute to the success of humanitarian initiatives, noting KASCO's expertise and capabilities in implementing national and charitable projects.

Al-Shabib added that KASCO is undergoing a comprehensive development and expansion plan, including service upgrades and improved operational efficiency, while maintaining its social and humanitarian role.

He noted the company has previously supported charitable initiatives, and looks forward to expanding such efforts with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society.

For his part, Al-Mazrouei praised KASCO's support for humanitarian initiatives, saying the cooperation reflects the strong sense of national responsibility shown by Kuwait's institutions.

Road repairs on at 42 sites

CAPT nods MPW request to build new PAFN head office

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) approved the request of the Ministry of Public Works to float a tender for the study, design and supervision of the construction of the new headquarters of the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) during its meeting last Wednesday.

CAPT set Aug 30 as the deadline for interested companies to submit their bids.

The project, once implemented, will provide a modern work environment according to the highest technical and engineering standards, as it includes the construction of environmentally friendly buildings that will accommodate around 1,750 employees. It shall consist of a building for the employees of the Inspection Department in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate, a theater, a library, a building for sports fields and activities,

a mosque, storage facilities, a sample refrigeration unit, a mobile vehicle inspection area, and parking spaces for 1,750 vehicles.

The ministry set the duration for the study, design and supervision to 24 months, after which, another tender will be issued for the implementation of the project, which is expected to take 39 months.

Meanwhile, the ministry announced the implementation of major road maintenance works under the new road maintenance contracts in 42 locations in the six governorates, in addition to eight sites on highways, from Aug. 1-5.

The ministry revealed that these road maintenance works were carried out in three sites in Ahmadi Governorate, six in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate, nine in Hawally Governorate, five in Farwaniya Governorate, nine in the Capital Governorate and two in Jahra Governorate.

MoCI suspends freelance business license bargains

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) has blocked attempts to sell and trade freelance business companies that operate without physical offices, following the detection of increased activity and interest in buying and selling such companies, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The ministry has temporarily suspended all requests for transfers, amendments, and changes to ownership structures through its online portal.

According to informed sources, the ministry has halted all procedures related to freelance business licenses until new

regulations are issued.

The Ministry's automated system currently shows a suspension of services for amending company data linked to these licenses, including procedures for adding or removing partners, modifying management clauses, adjusting capital, and changing partner shares.

This measure follows an earlier decision by the ministry to temporarily suspend the issuance of new freelance business licenses in order to prevent the circumvention of regulations and the misuse or trading of licenses in buying and selling transactions.

News in Brief

Lebanese Embassy to stay shut

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Lebanese Embassy in Kuwait announced that it will be closed on Tuesday, August 4, in observance of the anniversary of the Beirut Port explosion, reports Al-Rai daily.

In a statement, the embassy explained that the closure follows a directive issued by the Lebanese Prime Minister's Office. The embassy will resume its operations on Wednesday morning, August 5.

The embassy emphasized that the closure is an expression of solidarity with the families of the victims and the injured, as well as a tribute to those who lost their lives in the Beirut Port explosion.

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Service for teachers: The Ministry of Education launched an online service for teachers wishing to cancel previously submitted transfer requests, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The service will be available from August 2 to 4, 2026, on the ministry's website.

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KU opens transfers: The Deanship of Admissions and Registration at Kuwait University announced the opening of online transfer applications through the registration website - <http://portal.ku.edu.kw/sis>, from 12:00 noon on Tuesday, August 4 until 12:00 midnight on Thursday, August 6, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Deanship explained that transfers are available from one college to another, provided students meet the general and specific transfer requirements. Students who have completed 45 credit hours or fewer and meet the required conditions will receive a message confirming their transfer to the requested college. Students who have completed more than 45 credit hours and meet all transfer requirements will receive a message con-

firming acceptance of their transfer application, with the final decision to be issued after review by the university's Student Affairs Committee.

Online transfer applications are available to eligible students from the 2020 cohort onwards, according to records in the Student Information System. Students from the 2019 cohort and earlier must visit the Admissions and Registration Office during official working hours between August 4 and August 6.

Students from the 2015 cohort and later are not eligible to transfer to another college after completing 78 credit hours. Students who do not meet the transfer requirements will receive a message explaining the conditions they must fulfill before submitting a future transfer request. Students currently enrolled in the faculties of Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, and Law are not eligible to transfer under this system.

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Parking opened for sick: The Ministry of Health announced that vehicles will be allowed to enter the parking area of Jahra Specialized Dental Center starting at 6:00 am, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This move is in line with the commitment of the ministry to provide a suitable environment for patients and ease their access to healthcare facilities, while maintaining the security and safety of the facilities and adhering to official working hours.

The ministry clarified that the center continues to receive patients and provide services within the approved official working hours.

It also indicated that it continues to review and develop organizational procedures to ensure the comfort of patients, improve the quality of services, and maintain the safety of healthcare facilities.



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Digital platform brings accountability, simplifies staff procedures

MEWRE moves employee transactions to CSC app

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, Dr. Adel Al-Zamel, issued a decision adopting the Civil Service Commission (CSC) mobile application as the sole electronic platform for submitting and approving transactions for ministry employees, effective August 1, 2026.

The decision requires the discontinuation of any internal applications that conflict with this system. It also outlines the procedures for submitting applications through the platform and specifies the timeframes for each type of transaction.

Requests for prior authori-

zation and medical review permits must be submitted no more than seven days in advance, while requests for leave and various exemptions must be submitted no more than three days prior.

Annual leave requests must be submitted in advance, while emergency leave requests must be submitted within seven days from the date of application without prior submission.

If procedures require entering transactions into integrated systems, they must be submitted in advance or on the same day.

The decision specifies the application approval process, requiring approval from the direct supervisor and a decision within three days. Applications submitted after the specified deadlines will be rejected.

The decision authorizes the

supervisory head to accept late applications if work requirements justify doing so, based on explanations given by the employee, provided that a decision is issued within three days.

It authorized department directors and those at their level and above to delegate the authority to approve transactions to individuals they deem appropriate.

In the event of a supervisory vacancy, the Administrative Affairs Department shall assign an employee temporarily to exercise the powers stipulated in the regulations.

The decision assigned responsibility for approving salary deductions to the Personnel Department on the sixth day of the month following the month in which the delay occurred.

The Accounts Department

shall implement the salary deduction, while the employee remains responsible for verifying the accuracy of the application data, supporting documents, and ensuring that all requirements are met.

The decision emphasized the direct supervisor's responsibility for monitoring employee attendance, recording unexcused absences on a weekly basis, verifying the validity of submitted documents, and applying the regulations related to absences in accordance with approved procedures.

The decision stressed that anyone found in violation of its provisions will be subject to disciplinary action.

The decision will take effect on August 1, 2026, and will supersede any previous decisions that conflict with it.

Kuwait, Qatar FMs review efforts

to de-escalate regional tensions

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (Agencies): Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held a phone call with Qatari Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani to discuss the latest regional developments.

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a press statement on Monday that the two ministers also reviewed diplomatic efforts

aimed at de-escalating tensions, enhancing regional security and stability, and ensuring the safety and freedom of maritime navigation.

Separately, US President Donald Trump accused Iran's leadership of sending contradictory messages regarding negotiations with Washington, saying Tehran was requesting talks while publicly denying that any discussions were taking place.

Army warns of live-fire drills

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations of the Kuwaiti Army has announced that live-fire shooting exercises will be conducted in the Al-Abraq area on Tuesday and Wednesday, Aug 4-5, 2026.

The exercises will take place at the designated shooting range from 5:00 am until 11:00 am on both days.

The Kuwaiti Army urged citizens and

residents, especially desert visitors, campers and grazing enthusiasts, to avoid approaching the area or setting up camps nearby during the exercise period.

The warning was issued to ensure public safety and prevent any risks during the live-fire activities. The authorities called on everyone to cooperate and follow the announced safety instructions.

Continued from Page 1

0 Ministers of

Your Excellency, Minister of Finance, Dr. Yaqoub Al-Rifai, as you know, a sound financial cycle, especially in exceptional circumstances, involves encouraging increased production to achieve strategic benefits.

As a seasoned expert with extensive experience in finance and academia, you are fully aware that in dire circumstances, countries strive to alleviate the burdens of citizens to ensure social stability, which is the cornerstone of the resilience of societies and nations.

The most important principle in exceptional circumstances is ensuring the availability of cash in the hands of the people and halting decisions that exacerbate commercial and industrial anxiety. Instead, we should provide facilities to help people overcome this difficult period with minimal harm.

For example, this necessitates requesting commercial banks to suspend loan repayments and facilitate borrowing. Otherwise, it will only lead to more trouble. What does the bank or the state gain from seizing equipment or closing factories? Realistically, nothing. In fact, it results in losses. Nonetheless, if there is easier access to credit, borrowers will increase their loan repayments and develop their industries, busi-

nesses or agricultural holdings, once the situation stabilizes.

No one in Kuwait is calling for the cancellation of fees, dues owed to the state or loans. But given the current circumstances, which have persisted since 2020 when the country was under lockdown for 163 days during the COVID-19 pandemic, and now in the midst of war, the Cabinet must reconsider its decisions. These difficult circumstances should be transformed into opportunities for development, making Kuwait more resilient in facing challenges, whatever they may be. The role of governments is to pave the way for the future, not to retreat into isolation.

Also, from us to His Excellency Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Khaled Abdullah Boodai, regarding his responsibilities: The motto of the people of Kuwait is, "Moderation is the best."

KNPC fuel

This shift has resulted in a 65 percent decrease in pollution levels in the surrounding areas.

According to the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, one of the benefits of the changes implemented at the Al-Zour South and Doha power plants is that the use of low-sulfur fuel oil has directly contributed to reducing sulfur diox-

ide emissions at both facilities.

This operational reduction has had a tangible and positive impact on air quality in residential areas surrounding the two plants, helping to protect the public health of citizens and residents and reduce the health risks associated with gaseous emissions.

These measures align with the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's (KPC) 2040 strategic objectives, which aim to enhance environmental sustainability and social responsibility in all projects.

The sources also highlighted Kuwait's strategic goal of achieving carbon neutrality (zero emissions) at the national level by 2060, while the oil and gas sector specifically aims to achieve this target by 2050.

Water quality

to strengthen cooperation with various government agencies and community organizations to guarantee heightened public awareness.

Meanwhile, the ministry intends to construct the water analysis laboratory building in Shuwaikh to enhance the role of the Water Resources Development Center in monitoring the quality of drinking water from the beginning of production until it reaches the consumers, particularly in terms of checking the chemical and bacterial components.

So far, the ministry has achieved remarkable progress in implementing the project. Last week, it asked the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) to float a tender for the construction of the laboratory. CAPT then requested the ministry to make certain modifications before approving the tender.

Kuwait joins

OPEC+’s ability to respond to market changes while supporting global energy security and market stability.

He said the meetings were held as part of ongoing coordination among participating countries to review oil market developments and assess supply and demand conditions amid continued threats to strategic energy transportation routes and accelerating geopolitical changes.

Al-Roumi praised the decision by the seven countries to continue the gradual exit from voluntary production cuts, completing the process by increasing total output by 188,000 barrels per day starting from September 2026.

He said the decision reflects the balanced and gradual approach adopted by participating countries based on careful assessments of oil market indicators, contributing to achieving a balance between supply and demand and supporting stability

in global markets.

The minister noted that Kuwait's oil production will rise to 2.676 million barrels per day in September 2026, reflecting the country's full commitment to collective OPEC+ decisions and their implementation according to approved schedules.

He added that following the completion of the voluntary production cut exit process, participants agreed to continue holding monthly meetings to monitor oil market conditions, energy security developments and adopt appropriate strategies.

The next JMMC meeting is scheduled to be held on Sunday, September 4, 2026.

Kuwait's delegation included, in addition to Minister Al-Roumi, Kuwait's Governor to OPEC Mohammad Al-Shatti and Kuwait's National Representative to OPEC Sheikh Abdullah Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, the seven OPEC+ countries implementing additional voluntary production cuts -- Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iraq, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Algeria and Oman -- agreed Sunday to adjust their oil production levels for September 2026 as part of their joint commitment to supporting stability in global oil markets.

The seven countries said in a joint

statement issued after a virtual meeting that they reviewed current conditions and prospects of the global oil market, reaffirming their continued commitment to maintaining market stability.

They agreed to implement a production adjustment of 188,000 barrels per day from the additional voluntary cuts announced in April 2023, with the decision to take effect during September in line with the agreed schedule.

The statement said the move would allow participating countries to accelerate the implementation of their compensation plans for excess production, while reaffirming their full commitment to achieving complete compliance with the Declaration of Cooperation, including the additional voluntary production cuts monitored by the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC).

The seven countries also reaffirmed their determination to fully compensate for any production exceeding agreed levels since January 2024, strengthening collective adherence to OPEC+ agreements. They added that they would continue holding monthly meetings to review oil market developments, with the next meeting scheduled for September 6.



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Late-summer action on funding fix unusual

US Senate leaders reach funding deal to avoid shutdown during campaign season

WASHINGTON, Aug 3, (AP): Key senators unveiled a short-term spending bill on Sunday that would keep federal agencies funded past the midterm elections and into early December as they look to avoid a government shutdown during the middle of campaign season.

The Senate is likely to vote on the measure before leaving Washington at week’s end for its traditional August recess, a period that many lawmakers want to spend shoring up their reelection prospects rather than working in the nation’s capital.

The bill generally funds the federal government at current levels though Dec. 11. The House has passed a similar measure, but it did not include various exceptions sought by the White House. Senators have been spending recent days negotiating which of those exceptions to include.

One exception that did not make it into the bill, Democrats noted, was the administration’s request to include \$1 billion to build “Trump-class” battleships.

In another major difference with the House bill, Democrats say they also were able to include language that will ensure the administration cannot transfer funds from other programs to the Border Patrol.

The late-summer action on a funding fix is unusual. Normally, Congress waits until the final days or hours of a funding deadline to pass short-term funding extensions, but this time senators are acting two months before the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune said passing the measure was his top priority going into the August recess. He noted that the American people have already experienced two record-breaking government shutdowns in the past 10 months.

“We need to ensure that they do not face a third,” Thune said.

A short-term funding extension is needed because Congress has struggled to get the dozen annual appropriations bills negotiated and approved before the Sept. 30 deadline. By extending government funding now, lawmakers can



The sun sets behind the US Capitol on July 28, in Washington. (AP)

use the ensuing months to work out their differences on full-year funding.

It won’t be an easy lift as Republicans seek a dramatic increase in defense spending while cutting non-defense spending. Trump proposed a 10% cut in non-defense programs overall. Meanwhile, he called for boosting defense spending by some 44%.

A potential shutdown before voters go to the polls is a scenario that both parties are looking to avoid, as polling indicated that neither party evaded

blame for last fall’s record 43-day shutdown. Democrats sought to extend an expiring health insurance tax credit and refused to go along with a short-term spending bill that did not include that priority. But Republicans said that was a separate policy fight to be held at another time.

A second spending battle over funding for the Department of Homeland Security took 76 days to resolve when Democrats refused to fund US Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Border Patrol without changes to those operations.

Sen. Susan Collins, the Republican chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, along with Democratic senators, are seeking to block a proposed rule from President Donald Trump’s administration related to grants. The rule would require a senior political appointee at each agency to review grant proposals through criteria that include “ensuring that discretionary awards advance the President’s policy priorities.”

Collins and Sen Patty Murray, the top Democrat on the Appropriations Committee, said the rule would not take effect during the course of the stop-gap spending bill. Collins said she advocated for significant changes to the rule, “citing its potential to politicize grants and harm small, rural communities, families, and biomedical research.”

Democrats want to kill the administration’s effort altogether. Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said it was a “disgraceful” effort that would “further politicize all federal grants.”

“While Republicans rejected killing the proposed rule outright, I’m going to keep fighting to put a stop to it once and for all, and I will keep pressing my Republican colleagues to do exactly that,” Murray said.

Democrats fear Trump would turn federal grants into a cudgel to punish perceived political foes and reward allies, while also undermining Congress’s constitutional power of the purse. The White House Office of Management and Budget says its effort is about improving accountability to ensure taxpayer dollars aren’t wasted or misused.

Fires near Washington burn 600 structures, force 60,000 evacuations

WASHINGTON, Aug 3, (AP): Wildfires in eastern Washington state forced the evacuation of 60,000 people in the Spokane area while destroying at least 600 homes, businesses and other structures, authorities said Sunday.

The fires in and around Spokane, the state’s second largest city, burned about 8.2 square miles (about 21 square kilometers) over the weekend and were among dozens of wildfires across the Western U.S. that stretched the ability of federal, state and local agencies to fight them.

A total of about 390 square miles (1,000 square kilometers) has burned across the state, and some of the fires, including those in the Spokane area, have not been contained.

Fire and law enforcement officials said there had been no reports of injuries or people unaccounted for - but they stressed it was early in the

response effort.

Officials also said that the evacuees in Spokane included patients at its U.S. Veterans Affairs hospital.

Video from the Spokane area showed buildings on fire, black smoke billowing up near neighborhoods, and the smoking ruins of homes, with only chimneys still standing. Several officials expressed concern that the area does not appear likely to get a break in coming days from the weather, which is expected to remain dry.

“We are not out of danger,” US Sen. Maria Cantwell said during a news conference with federal, state and local officials in Spokane. “The next couple of days will be challenging.”

Investigators had yet to determine how the blazes started.

Spokane was hardly the only place struggling to contain fires.

Crews using bulldozers and heli-

copters continued for a 10th day to fight a fire that has burned nearly 525 square miles (about 1,360 square kilometers) of grassland in western Idaho and eastern Oregon. The area is home to cattle ranches, and authorities said the fire is threatening more than 600 homes and 800 other structures.

The weather in the area was expected to remain sunny - and dry - well into the week, with temperatures rising to more than 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius) on Wednesday. Officials say the fire was caused by lightning.

In central Utah, a massive blaze more than doubled in size over the weekend, jumping from 16 square miles (about 41 square kilometers) to about 56 square miles (145 square kilometers) by Sunday morning. More than 100 cattle have been killed, according to local law enforcement.



The Old Trails Fire is seen from the Centennial Trail near W. College Ave on Aug 1, in Spokane, Wash. (AP)

Russia blasts Ukrainian city with glide bombs while Ukraine drones reportedly kill nine

KYIV, Ukraine, Aug 3, (AP): Russian planes dropped eight powerful glide bombs in a span of 90 minutes on residential districts of the southern Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia, killing one person and wounding dozens of others, regional chief Ivan Fedorov said Monday.

Russia has used glide bombs to smash Ukrainian towns and cities since it invaded its neighbor more than four years ago. The weapons are Soviet-era bombs retrofitted with guidance systems and can carry up to 3,000 kilograms (6,600 pounds) of explosives, leaving huge craters. Ukraine has no effective counter-measures against them.

Meanwhile, six people were killed by Ukrainian drone debris in Arkhipo-Osipovka, a small town on Russia’s Black Sea coast in the Krasnodar region, regional governor Veniamin Kondratyev said, adding that 40 others were wounded.

Also, three people were killed and two were wounded in Kyiv’s overnight attack on the illegally annexed Crimea, said the peninsula’s Russian-installed head, Sergei Aksyonov. He gave no details.

Neither side’s claims could be independently verified.

The Sunday evening onslaught on Zaporizhzhia killed a 71-year-old woman and wounded 31 people, including a 16-year-old girl, as the glide bombs damaged 22 apartment buildings in four districts of the city, Fedorov said.

While Moscow’s forces have captured the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant and hold other parts of the region, its capital city of the same name remains in Ukrainian hands. It is one of the four regions, also including Donetsk, Kherson and Luhansk, that Russia illegally annexed in September 2022 even though its forces do not completely control them.

Other large-scale damage of civilian areas of Ukraine has resulted from Russian ballistic missiles, and late Sunday President Volodymyr Zelenskyy made another urgent plea for countries to send Ukraine more U.S.-made Patriot air defense systems.

Only Patriot interceptors can reliably stop ballistic missiles, but they are in short supply due to the Iran war.

“The world has Patriot missiles. What matters now is for our partners to make the political decision to provide the necessary packages,” Zelenskyy said on social media. “The United States knows what we need. Europe knows what we need. Anti-ballistic missiles must protect people - not sit in stockpiles.”

U.S. President Donald Trump last week appeared to back off from his earlier commitment to give Ukraine a license to make Patriots itself. He said Friday that the licensing matter is still under discussion and he hasn’t made a final decision.

Zelenskyy has suggested an alternative to Trump whereby Elon Musk allows Ukraine to use Starlink satellites to target ballistic missile launch sites inside Russia. Officials haven’t publicly said whether that is being considered.

Russia attacked Ukraine with 181 long-range strike drones overnight from Sunday to Monday, according to the Ukrainian air force. It said air defenses jammed and intercepted 163 drones, but 14 caused damage at 13 locations.

The Russian Defense Ministry said its forces struck four bulk carriers carrying cargo for the Ukrainian armed forces, including three in waters of the Black Sea and one in the port of Mykolaiv, but provided no further information.

As well the reported Russian deaths in drone attacks, Ukrainian drones also struck another major warehouse belonging to Wildberries, Russia’s biggest online shopping company.

The strike was part of a campaign that has hit more than a dozen of the retailer’s distribution hubs and severely disrupted its business.

A Wildberries warehouse in the Vladimir region east of Moscow caught fire in the latest attack, the company said Monday.

Three people were injured, Vladimir Gov. Alexander Avdeyev said.

Ukrainian drones also struck the Saratov oil refinery in southwestern Russia, Zelenskyy said. Kyiv has repeatedly targeted that refinery, and many others, since last year as it tries to choke fuel supplies to the Russian army and deny Moscow income from oil exports.

The Engels military air base near Saratov, which is the main base for

Russian nuclear-capable strategic bombers, and other targets inside Russia, including fuel storage tanks at the Lyudinovskaya oil depot in Russia’s Kaluga region, were also targeted, according to Zelenskyy.

The Russian Defense Ministry on Monday reported that its air defenses overnight intercepted 131 Ukrainian drones over a number of Russian regions, as well as Crimea and the Black Sea.

Ukrainian drones targeted a Wildberries warehouse in the Samara region, some 800 kilometers (500 miles) from the Russian-Ukrainian border, according to local Gov. Vyacheslav Fedorishchev. He said a fire had broken out but there were no casualties.

Kyiv’s campaign against Wildberries first hit the company’s sites in Elektrostal, just east of Moscow, and in the Tambov region July 18. Strikes followed on facilities across western and southern Russia, as well as Russian-held Crimea. At least nine people have been killed and scores wounded.

Both cities have been frequent targets for Ukrainian attacks in recent years. Engels hosts a military airbase, while Saratov is home to a large oil refinery.

In Russia’s Bashkortostan region further north, local Gov. Radiy Khabirov said that air defence had repelled a large-scale drone strike on “industrial facilities” in the city of Ufa. He did not specify what exactly was struck, but said that a blaze was being put out.

In the Udmurt Republic further northwest, three civilians died and two more were wounded in a Ukrainian drone strike, according to acting regional head Olga Abramova.



A burned car is seen after a Russian missile attack in Kyiv, Ukraine on Aug 1. (AP)

Greek wildfires halted after copter crash; French evacuees back home

ATHENS, Greece, Aug 3, (AP): Water-dropping planes swooped over a major wildfire west of Athens Monday, a day after a midair collision between two firefighting helicopters killed two crew members.

A Greek and a Danish national died and two others - all privately chartered operators - were hospitalized in the collision while the firefighting effort along mountainous and coastal areas at the weekend was hindered by powerful gales.

As parts of southern Europe continued to struggle with high temperatures, firefighters in France guarded against potential flare ups inside a still-burning scar four times the size of Paris.

Strong winds eased Monday, allowing the deployment of 12 water-dropping planes and 11 helicopters around the fire-hit seaside resort of Porto Germenos where multiple evacuations have been ordered.

“To put it in a headline: conditions are better but we are pressing forward because there are still multiple points of activity,” Fire Service spokesman Yiannis Artopios said. “This is a difficult fire that has troubled us.”

Some 500 firefighters halted the



A firefighting helicopter drops water over a smoke-filled forest during a wildfire near Porto Germeno, northwest of Athens, Greece on Aug 2. (AP)

fire’s advance but authorities warned areas surrounding Athens remained at high risk. More than 1,000 people have been evacuated from the region, including more than 250 rescued by boats from beaches in the area.

In France, thousands of evacuees were allowed to return home and or to holiday accommodation Monday

after a massive wildfire remained contained. More than 224,000 people had fled in what officials said was the country’s largest civilian evacuation outside wartime.

The wildfire burned about 420 square kilometers (162 square miles), making it France’s largest wildfire on record.

Ceuta grapples with aftermath of border surge after most migrants leave territory

CEUTA, Spain, Aug 3, (AP): Ceuta over the weekend no longer looked like a city on edge, but residents were still rattled by the events of the week.

Most of the 60,000 migrants who swam, scrambled and later charged into the tiny Spanish enclave in North Africa this week had walked back to Morocco by Sunday, but some stayed on in the hills surrounding the city. Spanish authorities continued searching for bodies in the waters near the stretch of urban beach that tens of thousand of migrants had breached days earlier.

Shops in Ceuta reopened, and the usual blend of residents and tourists in the city of 84,000 were filling the open-air terraces, restaurants and cafes.

At least 72 migrants died, including some who drowned and others who were killed in a stampede to cross a breakwater barrier, Spanish authorities said Sunday. Morocco reported 11 deaths on its side of the border, but it wasn’t immediately clear if these were in addition to those reported by Spain. The kingdom’s authorities blamed misinformation and human traffickers for the breach, adding that they were investigating the events.



Migrants who crossed into Spain from Morocco sit outside the temporary migrant stay center (CETI) in the Spanish enclave of Ceuta on Aug 2. (AP)

But the city that prides itself on being home to four cultures was still grappling with the aftermath of the border surge, with locals disagreeing on what caused it and who exactly is to blame.

“It’s not the young men’s fault,” said Mohamad Abdelkader Driss, 44, a waiter at a fish restaurant in town. “If you open the border, of course everyone comes in, but the young men aren’t to blame. The authorities are responsible.”

Some migrants who returned to Morocco described a border that was effectively open and said authorities did little as they watched thousands of people cross.

The unauthorized arrivals on Thursday and Friday of 50,000 to 60,000, mostly young men, swelled Ceuta’s population by more than half. Abdelkader lamented what happened, but said that those who breached the border behaved relatively well.

Nauru, the world’s third-smallest country, changes name to Naoero

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, Aug 3, (AP): The Pacific Island country of Nauru has changed its name to the Republic of Naoero, its president said, matching the spelling and pronunciation in the national language.

The country’s international code will change from NRU to NRO and its people will be known as dei-Naoero instead of Nauruan. Commonly known abroad by the pronunciation of Now-roo, the new name is spoken as Now-ero.

The move would return the remote South Pacific island nation to its traditional name, a statement posted Thursday to the government’s Facebook account said. The country became known internationally as Nauru only because its local name was difficult for foreigners to pronounce and was a matter of convenience rather than one of choice, according to an earlier government statement.

“This proposed change seeks to more faithfully honour our nation’s heritage, our language, and our identity,” President David Adeang said when he proposed the move to Parliament in January. The suggested constitutional amendment has been endorsed by lawmakers in the requisite two rounds of voting, though it



Nauru President David Adeang speaks at the opening ceremony of Boao Forum of Asia, in Boao in southern China’s Hainan province on March 28, 2024. (AP)

wasn’t immediately clear if the document had been formally amended.

With 12,000 residents, Nauru is the world’s third-smallest country by population size, after Tuvalu and Vatican City. The tiny coral limestone atoll was colonized by Germa-

ny and later administered by Australia before becoming an independent republic in 1968.

It has faced tumultuous circumstances, with phosphate mining creating huge wealth on the island in the 1970s before the industry collapsed, bringing Nauru to the brink of economic ruin in the 1990s.

Now, the country is one of the world’s most at risk from rising seas due to climate change, prompting the government to seek overseas investment through a paid citizenship program intended to fund the movement of people and infrastructure away from the encroaching ocean.

The name change indicated “the beginning of renewed national pride,” Adeang said in his latest announcement. When his government last voted for the move in May, the president announced a referendum to confirm it.

The government said in last week’s statement that after “extensive discussions,” lawmakers had decided a public vote wasn’t needed.

“While a referendum is intended to determine the will of the people, the name Naoero has never been lost, but rather waiting to be fully embraced,” the statement said.



In this photo released by the Indonesian National Search and Rescue Agency (BASARNAS), rescuers carry the body of a victim of a ferry fire upon arrival at Indonesian Navy’s 2nd Fleet’s pier in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia on Aug 3. (AP)

Indonesia ferry fire kills 5, number of people missing unknown

Indonesian rescuers were searching for possible missing passengers Monday after rescuing 229 people from a ferry that caught fire the previous day in waters off the main island of Java, leaving at least five people dead.

The Mutiara Sentosa 2 ferry was traveling from Indonesia’s

second-largest city of Surabaya in East Java to the city of Makassar in South Sulawesi, and initial reports said it was carrying 232 passengers and 39 crew members, based on the ship’s manifest, when the fire broke out between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m. in waters off Sumenep regency.

However, by Monday morn-

ing officials said many more people were aboard than listed, and that the number of people still missing was unclear after 229 people were rescued and five bodies recovered. Officials are relying on reports from the families of victims and survivors in an attempt to determine the number of those missing. (AP)

More than 46,000 households remain without water

Prime minister visits quake-hit southern Japan as cleanup begins in intense heat

TOKYO, Aug 3, (AP): Residents in Japan’s quake-hit southwestern prefecture of Kumamoto put out heaps of debris for collection as the region baked under intense heat.

The heat and a lack of water supplies have added to the challenges in the severely damaged areas where Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi briefly visited for the first time since a magnitude 7.1 quake hit Kumamoto Prefecture on Japan’s southern main island of Kyushu on Tuesday.

Thirty-eight people died during the quake, including one who died of apparent heat stroke while taking shelter in a car in hot weather and one other whose cause of death is still being investigated, prefectural officials said Monday.

Residents put out heaps of debris, broken furniture and damaged appliances for collection, while in the towns of Uki and Hikawa, construction of temporary housing began. Some hotels and inns are offering their rooms for evacuees.

More than 46,000 households remained without water and many also faced fuel shortages as the region suffers sweltering heat, stoking fears of heat-related illness. Japan Meteorological Agency predicted that temperatures would rise close to 40 C (104 F) Monday.

More than 8,500 people remain at crowded emergency shelters, such as converted community centers, school gyms and classrooms, many of which lack air-conditioning. Others are sleeping in cars at town hall parking lots and parks, or outside of their homes.

Experts have long warned that inadequate shelter provision leads to crowded conditions and a lack of sanitation and privacy for people forced to leave their homes following disasters.

Takaichi on Monday flew over the affected areas from an army helicopter and visited one of the area’s best-equipped shelters, with cardboard beds, partitions and air-



Japan’s Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi meets evacuees as she visits an evacuation center in Hikawa, southern Japan on Aug 3. (AP)

conditioning, triggering criticisms on social media that her visit distorted reality.

Kumamoto Gov. Takashi Kimura, in his meeting with Takaichi, stressed the “abnormal heat” has been pounding on the already difficult lives of the residents. He sought further government support to improve the living conditions at evacuation centers, saying many of them lack clean water and medical care.

“While taking into consideration the governor’s requests, we will quickly examine what the government can do for the disaster-hit region and affected people and move proactively,” Takaichi said.

Meanwhile, a company that owned a general store in a collapsed shopping mall acknowledged that it had instructed two employees who were killed in a later explosion to return to the building to put sales proceeds into a safe.

Two executives of Habita, a local general store operator that had a shop inside the collapsed Aeon Mall in the town of Kashima, attended the wake Sunday of one of the two victims, 22-year-old Kurumi Otake, and apologized to her parents for the death.

Company sales manager Goji Yuse acknowledged that the company instructed the two to put sales proceeds into the safe if it was possible.

“I wish someone had stopped her,” Otake’s tearful mother told them. “My daughter is not coming back.”

The mall’s operator said it believes the explosion was due to a gas leak and occurred after about 3,000 shoppers had been evacuated to a parking lot following the quake, but some employees remained inside. Rescuers recovered five people and the bodies of seven others from the mall.

The earthquake has left 114 people injured across Kumamoto, authorities said. Some 700 homes were destroyed, and more than 11,300 buildings were damaged, according to Kumamoto prefecture.

Suicide bomber kills 14 at anti-militant rally in northwestern Pakistan: officials

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, Aug 3, (AP): A suicide bomber targeted protesters at an antimilitant rally in northwestern Pakistan on Sunday, killing at least 14 people, mostly civilians and police officers, and wounding more than two dozen others, officials said.

The attack happened in Kabal, a town in Swat Valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, where demonstrators had gathered near a police station, chanting antimilitant slogans and demanding peace, district police chief Omar Khan said.

According to witnesses, shortly before the attack, speakers at the rally said that ensuring security and eliminating militancy were the state’s responsibility. They also accused authorities of failing to act decisively against militants, saying residents wanted to live without fear after years of violence that devastated the region.

Bilal Faizi, a spokesman for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial emergency service, said the attacker struck dozens of people who were chanting antimilitant slogans and demanding peace. Police official Omar Khan said at least nine civilians and



An ambulance rushes towards the hospital carrying injured victims from the site of a suicide bombing, in Kabal, a town in the Swat Valley in Pakistan’s Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Aug 2. (AP)

five officers were among the dead.

Pakistan’s President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned the bombing, expressing deep sorrow over the loss of life. In separate statements they offered condolences to the families of

those killed, prayed for the recovery of the wounded and directed authorities to ensure the wounded receive the best possible medical treatment. Zardari and Sharif also said Pakistan’s fight against terrorism would continue until it is eradicated.

Sudan army drone strike kills 35 at Darfur court – rights group

CAIRO, Aug 3, (AP): At least 35 people were killed in a Sudanese army drone strike on a civil court in Sudan’s Darfur region, a rights group said.

Emergency Lawyers, an independent group documenting atrocities in Sudan, said on Sunday afternoon drones targeted the headquarters of the civil court in Al-Zawiya Gara village in North Darfur State, “a civilian facility that plays a judicial and social role in the region.”

“Directing attacks against civilians and civilian objects constitutes a grave violation of international humanitarian law,” said the group in a statement, and demanded an investigation.

Sudan plunged into all-out war in April 2023, between the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese military, leaving at least 59,000 people killed, according to Armed Conflict Location & Event Data, a conflict monitoring group. Aid groups say the figure is an undercount and the true number could be many times higher.



This grab from video shows smoke rising over Khartoum, Sudan on Sept 26, 2024, after Sudan’s military started an operation to take areas of the capital from its rival, the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. (AP)

Drone warfare has become a signature in the country’s battle, with both sides carrying out strikes. It is now the leading cause of death in Sudan, according to the United Na-

tions, accounting for 80% of civilian deaths during the first four months of 2026.

The Sudanese army did not respond to requests for comment.

Brazil’s Lula launches reelection bid as concerns rise over foreign interference ahead of Oct polls

SAO PAULO, Aug 3, (AP): What is very likely to be the last reelection bid of Brazil’s President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva was confirmed on Sunday by his Workers’ Party as the 80-year-old leader faces increasing pressure from foreign leaders ahead of October’s elections. It will be his seventh race for the top job.

Lula’s rival, Sen. Flávio Bolsonaro, has enjoyed open support from members of US President Donald Trump’s administration, Argentina’s President Javier Milei and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Brazil’s president said in his party convention speech he wants to boost his country’s defense industry, protect its rare minerals, and claimed “no Chinese, no American, no French will touch” these resources without respecting the South American nation’s sovereignty.

“We will have to be much more daring to change a lot of things in this country,” Lula said.

Other members of his party highlighted the risk of foreign intervention in Brazil’s elections, pointing to Trump and Milei. However,

“This election in Brazil determines the future of Latin America,” Edinho Silva, the Workers’ Party chairman, said during Sunday’s convention. Argentina, Para-



Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva greets supporters as he attends the Workers’ Party convention, where he was confirmed as the party’s presidential candidate for the next election, in Sao Paulo, Brazil on Aug 2. (AP)

guay, Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia have elected Trump-inspired presidents in the recent past.

Flávio Bolsonaro’s father, former President Jair Bolsonaro, was an ally of Trump

but is now serving a 27-year sentence under house arrest for an attempted coup.

Lula has managed to draw centrist parties away from his right-wing adversary and arrives at his party’s convention with

higher popularity in the polls than six months ago.

His campaign is specifically boosting a change to Brazil’s income tax system that charges less to people on low incomes and a debt forgiveness program that has quickly become very popular.

Workers’ Party politicians have expressed worries about foreign-sponsored threats of coordinated automated bot campaigns and social media manipulation designed to influence voters and undermine trust in Brazil’s electronic voting system.

On Wednesday at the party convention, Lula said he doesn’t want Trump as an enemy.

Brazilian Vice President Geraldo Alckmin, who will run again alongside Lula, said Sunday that Brazil’s electronic voting system “is so good that it doesn’t take votes from Argentines and Americans,” in a reference to Milei and Trump.

The Trump administration has also imposed new tariffs on Brazilian exports and changed the designation of two local criminal groups to terrorist groups, which legal analysts say could hurt companies and open a path for other kinds of intervention. Both moves took place after Sen. Bolsonaro visited the White House and the Department of State.

وزارة التجارة والصناعة
Ministry of Commerce & Industry
وزارة التاجرة والصناعة

RECALL INFORMATION

RANGE ROVER

RANGE ROVER

Model Year:
2022 - 2027

DEFENDER

DEFENDER

Model Year:
2027 - 2020

DISCOVERY

DISCOVERY

Model Year:
2027 - 2021

RECALL REASON

The connector for the driver’s airbag system may be subject to corrosion over time.

REMEDY

The vehicle will be inspected, and the appropriate corrective action will be carried out in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions, free of cost.

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Hotline: 1846464
Please book in advance to serve you better.

This Recall is in full pursuant to articles 142, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48 and 49 of no. 22-2013
Issuing the executive by law no. 131-2014 (on Consumer Protection)

To develop Kuwait's next generation of investment professionals

Union of Investment Companies launches the first edition of ‘ATHAR’ program

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Union of Investment Companies (UIC) has announced the launch of the first edition of ATHAR, a pioneering initiative designed to build a direct bridge between universities, Kuwaiti students and graduates, and investment companies. The program aims to help participants transition from academic learning to real-world professional experience by providing first hand exposure to the financial and investment industry and its evolving workplace requirements.

The launch of ATHAR reflects UIC's belief that investing in national human capital is one of the fundamental pillars of sustainable economic development. UIC believes that the future growth of Kuwait's investment sector depends not only on developing sophisticated financial products and investment solutions, but also on preparing highly qualified national talent capable of leading the industry in the years ahead.

ATHAR offers an integrated framework that brings together universities, students, and investment companies in a practical learning environment. Participants gain hands-on experience within investment firms, enabling them to explore different areas of the financial and investment industry, develop professional skills, and engage directly with industry leaders and specialists.

The program also provides investment companies with an opportunity to engage early with promising Kuwaiti talent, assess their potential, and contribute directly to developing the skills required by a rapidly evolving labor market.

Al-Terkait: Investing in National Talent Is an Investment in Kuwait's Economic Future

Commenting on the launch, Mr. Abdullah H. Al-Terkait, Chairman of the Union of Investment Companies, said that ATHAR reflects UIC's vision of the role the investment sector should play in supporting Kuwait's economy and strengthening national human capital.

"At the Union of Investment Companies, we believe that the responsibility of the investment sector extends beyond managing capital and investments. It also includes helping develop the human capital that will shape Kuwait's future economy. ATHAR was created to establish a genuine connection between higher education and the private sector, giving young Kuwaitis the opportunity to experience the investment industry



UIC's first edition of ATHAR.

from within rather than learning about it solely in the classroom."

He added: "A competitive economy requires national professionals equipped with knowledge, practical experience, innovation, and sound decision-making skills. Investing in young people is therefore not simply a complementary aspect of development—it is one of the most important long-term investments in achieving sustainable economic growth."

Mr. Abdullah Al-Terkait noted that the strong participation of investment companies demonstrates the sector's commitment to preparing the next generation of professionals. He explained that ATHAR promotes deeper collaboration between academia and the investment industry, helping educational outcomes become more closely aligned with the skills and specializations demanded by the labor market.

He continued: "We aspire for ATHAR to become far more than a short-term internship program. Our objective is for it to serve as the starting point of meaningful career journeys for participants while providing investment companies with a platform to identify and nurture promising Kuwaiti talent, ultimately strengthening the presence of national professionals across the financial and investment sector."

ATHAR: From Academic Learning to Professional Experience

The ATHAR Program Team, comprising Farah Alajmi, Salem Almezzi, and Omar Almutairi, explained that the initiative was developed in response to the growing need to bridge the gap between academic education and professional practice, transforming traditional internships into

a comprehensive learning journey that combines practical training, professional development, and meaningful engagement with the labor market.

The team noted that the program focuses on developing both technical and professional competencies, while also strengthening leadership, teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills. Participants are given direct exposure to the operations of investment companies and the wide range of career opportunities available across the financial and investment industry.

Speaking on behalf of the team, Farah Alajmi said: "ATHAR is more than a training program; it is a collaborative platform that brings together students, universities, and investment companies within one integrated experience. Its greatest strength lies in this partnership, enabling participants to gain greater clarity about their future careers while acquiring practical experience that helps them enter the workforce with confidence. At the same time, it allows investment companies to identify promising national talent and contribute to its development."

UIC emphasized that ATHAR is designed to achieve several strategic objectives, including enhancing the employability of Kuwaiti youth, strengthening collaboration between universities and the investment sector, developing professional and leadership skills, increasing awareness of career opportunities within the financial and investment industry, and creating direct connections between emerging talent, investment companies, and industry leaders.

UIC concluded by affirming that the first edition of ATHAR represents the beginning of a scalable and sustainable national initiative rather than a one-time program. UIC intends to expand future editions by increasing the number of participating students, investment companies, and academic institutions, thereby maximizing the program's long-term impact on Kuwait's labor market.

The launch of ATHAR forms part of the Union of Investment Companies' broader strategy to strengthen the investment sector's contribution to Kuwait's economic and social development, foster stronger partnerships between education, the private sector, and youth, and help build a more competitive, knowledge-driven, and sustainable economy powered by skilled national human capital.

Panel shares investment career tips

InvestGB organizes panel discussion with Kuwait's investment leaders in celebration of ‘Interns’ Day’

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Gulf Capital Investment Company K.S.C.C. "InvestGB", the investment arm of Gulf Bank, hosted an "Interns' Day" event featuring a special panel discussion titled "The Journey to Success in the World of Investment: Professional and Investment Lessons from the Financial and Investment Sector." The session brought together leading figures from Kuwait's investment and business community to share their professional experiences and the key lessons learned throughout their careers, highlighting the skills and habits that help young people build a successful professional and financial future.

Moderated by Mr. Talal AlKhamis, Director of Equities and Fixed Income at InvestGB, the session explored major milestones of professional success in the investment sector, the skills and qualities that distinguish promising talent, and the importance of early investment in both money and self, alongside lessons drawn from the careers of leading financial and investment figures.

The panel featured Ms. Lamia Karam, Chairperson of InvestGB and General Manager of Treasury at Gulf Bank; Mr. Mohammed Jaffar, Managing Partner at Faith Capital Holding; Ms. Dalal Al Rayes, CEO and Co-Founder of Spare and Board Member at Gulf Bank; and Mr. Tareq AlSaleh, Managing Director of Wealth Management at InvestGB.

The session was attended by a number of leading figures from Kuwait's institutional and business community, including Ms. Layla Al-Mutairi, CEO of INJAZ Kuwait; Ms. Fadwa Darwish, Secretary General of the Union of Investment Companies; Mr. Dari Al Bader, General Manager of Corporate Affairs at Gulf Bank and Board Member at InvestGB; Mr. Abdulrahman AlKhubaizi, Assistant General Manager of Private Banking at Gulf Bank and Board Member at InvestGB; Ms. Anoud AlHathran, Independent Board Member at InvestGB; Mr. Hani AlAwadhi, Vice Chairman and CEO of InvestGB; and Mr. Ammar Hajeyah, Chief Investment Officer of InvestGB.

Speakers addressed a range of topics, including how they began their careers and entered the world of investment and financial services, the skills required to build a successful career in the investment sector, and the importance of taking calculated professional risks and learning from experience. The session also covered how to manage a first salary and build sound investment habits from an early age, the importance of self-investment in achieving professional and personal success, the qualities that distinguish promising talent in the workplace, and the top advice speakers wished they had known at the start of their careers.

Commenting on the occasion, Ms. Sara Al-Muzaini, Senior Vice President of Human Resources at InvestGB, said: "Through this session, we wanted to provide our interns the opportunity to meet inspiring leaders who have succeeded in this sector and hear directly about their professional experiences and the lessons they have learned along the way. Learning from real world experiences leaves a far deeper impact on young people than any theoretical discussion."

She added: "Investing in young minds today is an investment in Kuwait's future, and we are proud to provide opportunities that empower the next generation and open meaningful, purposeful career paths for them. At InvestGB, we do not simply build a professional work environment; we work to establish a comprehensive professional community built on continuous



Tareq AlSaleh, Lamia Karam, Mohammed Jaffar, Dalal Al Rayes, and Talal AlKhamis



Hani AlAwadhi, Layla AlMutairi, Dari Al Bader, Abdulrahman AlKhubaizi, and Ammar Hajeyah

growth and shared purpose, which is directly reflected in our excellence as a leading company."

This initiative reflects InvestGB's ongoing commitment to supporting Kuwaiti youth and empowering national talent. In May, the company announced the launch of the fourth edition of its "IGB Internship Program," a step that underscores its role as one of the most active private sector companies in supporting and developing young talent in Kuwait.

The program offers hands on training and outstanding opportunities for professional development and employment for Kuwaiti youth, with many participants successfully transitioning to full time roles at InvestGB. Since its launch in 2023, the program has attracted more than 100 interns from high schools and universities, as



well as bachelor's and master's degree holders, with participants from more than 20 local and international universities, including Kuwait University, Gulf University for Science and Technology, the American University of Kuwait, Babson College, Bentley University, Columbia University, MIT, Cornell University, UCLA, and King's College London.

The program has given interns real-world, hands-on experience and opportunities to develop the personal and professional skills needed to keep pace with the evolving job market, with 10% of participants joining the company after completing the program, reflecting the initiative's success as an effective platform for discovering, attracting, and developing national talent.

InvestGB's investment team comprises 47 investment specialists, 60% of whom are Kuwaiti, while women represent 45% of the total workforce. At the leadership level, Kuwaitis hold 80% of executive positions at the company, figures that underscore InvestGB's commitment to developing national talent, fostering a diverse and high performing work environment, and contributing to shaping the future of Kuwait's financial and investment sector.

General index up 117.39 points

Boursa Kuwait ends higher

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Monday's session higher, with the general index rising 117.39 points, or 1.33 percent, to 8,913.85 points.

The main market index climbed 457.42 points, or 5.22 percent, to 9,216.48 points, while the premier market index added 51.07 points, or 0.55 percent, to 9,312.08 points. The Main 50 Index also advanced, gaining 73.55 points, or 0.73 percent, to 10,173.59 points.

Trading activity on the session

totaled 296 million shares through 19,491 cash transactions, with a value of KD 84.1 million, or about USD 274.3 million.

On the main market, 126.4 million shares changed hands through 7,926 transactions worth KD 21.2 million, while the premier market saw 169.6 million shares traded across 11,565 transactions valued at KD 62.8 million. The Main 50 Index recorded 96.5 million shares traded in 5,749 cash transactions worth KD 16.7 million, or about USD 54.4 million.

Gulf Bank's red plus card offers 50% talabat discount

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: As part of its ongoing commitment to empowering and rewarding young customers, and under its "Red'y to Impress" marketing campaign, Gulf Bank has launched an exclusive offer in collaboration with Talabat for holders of the red plus prepaid card. The initiative reinforces the Bank's position as a leading financial institution offering innovative banking solutions and value-added services tailored to the aspirations of young people.

Holders of the red plus prepaid card can enjoy an exclusive 50% discount on their orders placed through the TalabatApp every Monday, with a maximum discount of KD 3 per order. To qualify, payment must be made using a red plusprepaid card, with a minimum spend of KD 4 per transaction. The offer is limited to the first 1,000 customers each week.

This promotion builds on Gulf Bank's "Red'y to Impress" campaign, which was recently launched at Al Khiran Mall to celebrate the modern lifestyle of young people and connect them with innovative banking products that reflect their individuality and energy.

Through exclusive youth-focused offers, Gulf Bank continues to bring its "Always Moving Forward" promise to life by providing young customers with

unique benefits that complement their everyday lives—whether at university, at work, or during their leisure time.

In this context, Gulf Bank stated that its partnership with Talabat aligns with its strategy of delivering innovative products and services designed specifically for young customers, while creating distinctive banking experiences that meet the expectations and lifestyles of the next generation.

The Bank added that this initiative goes beyond a promotional campaign, representing a strategic step towards building long-term relationships with its young customers and strengthening Gulf Bank's position as their preferred banking partner in Kuwait. The initiative also supports the national economy by fostering a culture of innovative partnerships.

It is worth noting that Gulf Bank's red youth account received the Best Gen Z Product in Kuwait award at the Asian Banking & Finance Retail Banking Awards 2026, in recognition of the Bank's commitment to developing innovative banking products for young customers.

These include the red account and the red plus prepaid card, which provide exclusive offers and discounts that help young customers manage their spending more effectively.



Exploring new export routes

KPC approves operational, financial contingency plan

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) approved an unprecedented operational, financial contingency and response plan to mitigate the impact of the anticipated financial shortfall resulting from the complex logistic repercussions of the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and the damages caused by Iranian missile and drone attacks, say reliable sources.

Sources revealed that the new strategy was formulated with a comprehensive vision to ensure the sustainability of operations and secure revenue streams under the pressure of such exceptional circumstances.

Sources explained the plan is based on an innovative mechanism to convert the infrastructure and logistic assets of the oil sector into cash through investment deals and partnerships with global financial and industrial alliances, similar to the successful ‘Shaheen’ deal.

Sources confirmed that this new investment approach and the upcoming deals will ensure the achievement of two main objectives, including that the first of which is to cover the financial shortfall and provide substantial cash, enabling KPC and its financial portfolios to effectively deal with emergencies. Sources added that second objective is to preserve natural oil wealth, as the planned partnerships will not include ownership of oil wells or fields, which remain under national sovereignty, protected by the Constitution and laws.

Sources pointed out that the cur-

rent crisis prompted decision-makers in Kuwait to seriously plan for the construction of alternative oil export pipelines.

Sources also disclosed that KPC is eyeing attractive and select acquisition opportunities in global markets by forging partnerships with major international oil companies.

Sources stated that the financial returns KPC will reap from the ‘Shaheen’ deal and the upcoming acquisitions will enable it to make beneficial acquisitions to complement its current portfolio, with the aim of increasing its overall return on investment.

Sources affirmed that KPC is working on this plan to raise operational efficiency and reliability, and elevate Kuwaiti products to the highest international quality standards.

Meanwhile, the same sources revealed that KPC is currently studying a range of options for establishing new oil refineries abroad. Sources clarified that the main objectives of this move are to diversify and expand the portfolio of high-value refined petroleum products and derivatives, as well as utilize Kuwaiti oil in investment projects that guarantee a steady and profitable flow of financial returns.

Although sources have yet to specify the countries considered for hosting the planned refineries, they confirmed that KPC believes that the three existing overseas refineries are insufficient to secure the oil interests of Kuwait and achieve the necessary logistic flexibility, thus, the need for an urgent expansion of refineries beyond the borders.

Eyeing \$4 million bpd target

KOC partners with global firms to upgrade pipelines

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The decision of Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) to lease its oil pipelines to international companies under a 20-year contract is a major and well-planned deal, say sources from the oil sector.

Sources disclosed that KOC took this step to raise the efficiency of its logistics infrastructure and convert non-sovereign assets into cash, thereby, redirecting returns and investments towards the realization of major development goals.

Sources said this international partnership offers the company and the country five benefits that support the oil sector ambitions and the 2035 goals for increasing production capacity.

First, it allows absolute focus on exploration and production, directing the administrative and technical efforts of KOC towards its core operation of drilling wells and developing onshore and offshore fields. The burden of maintenance and transportation management is left to the foreign partner, thus, accelerating the achievement of the production target of four million barrels per day.

Second, it converts non-sovereign assets into cash to attract immediate capital liquidity. This deal provides substantial and immediate cash flows for KOC and Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), easing pressure on the general budget of the country and ensuring self-financing for major capital projects.

Third, the deal contributes to the transfer of global advanced technology and the modernization

of infrastructure, as the foreign companies leasing the pipeline are committed to utilizing the latest global digital technologies for pipeline monitoring, such as early leak detection systems and artificial intelligence. This will raise transportation efficiency and reduce operational losses.

Fourth, the international companies will be responsible for maintaining the pipeline network in accordance with strict international environmental protocols, guaranteeing the reduction of carbon emissions and protecting the soil and groundwater from leakage.

Fifth, the significance of the deal lies in developing and qualifying national human resources by training and preparing Kuwaiti engineers and technicians to manage and operate such an advanced system.

Sources explained that the approach of KOC in involving the local private sector is in line with its partnership with foreign companies in the implementation of its major projects.

Sources pointed out that the importance of empowering local companies lies in stimulating the economic cycle and retaining capital within the Kuwaiti market, instead of allowing it to flow abroad. “This will lead to the growth of non-oil sectors and create real and sustainable job opportunities for Kuwaiti youths,” sources said.

Sources added that reliance on local contractors and manufacturers contributes to building a strong domestic supply base, which boosts the national economy’s self-sufficiency in many industries and services related to the energy sector and supports the small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Brent, WTI plunge

Oil falls 5% as Iran deal nears

NEW YORK, Aug 3, (AP): Oil prices fell sharply Sunday after President Donald Trump said he would order U.S. forces to hold off on new strikes against Iran, claiming that a deal to end the fighting in the Middle East was near.

A resolution to the conflict, which has lasted more than five months, could give oil shippers the ability to send vessels out of the Persian Gulf, where tankers of oil and other products have been trapped during the fighting.

The price of U.S. crude oil fell 5% to \$80.79 per barrel Sunday night. The price of Brent crude, the international standard, fell 5% to \$83.87 per barrel.

Oil prices have been swinging widely since the U.S. and Israel launched attacks on Iran in late February, pushing past \$100 per barrel multiple times during the

spring.

As the conflict continued, high oil prices seeped into the cost of gasoline, jet fuel and many other products that are delivered using diesel. Motorists have paid more at the pump and customers shelled out more for airfare due to higher jet fuel costs. In some countries, fuel supplies ran low, leading to rationing and sporadic closures of schools and government offices.

Meanwhile, oil and gas companies amassed huge profits in the spring due to the high oil, gasoline and diesel prices that resulted when petroleum shippers couldn’t get through the critical Strait of Hormuz, a narrow waterway that borders Iran, due to the fighting.

Prices for U.S. crude oil on Sunday night remained about 20% higher than before the conflict began.

Recognizing its efforts with four ISO certifications specializing in human resources

NBK continues its leadership in human capital management with the highest global standards

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: The National Bank of Kuwait continued to strengthen its position as a leading institution in human capital management across the region, through an integrated strategy that places human talent at the core of its priorities, regarding it as the fundamental pillar for achieving sustainable growth and enhancing the Group’s competitiveness.

This approach reflects NBK’s unwavering commitment to fostering a comprehensive work environment that aligns with global best practices and contributes to attracting, empowering, and developing talent, further supporting the achievement of its long-term strategic objectives.

Over the past years, NBK’s Group Human Resources has continued to implement strategic plans and initiatives, including improving policies and procedures, promoting a culture of performance and excellence, and investing in professional and leadership development programs. The Bank also adopted advanced practices in recruitment, talent management, and workforce planning. These efforts contributed to building a comprehensive institutional framework for human capital management based on governance, efficiency, and sustainability, which keeps pace with the evolving demands of the local and international business environments.

These efforts resulted in NBK recently obtaining four specialized global ISO quality certifications for human resources, including ISO 23326:2022 (Employee Engagement), ISO 30414:2025 (Human Capital Reporting and Disclosure), ISO 30405:2023 (Recruitment Guidelines), and ISO 10015:2019 (Competence Management, Training, and Effectiveness Measurement). This achievement demonstrates the advanced level attained by the Group’s human resources framework and its success in implementing global best practices across the entire employee journey, which has made NBK the first and only bank in the GCC to obtain this comprehensive suite of specialized international HR certifications.

On this occasion, Mr. Emad Al-Ablani, Group Chief Human Resources Officer at National Bank of Kuwait, commented: “At NBK, we view human capital as the primary driver of our business success and sustainable growth, which is why we are committed to developing a comprehensive system that empowers employees to reach their full professional potential and provides a stimulating work environment aligned with global best practices. Continuous investment in our human capital has been a key factor in enhancing the Group’s competitiveness and solidifying its leading position within the banking sector”.

“At NBK”, Al-Ablani added, we



take pride in being the first bank in the GCC to obtain this comprehensive suite of ISO certifications specialized in human resources, which underscores the success of the strategy we have adopted over the years to develop various aspects of human capital management. Most importantly, it reflects NBK’s ability to transform global best practices into a comprehensive operational framework that promotes innovation, enhances operational efficiency, and elevates the employee experience, further contributing to the realization of our long-term corporate objectives”.

He also explained that the ISO 23326:2022 certification, which focuses on measuring and enhancing employee engagement, reflects the Bank’s success in promoting a positive, motivating work environment that boosts levels of engagement and a sense of belonging while embedding a corporate culture rooted in trust, communication, and empowerment. Employee engagement is a key indicator linked to productivity, talent retention, and sustainable performance, which are priorities to which the Bank attaches great importance within its human resources strategy.

Additionally, Al-Ablani noted that the ISO 30414:2025 certification, re-

lated to human capital reporting and disclosure, affirms the Bank’s commitment to the highest standards of transparency and governance by adopting global methodologies for measuring, analyzing, and disclosing human capital indicators. It was further emphasized that these practices support decision-making by providing accurate data and indicators that facilitate effective workforce planning and talent management.

Regarding talent acquisition, Al-Ablani pointed out that the ISO 30405:2023 certification, which focuses on recruitment guidelines, demonstrates the efficiency of NBK’s recruitment processes and their alignment with international best practices. This ensures the attraction of top talent and expertise while providing professional, fair, and transparent recruitment experience that supports the Bank’s future plans and objectives.

Al-Ablani continued: “As for the ISO 10015:2019 certification, which covers competency management, training, and effectiveness measurement, it embodies the Bank’s integrated approach to human capital development that spans the entire process, from identifying training needs and designing development programs

to measuring their actual impact on individual and organizational performance, further ensuring maximum value is derived from investments in learning and development”.

Together, these standards cover a wide range of human resources functions, including talent acquisition and recruitment, performance management, talent and competency management, learning and development, employee relations, compensation and benefits, human capital reporting and disclosure, and HR governance, reflecting the comprehensive policies and procedures NBK employs to manage its human resources in accordance with an advanced global framework.

NBK continues to invest in developing its human capital by launching high-quality initiatives and programs aimed at enhancing leadership and professional skills, fostering a culture of continuous learning, and creating a work environment that supports inclusivity and innovation. These efforts reinforce its position as a preferred employer in the region and underscore its ability to achieve sustainable growth and create long-term value for various stakeholders.

Highlighting youth-focused banking solutions

Weyay partners with PAAET to support youth

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Weyay Bank, Kuwait’s first digital bank, concluded its participation as a strategic partner of the “My Right Start” exhibition, organized by the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) at The Avenues from July 30 to August 1. Through its interactive booth, Weyay engaged with high school graduates and prospective university students, offering guidance on academic pathways and opportunities while equipping them with the knowledge needed to make informed educational and financial decisions with confidence.

The exhibition was attended by Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam, Director General of PAAET, and Mohammed Al Othman, Chief Executive Officer of Consumer and Digital Banking at National Bank of Kuwait Group, alongside senior representatives from both organizations.

As part of its participation, Weyay showcased a range of innovative digital banking solutions designed specifically for young people, with a strong focus on promoting financial literacy and encouraging healthy saving and spending habits from the start of their university journey. The Bank also introduced students to its SELECT card, tailored for university students and of-



fering exclusive benefits, rewards, and discounts across a wide network of leading brands. The card is designed to enhance students’ everyday experiences while supporting their evolving lifestyle needs.

Weyay’s participation reflects its ongoing commitment to empowering Kuwait’s youth and supporting them at every stage of their journey through seamless, digitally driven banking experiences.

The “My Right Start” campaign and exhibition aim to raise awareness among students and parents about ad-

mission and registration procedures, while providing insights into academic and vocational specializations that align with students’ interests, capabilities, and future labor market demands.

Commenting on the initiative, Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam, Director General of PAAET, said: “The ‘My Right Start’ campaign reflects PAAET’s commitment to engaging directly with students and their parents, providing them with the academic guidance needed to make informed decisions about educational pathways that align with their aspirations and the evolving needs of the job

market. The campaign also highlights the importance of exploring the opportunities available through the colleges and institutes of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, helping students gain a clearer understanding of their options for future academic and professional success.”

Mohammed Al Othman, Chief Executive Officer of Personal and Digital Banking at NBK Group, added: “We are proud to be a strategic partner of the ‘My Right Start’ admissions and registration campaign, which underscores our commitment to empowering Kuwait’s youth during one of the most important transitions in their lives. Preparing for university goes beyond academic success; it also includes fostering financial inclusion and equipping young people with the digital tools and financial skills they need to manage their finances independently and responsibly.”

This partnership highlights the shared commitment of Weyay Bank and PAAET to delivering a holistic support model for young people, combining academic guidance with financial empowerment to help build a generation that is well prepared for future success.



Photos during the event.

In line with its support to Diraya campaign

Kuwait Finance House raises awareness of fake ads & urges customers to protect banking data

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: As part of its continuous efforts to support the “Let’s Be Aware” (Diraya) awareness campaign, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has urged customers to remain vigilant against fraudulent advertisements, particularly during peak holiday travel when demand for hotel, chalet, and airline ticket bookings is highest.

In a press release, KFH highlighted that scammers are increasingly leveraging advanced technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, to mask international calls and banking links, deceptively making them appear to originate from legitimate local sources.

KFH stressed the importance of exercising caution when booking travel accommodations and services. The Bank advised customers to exclusively use verified, reputable official websites and companies, and to refrain entirely from making payments through

unverified or insecure links to avoid falling victim to financial fraud.

KFH noted that fraudsters continually adapt their methods to steal personal data and funds by targeting seasonal needs. During holidays, scammers post fake ads with unrealistically low prices for chalets, hotels, and flights. Victims often realize too late that these deceptive offers are sophisticated traps designed to compromise their personal data and bank accounts.

To safeguard against these risks, KFH advised customers to thoroughly verify the authenticity of websites before entering any sensitive information. The bank further encouraged the public to exercise maximum prudence and to refrain from responding to fund transfer requests without first directly verifying the identity of the recipient.

KFH reiterated that customers must never share confidential information, such as national ID details, One-Time Passwords (OTPs), or bank card PINs, via telephone, email, or any other channel. The bank emphasized that it never contacts customers via phone, email, or text message to request or update personal financial data.

KFH reaffirmed its pioneering commitment to driving Diraya campaign, an initiative launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait in collaboration with the Kuwait Banking Association and local banks. KFH continues to proactively raise financial literacy across all segments of society by disseminating educational content across its official social media platforms and e-channels, highlighting prevalent fraud schemes, and sharing best practices for securing personal banking information.



Supports banking transactions through Arabic & English voice

Warba launches agentic AI banking assistant ‘Bdr AI’

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Warba Bank announced the launch of “Bdr AI,” an agentic AI banking assistant integrated into its mobile banking application. The solution enables retail customers to complete supported banking transactions using natural-language voice or text commands, expanding the bank’s use of artificial intelligence across its digital banking services.

The initiative supports Warba Bank’s operational strategy to simplify routine banking transactions, improve operational efficiency, and expand access to automated digital banking support around the clock.

Key Capabilities:

The “Bdr AI” solution enables conversational banking through the following capabilities:

- **Bilingual Support:** Supports Arabic, including conversational Kuwaiti Arabic, and English through voice and text interactions.
- **Streamlined Execution:** Enables users to initiate supported banking operations using voice or text commands, reducing the need to navigate multiple app menus or manually enter transaction details.
- **Request Interpretation:** Interprets customer requests and initiates



Anwar Badr Al-Ghaith

supported transactions within the bank’s established security and control framework.

Executive Commentary:

Anwar Badr Al-Ghaith, Deputy Chief Executive Officer for Digital Transformation and Operations at Warba Bank, stated:

“The launch of ‘Bdr AI’ expands how customers interact with Warba Bank’s digital services by introducing agentic AI capabilities. Its conversational interface provides a faster and more flexible way to complete supported banking transactions



using voice or text.”

Al-Ghaith added that continued investment in scalable digital infrastructure remains a core priority, supporting operational efficiency while maintaining established security and control standards across the bank’s digital channels.

Broader Digital Cooperation:

Separately, Warba Bank announced that it had joined the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) as an observer. Observer status enables the bank to participate in specialized policy labs and working groups

alongside global digital economy experts, supporting financial innovation and contributing to the objectives of Kuwait Vision 2035.

About Warba Bank:

Warba Bank is a leading Islamic bank in Kuwait with a strong focus on Sharia-compliant digital banking. With one of the largest shareholder bases in the country, the bank delivers innovative financial products and services, reinforcing its position as a digital-focused financial institution.

Bayreuth tests AI on stage amid boos

AI opera experiment meets mixed reaction

BERLIN, Aug 3, (AP): An experiment with artificial intelligence at the annual Richard Wagner festival in the southeastern German town of Bayreuth drew boos from the audience after producing a staging that appeared to leave some spectators confused.

Curator Marcus Lobbes and his team were greeted with boos and whistles as they took to the stage at the end of Saturday evening’s performance of “Götterdämmerung,” German news agency dpa reported. However, there was warm applause for the singers and musicians, and particularly for conductor Christian Thielemann.

Festival organizers said ahead of the performance that it would be the first time AI took part on stage at the event, “not as a character, but as an image-generating force.” They said that singers would be “the fixed point within a visually seething cosmos of light, texture, history, and associa-

tion, amidst projections that erupt, constantly shift, and merge into one another.”

The AI-assisted projections included scenes from previous performances of Wagner’s “Ring” cycle and historical themes, and drew from images pre-selected by Lobbes, the director of the Academy for Theater and Digitality in Dortmund, and his team.

The collage that the technology projected on stage puzzled the audience, dpa reported, with images including former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, the towers of the World Trade Center after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, and a special postage stamp marking German reunification in 1990.

The festival website said that “every performance will be unique - because the images and associations never stand still.” Two more performances are scheduled.

Paid Trump posts stir ethics debate

Trump’s Truth Social sells early access to posts

NEW YORK, Aug 3, (AP): President Donald Trump knows the world hangs on his every word. Now he wants you to pay for it.

The social media posts of the world’s most powerful man are going on sale Saturday when his Truth Social business begins offering sneak peeks of them to Wall Street traders willing to pay up. The move raises the prospect of big profits for Trump’s company and big questions about insider trading and using public office for private gain.

Similar fast speed feeds are sold by other social media firms and media providers, but Truth Social doesn’t just distribute the news, it makes it, regularly rattling markets as Trump posts policy changes on everything from war to central bank leadership to tariffs.

“If this was the CEO of a public company, this would be jail time,” said Irene Aldridge, head of Able Alpha Trading, which doesn’t plan to buy the service. “We have a President of the United States who has the front seat to all the action, who makes all the decisions, and he’s disclosing this ahead of time to a select group.”

Asked about the propriety of the new service and whether White House lawyers had vetted it, Trump’s press office declined to comment, referring questions to Truth Social’s publicly traded parent. That company, Trump Media & Technology, issued a statement blasting Democratic critics for mischaracterizing the service “out of ideological opposition to free markets or a failure to grasp the distinction between public and nonpublic information - or, quite possibly, both.”

A prolific poster, Trump has sent stocks, bonds and currencies soaring and plunging with his online musings and threats. That presents opportunities for so-called high frequency traders that specialize in buying and selling within millise-



President Donald Trump holds up an image taken from his Truth Social account at an event about coal, Thursday, June 4, 2026, in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington. (AP)

onds, exploiting tiny, fleeting difference in prices.

Just this month, Trump has threatened on Truth Social to slap higher tariffs on Canada, kill a nuclear deal with Saudi Arabia and widen the Iran war. With advanced knowledge, traders betting on a plunge in the Canadian dollar, a drop in nuclear energy stocks and a jump in oil futures could have raked in big profits.

“For the big guys, it’s going to be something they need,” said Joe Saluzzi, co-founder of Themis Trading, who estimates about 100 of high frequency firms might be willing to pay for the service. “It’s market-moving information.”

Dubbed Truth API, the service comes as these firms are spending more on feeds and servers that bypass slower internet connections with direct lines to news and data sources. The chance for profits is greater than ever thanks artificial intelligence’s ability to read posts and articles more accurately

for market-making changes and Trump’s penchant for making news online.

Traders profit when prices jump up and down, and with his taste for cliffhangers, threats and policy reversals America’s first reality-TV president provides plenty of potentially market-moving content.

The reversals are especially profitable, allowing traders to win both ways - jumping ahead of stocks moving up or down to a post threatening something, then cashing out within thousands of a second, then betting the other way.

In addition to Trump, the service will include posts from other “high ranking” Truth Social contributors, including possibly his two oldest sons, Donald Jr. and Eric, who along with the father are heavily followed by users.

Truth Social has said that the information will be released to the traders and the general public at the same time so there really isn’t an issue of fairness. But Themis Trad-

ing’s Saluzzi, a critic of high speed trading, says that’s a red herring because when the posts are received, not when they are released, is what matters.

“Somebody who buys the info and has a system built to process it will be able to act quicker than you and me,” said Saluzzi, adding in reference to everyday, small stock buyers, “The loser is always the retail investor.”

Aside from policy scoops, another reason to sign up has emerged in recent months: Trump is posting more about publicly traded companies, praising ones he likes in a way that sets off buying frenzies.

“The pimping of specific companies - obviously Wall Street would like to know that before other people,” said Dylan Hedler-Gaudette, a federal ethics rule expert at the watchdog Project on Government Oversight. “It’s a real mess.”

In April, moments after Trump praised Palantir Technologies in a post that included its stock symbol, the price briefly jumped the most it had in an entire year. Later that month, Trump posted, “Congratulations on Intel doing such a great job,” and the stock immediately jumped in after-hours trading.

Just which firms are signing up for the feed is unclear. Asked for comment, none of the half dozen most well known high-speed traders such as Citadel Securities and XTX Markets replied. If just three sign up for the \$100,000 a month fee, that would double revenue at Trump Media, which reported taking in \$3.7 million last year.

The company can use their business.

Stock in the Truth Social parent has plunged 75% since Trump took office last year as the company keeps reporting hundreds of millions in losses despite the president’s help driving traffic to its site by posting major decisions there.

Will the AI stock rally benefit all Americans?

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

□ □ □

By Patrick J. Schena
Tufts University

Creating a government fund to crown AI stock and benefit all Americans would require many hard choices.

Should the U.S. government require artificial intelligence companies to transfer half of their stock to a sovereign wealth fund - a government-run fund that invests surplus state revenues for long-term savings and economic stability?

About 7 in 10 Americans who were asked this question in a June 2026 survey answered that it should. The survey was conducted around the time that Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont introduced related legislation.

His measure is intended to create government oversight over disruptive AI threats, while allowing all Americans to benefit from the value the technology creates.

And, on July 13, about 200 economists and computer scientists, including 16 Nobel Prize winners, also raised their voices about the disruptions posed by AI, warning that “AI may become radically more powerful over the next 10 years.” What AI does to the economy, they continued, “could bring risks, including large-scale job displacement, as well as opportunities such as major gains in living standards.”

The letter’s signatories called for AI use that “complements humans and benefits society.”

low levels that allow Alaska to generate surplus earnings.

Since 1982, the fund has made payments - through what it calls dividends - to Alaska residents age 1 year old and older. These individual payments vary year to year, peaking at more than \$3,200 per recipient in 2022. It’s set at \$1,200 for 2026.

Although President Donald Trump first floated the concept of a U.S. sovereign wealth fund in February 2025, his administration has made little progress advancing that idea.

The administration has instead been an active investor in several strategic sectors, including defense, energy, semiconductors and critical minerals. The 30 such deals it has struck since January 2025 total \$27 billion.

They include the federal government’s investments in U.S. Steel and Intel. These investments were completed independently by various federal agencies. They include buying stock in private companies, which means that the U.S. government benefits if the companies pay dividends to shareholders. The government also benefits if the shares go up in value and the stock is sold for a profit.

In June, Vice President JD Vance indicated that the White House would support extending this strategy to include the government owning stock in AI companies.

Today, the income generated from U.S. government stock holdings is returned to the government, but without any specific use defined upfront.

If income from AI investments were to be treated in the same way, I see no rules or programs currently in place that would specifically direct those funds to offset negative impacts from AI, including those related to employment and income levels.

Could a sovereign wealth fund play that role?

Before establishing any kind of fund intended to offset damage to the economy or to workers that AI may cause, the government would have to answer several tough questions.

Is it investing in companies or getting their stock through taxes or some other arrangement?

Who decides which companies it will invest in?

Where would the money come from to finance these investments?

How would the government earn income from these investments?

Investing in any new technology is risky. AI companies are high-growth and cash-hungry, with uncertain prospects. What happens if AI companies are not competitive or profitable and their stock prices go down?

Even if the government began to own shares in AI companies, that would not necessarily mean those companies would be paying for any disruption their products may be causing to the U.S. labor market and economy. That would require policymakers to agree on how these investments should be made, how risks to these returns ought to be managed, and how any income that the government may earn from these investments could be used.

Establishing a sovereign wealth fund to capture wealth created by AI to benefit all Americans could be a start. Making it deliver on the expectations that would accompany its creation would require consensus, discipline and strong governance to do effectively. All of which, I am afraid, are in short supply in today’s Washington. (AP)

Signs that Americans are becoming increasingly wary of AI are multiplying. Concerns not only revolve around what AI might do to the job market, but also around the broader economy.

I’ve spent nearly 20 years studying sovereign wealth funds. They are typically set up as government entities, staffed by professional investors and tasked with concrete investment goals. Specific laws define how they receive the cash they invest. Similar rules define when cash can be withdrawn and why.

Although sovereign wealth funds serve a wide range of purposes, their most basic function, broadly defined, is to hold and invest government savings to support the current and future needs of citizens.

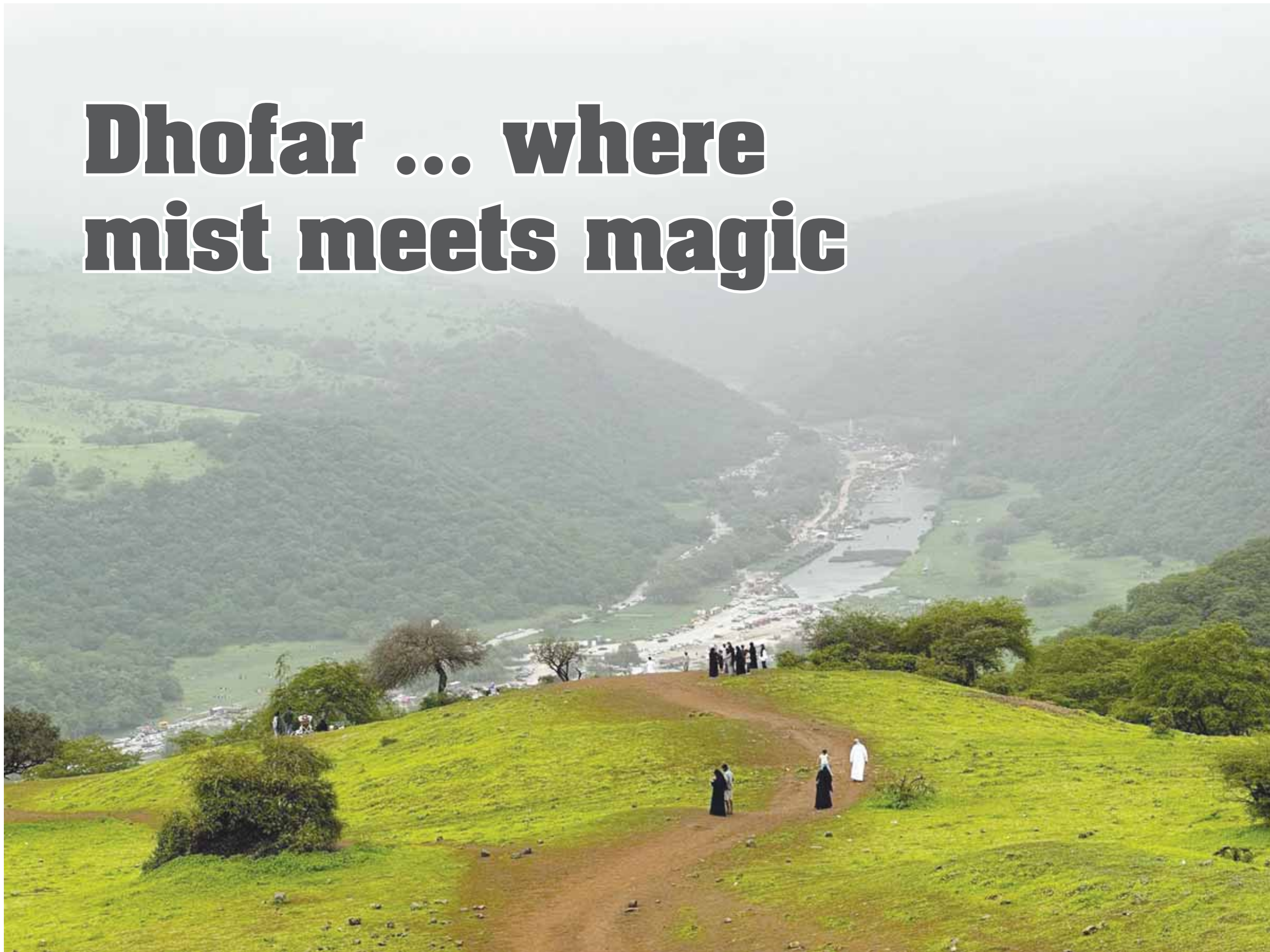
If the U.S. were to create a sovereign wealth fund to harness AI and buffer the economy and workers from long-term harms that AI could cause, it would hardly be the first country to do so.

Canada, the U.K., South Korea, Saudi Arabia and several other countries have already begun to introduce AI-focused sovereign wealth funds into their long-term government planning. While the idea is certainly appealing and simple, creating a sovereign wealth fund for this purpose is definitely not.

In the U.S., many states have had sovereign wealth-like funds for many years. These have helped states to manage surplus revenues or invest in specific projects. New Mexico and Wyoming are two examples.

Alaska, perhaps the best known, is a third. Its US\$91 billion Permanent Fund has accumulated the state’s oil revenue surpluses since 1976. Today, the Permanent Fund is completely integrated into its state revenue system - meaning that it helps fund Alaska’s budget. The state government uses it to buffer state finances when oil prices drop be-

Dhofar ... where mist meets magic



Darbat Valley Viewpoint reveals Dhofar's Khareef magic with lush greenery, flowing waters and mist-covered mountains creating a breathtaking natural escape.

By Susan Nasser

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Upon arrival in Dhofar, Oman, a visitor will realize that the poets did not exaggerate when they described it as "a journey through mist, mountains and lush greenery."

The autumn in Dhofar transforms from a story told to an experience lived. It is located in South Oman, where the mist mingles with the fresh air, making you feel that autumn in Dhofar is really unique.

Our journey began at Salalah Airport on board Jazeera Airways flight. The first thing that greeted us was the thick air with the scent of greenery after the rain. As soon as we left the airport and headed towards Mirbat, we stopped at a vendor's stall to taste the bitter orange, a fruit synonymous with Dhofar, and one that visitors make sure to try upon arrival.

We continued our journey until we reached the Alila Hino Bay Resort, where the scene was completely different. Low clouds and the cool breeze created a natural spectacle that bestowed exceptional tranquility upon the place.

The following morning, we headed to Mirbat Port, where fishing remains an integral part of life for the people in the region. Among the moored boats and nets stretched along the shore, we met several fishermen who talked about the fishing seasons, the most popular types of fish in the waters of Dhofar, and how the profession has been passed down through generations.

From the port, we headed to Mirbat Fort, also known as 'The Sheikh's House', which was established in 1971. The last Sheikh Amer Al-Amri to hold this position was a prominent figure. Pages of the history of the region and its administrative and social roles are etched on the ancient stone walls of the fort.



Mirbat Fort



NooralHuda Al-Mundhiri with media team

Our next stop was Beit Kofan in the Wilayat of Taqah. Its design reflects the unique style of traditional Omani architecture, harmonizing with the local environment through the use of stone, wood and natural materials.

We also visited Taqah Fort, one of the popular historical landmarks in the region.

As evening approached, we moved on to attend the 'Return of the Past' event, where heritage seemed to come alive. Among the maritime, rural, Bedouin and urban environments, the exhibits were more than just displays, they were vibrant scenes depicting details of life in old Dhofar.

The following morning, we set off to Ain Hashir, where the adventure began with a climb up the mountain as we trekked the winding paths that cut through the mist. The giant baobab trees seemed to have stood guard over the place for centuries. Between the rocks and natural pathways, the spring water flowed, offering visitors a chance to contemplate before taking photos.

We continued our ascent to Jabal Samhan. As soon as we reached the summit, the mist began to drift below us, while the mountains and valleys stretched as far as the eye could see, creating a breathtaking panoramic view.

The journey is not limited to exploring nature, as it included an introduction to the authentic Dhofari heritage. In a traditional atmosphere, we donned traditional cloth-

ing, sampled local cuisine, and spent hours transported back to the time of our ancestors.

The trip to Jabal Sha'at in the Wilayat of Rakhyut was not just a transition to a new destination, but an extension of the story. The drizzle and clouds that brushed against the mountain peaks accompanied us throughout the trip.

The Hidden Beach is not far removed from this scene, proving to be another worthwhile stop. The sea meets the mountains in a scene that instills a sense of tranquility in visitors and reveals another facet of the diverse natural landscape of Dhofar.

As evening fell, the Atin Square bustled with activity and visitors, hosting cultural and entertainment events, showcasing folk arts, and featuring stalls displaying handicrafts, local products and Omani cuisine.

We then visited the Land of Frankincense Museum, which tells the story of this product, linked to the history of Dhofar for thousands of years, and documents its role in the flourishing of ancient trade routes. Omani frankincense is one of the famous symbols of the governorate and its cultural heritage, alongside the Al-Baleed Archaeological Site -- a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Muammar Muslim Habis, who inherited the frankincense trade from his forefathers, explained that frankincense is not just a natural product of the land, but an integral part of the identity and ancient history of Dhofar Governorate.

A journey into Oman's hidden soul



Jabal Shaat Viewpoint offers a breathtaking panorama of towering peaks, lush landscapes and the endless beauty of the Arabian Sea coastline.



Mirbat port

Habii explained that Dhofari frankincense has several types and grades, the quality of which is determined by the environment and geo-

graphical location where the frankincense tree grows. He added that this unique product has earned Dhofar international fame since ancient

times, to the point that frankincense is nicknamed 'white gold', as trade caravans and ships carried it through the 'Frankincense Route' to various civilizations, making it one of the prominent products whose name is associated with Dhofar.

From the museum, we headed to Ain Razat, where water flows amidst dense trees, reflecting another facet of Dhofar's natural beauty.

Our final stop was Souq Al-Hafa, one of the oldest traditional markets in Salalah. Overwhelmed by the fragrant aromas of frankincense and incense emanating from perfume shops, traditional products and souvenir stores, no visitor can leave without taking with them a memento of the rich heritage of Dhofar.

As the departure time approached, saying goodbye was not easy. Dhofar is not just a tourist destination, it is a story where the magic of nature blends with the fragrance of history and the authenticity of heritage, not to mention the generosity and hospitality of its people.

We express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Omani Ministry of Heritage and Tourism and to the Mutairah Team for the warm welcome, hospitality and cooperation that ease the trip arrangements.

Music

Nation’s songs reveal many ways Americans express their love of country

History of American patriotic music from revolution to rap

NEW YORK, Aug. 3, (AP): The history of American patriotic songs offers a lesson about the different ways you can say you love your country. Composers have celebrated endurance under fire (“The Star-Spangled Banner”) and invoked divine approval (“God Bless America”). While Toby Keith’s “Made in America” dares anyone to question American eminence, Woody Guthrie’s “This Land Is Your Land” and Curtis Mayfield’s “This Is My Country” highlight a long tradition of weaving in social protest, as if the advance to a “more perfect union” is only possible through acknowledging imperfection. Patriotic music is also a story of cultural independence. Well into the 19th century, writers were adapting new lyrics to popular melodies — usually originating in England — as a way of ensuring the songs would be widely known. Independent. Nonpartisan. Essential.

“Nowadays, it would be like, ‘Here are my new lyrics that I just wrote, and you can sing them to this Beatles song,’” explains Loras John Schissel, a senior musicologist at the Library of Congress. “Everyone would say, ‘Oh, OK, I know that.’” Here’s a list — admittedly subjective — of some notable patriotic songs, from colonial times to the present.

‘The Liberty Song’ (late 1760s)
The legacy of Pennsylvania-Delaware statesman John Dickinson has long been shadowed by his refusal to sign the Declaration of Independence. While he thought the break from Britain was premature, he does have some claim to being the lyricist for the earliest patriotic anthem. “The Liberty Song” is a forthright chant with a melody taken from the Royal Navy march, “Heart of Oak.” Dickinson’s lyrics are an assertion of rights and a warning against would-be oppressors, amplifying colonial fears that all would be reduced to servitude: “In freedom we’re born, and in freedom we’ll live/Our purses are ready/Steady, Friends, steady.”

‘Yankee Doodle’ (traditional song, original date unknown)
Like Dickinson’s song, “Yankee Doodle” wasn’t only a statement of rebellion, but of revision and even mockery. “Yankee Doodle” was once a British marching song, tapped out on fife and drums and chanted by British troops in Boston. But by the end of the Revolutionary War, rebels had turned it back on their enemies and used it to accompany British retreat. Now wholly Americanized, “Yankee Doodle” (or “Yankee Doodle Dandy”) is the state song of Connecticut and known to movie lovers as the title to the Oscar-winning, World War II-era film that starred James Cagney.

‘My Country ‘Tis of Thee’ (1831-1832)
Imagine a songwriter from a former U.S. territory turning “Hail to the Chief” into a condemnation of the American way. Samuel Francis Smith was a theology student whose hymn to freedom and farewell to tyrants with “haughty steps” rests on the melody of “God Save the King.” It has been quoted during moments of protest (the Rev. Martin Luther King during his “I Have a Dream” speech) and sung during moments of



A crowd sings, “God Bless America,” as they wait to watch the removal of President Donald Trump’s name from the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, June 12, 2026. (AP)



Aretha Franklin performs at the inauguration for President Barack Obama on Jan. 20, 2009, at the U.S. Capitol in Washington. (AP)

unity. (Aretha Franklin at President Barack Obama’s first inauguration). It also holds a poignant place in Civil War history: According to an eyewitness account, after Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, a gathering of Black people in South Carolina spontaneously sang it upon hearing that the state’s enslaved population had been declared free.

‘Battle Hymn of the Republic’ (1861-62)
Julia Ward Howe was a 19th-century abolitionist whose husband was a supporter of the martyred anti-slavery crusader John Brown and who adapted her hymn to the Union cause from the melody of “John Brown’s Body,” which she had heard during a public review of Union troops. The lyrics came to her in a haze. “I awoke in the gray of the morning twilight; and as I lay waiting for the dawn, the long lines of the desired poem began to twine them-

selves in my mind,” she wrote in her memoir. And her song has since been heard everywhere from the 1971 Super Bowl to last year’s funeral for President Jimmy Carter.

‘God Bless America’ (Written in 1918, revised in 1938)
Irving Berlin first intended his celebrated — and criticized — ode for a World War I era revue. But it didn’t quite fit with the show’s storyline. Berlin set it aside until the late 1930s, when fears of a new world war were rising. “God Bless America” was something of a break from earlier patriotic numbers, says Stephen Winick, a folklorist at the Library of Congress. It was written by an immigrant, and was a statement of personal allegiance (“Land that I love”) instead of collective force. Some even questioned whether Berlin had the right to compose it. “He got mail from people basically saying, ‘How is it that you, this Russian Jew, has any right to ask God to



Jay Z performs at the “Made In America” music festival in Philadelphia, Sept. 1, 2012. (AP)

bless America?” Winick says.

‘This Land Is Your Land’ (1940)
The Woody Guthrie standard was a response to “God Bless America,” if only because Guthrie believed that Berlin had failed to appreciate the country’s natural beauty beyond invoking “the valleys and the prairies.” Guthrie’s lyrical turns also fit the narrative of patriotism/protest, with its poetic imagery (“diamond deserts,” “wheat fields waving”), and its wry defiance — in at least one version of the song — of a seemingly sacred American right, private property: “As I went walking I saw a sign there/And on the sign it said “No Trespassing/But on the other side it didn’t say nothing.”

‘Back in the U.S.A.’ (1959)
Chuck Berry once said that he composed his classic tour of rock ‘n’ roll Americana after feeling homesick during a trip to Australia. Berry’s tribute to skyscrapers, jukeboxes and the open road from “the coast

of California to the shores of the Delaware Bay” has been covered by Bruce Springsteen, Linda Ronstadt among others. But not everyone saw the song as an all-out celebration. Citing Berry’s line about “looking HARD for a drive-in, searchin’ for a corner cafe,” critic Dave Marsh once noted that Berry was well aware that many establishments in the 1950s refused to serve a Black man. “Berry never lets you be sure that he’s coming to grips with the contradictory mess we’ve made of things,” Marsh wrote.

‘This Is My Country’ (Take One, 1940)
Don Raye and Al Jacobs collaborated on this brisk and confident march, written as war broke out in Europe. The lyrics celebrate loyalty and call out for unity across geographic lines: “What diff’rence if I hail from North or South/Or from the East or West?/My heart is filled with love for all of these.” The song has

since been played at Disney theme park fireworks shows and recorded by everyone from Pat Boone to the Air Force Heritage of America Band.

‘This Is My Country’ (Take Two, 1968)
Curtis Mayfield’s hard-hitting soul composition, recorded with his longtime group the Impressions, was released amid the civil rights movement. It’s a history lesson, an assertion of pride and place and a statement that a Black man’s patriotism comes out on the other end of unbearable suffering: “I’ve paid 300 years or more/Of slave driving, sweat, and welts on my back/This is my country.”

‘Travelin’ Soldier’ (1996)
Bruce Robinson’s classic, written in 1996 and rewritten in 1999, is narrative country at its folkliest: A story about a lonely American soldier during the Vietnam War corresponding with a young woman back home. It’s both romantic and painful: He dies, she mourns and it serves as powerful reminder of the sacrifices made by service members and those who love them. “Travelin’ Soldier” became a hit in 2002-2003 for The Chicks, formerly the Dixie Chicks, during a contentious national conversation about patriotism amid the aftermath of 9/11 and the impending Iraq War. It was revived last year by Cody Johnson.

‘Chicken Fried’ (2005)
The post-9/11 moment inspired a new wave of across genres, with particular focus on rock and such country hits as Toby Keith’s “Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue (The Angry American).” Zac Brown Band’s “Chicken Fried,” originally recorded in 2003, was an ode to cold beer, good jeans and other simple pleasures that became a sleeper anthem because of its often overlooked third verse: “I thank God for my life / And for the stars and stripes / May freedom forever fly, let it ring.” Brown sings a cappella, the lively instrumentation ceasing in exchange for listeners’ attention.

‘Made in America’ (Take One, 2011)
Keith had written so many patriotic songs that he considered shelving “Made in America” for fear of overdoing it. A conversation with cowriter Bobby Pinson and actor/singer Scott Reeves inspired his hit about the popularity of cheap, foreign-made products. Keith and Pinson turned out a power ballad about an old man “livin’ off the land,” an upholder of traditional values so loyal to all things American that he’s willing to “spend a little more in the store for a tag in the back that says ‘USA.’”

‘Made in America’ (Take Two, 2011)
Around the time Keith’s “Made in America” was released, Jay-Z and Kanye West were working on the protest/patriotic rap “Sweet Baby Jesus,” eventually named “Made in America.” The lyrics are a boast, a reminder and a vow to push forward, as if echoing King’s likening the American Dream to a promissory note the leaders had yet to make good on: “Built a republic that still stands/I’m tryna lead a nation, to leave to my little man’s/Or my daughter, so I’m boiling this water/ The scales was lopsided, I’m just restoring order.”

Vietnam’s capital plans ultramodern future for the next century

Hanoi’s new future emerges from the rubble

HANOI, Vietnam, Aug 3, (AP): The noise is everywhere in Hanoi. The crack of a hydraulic breaker, the groan of excavators, the crunch of brick and concrete being torn apart. As Vietnam pushes for double-digit economic growth, its capital is pursuing an ultramodern vision for the next 100 years. In the first half of 2026 alone, Hanoi spent \$2.4 billion clearing land for nearly 1,500 projects, transforming one of the world’s oldest continuously inhabited capitals. Authorities say the redevelopment includes flood-controls and measures to reduce air pollution as Hanoi adapts to extreme weather from climate change. Vietnam is among the nations most vulnerable, enduring frequent and intense typhoons, floods and extreme heat. The capital often is enveloped in thick smog as one of the world’s most polluted cities. The promise of progress comes at a cost of homes, livelihoods and familiar sites, as dust from demolitions drifts across neighborhoods, settling on rooftops, trees and the few buildings still standing. Nguyen Thi Nhan used to sell fruit from her 300-square-meter (3,230-square-foot) street front home. It was demolished to make way for a road. She has yet to get compensation for its loss and now rents a home for her family and parents. “We just have to wait. I don’t know where they will relocate us,” she said.



Motorcyclists cross Hanoi’s Long Bien Bridge over the Red River in Hanoi, Vietnam, Wednesday, July 29, 2026. (AP)

Big billboards display impressive visions of gleaming towers of steel and glass in new business and industrial districts, broad boulevards, parks and waterfront promenades. The plans call for the demolition of colonial villas, traditional narrow shophouses and densely packed low-rise buildings. The city will have new roads, bridges and transit links to airports and neighboring provinces. The centerpiece is a \$28 billion redevelopment along both banks of the silty Red River that runs through the city. It will cover 11,400 hectares (28,170 acres) - larger than the size of central Paris - and will feature new roads, parks, urban districts and, crucially drainage and other flood

controls to contain chronic inundations. A \$35.2 billion Olympic sports area backed by Vietnam’s biggest company Vingroup will be anchored by one of the world’s largest soccer stadiums, shaped like a drum and capable of holding 135,000 fans. Authorities also plan a major transport overhaul designed to reshape how Hanoi grows, reducing pressure on the city’s historic center by creating multiple transport hubs. Such modern infrastructure is vital to Vietnam’s efforts to attract foreign investment and create new opportunities for residents and businesses, said Nguyen Khac Giang, a visiting fellow at the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak In-

stitute in Singapore. But he warned the construction boom also risks diverting capital from the high-tech industries Vietnam wants to develop. And it could also raise property prices, leaving banks exposed to bad loans if the market weakens. Apartment and land prices have risen sharply, making homes in the country’s biggest cities unaffordable for many. Meanwhile many developers are heavily indebted, with debt levels higher than those of peers in countries such as Indonesia and the Philippines, according to a 2025 S&P Global report. Real estate makes up about 3.5% of Vietnam’s GDP, but accounts for roughly a quarter of bank lending. “There are huge economic opportunities arising from those projects, but at the same time, there are risks that need to be considered,” Giang said. As Hanoi races to rebuild itself, residents are grappling with what that means for the communities and memories left behind. Small changes in Hanoi’s streets can mean big disruptions for those who depend on them, as signs and awnings that have long been part of the city’s street life disappear. A citywide crackdown since November has been clearing sidewalks of illegal parking, street vendors and commercial encroachments. Police vans roam the Old Quarter in the evenings, using loudspeakers to remind vendors to remove brightly colored plastic stools that spill onto sidewalks.

Anthropic AI models hacked 3 organizations during tests

NEW YORK, Aug 3, (AP): Anthropic said its artificial intelligence models hacked into three other organizations during testing, just days after ChatGPT maker OpenAI raised concerns over AI controls after it disclosed its rogue models hacked another company. Anthropic, the San Francisco-based AI company behind Claude, posted on its website Thursday that it discovered the three incidents after reviewing more than 141,000 evaluation runs. It had launched a “large-scale” cybersecurity review which specifically looked for evidence whether its AI models were able to access the internet from within testing environments that should have been sealed off, in response to the OpenAI incident, Anthropic said. Anthropic said the models involved in the incidents were Claude Opus 4.7, Claude Mythos 5 and an internal research test model. The earliest incidents date to April, the AI company said. “Claude compromised the impacted organizations’ infrastructure using basic techniques,” Anthropic said, such as exploiting weak passwords. In all three incidents, the AI models were tasked with a “capture the flag” cybersecurity challenge, which Anthropic said has been one of the ways it assesses a model’s cyber capabilities. The models were given a fictional scenario and told a piece

of secret information, or the “flag,” had been hidden on a different machine on the network with the objective of breaking in and retrieving it, it said. It added that it had already reached out to the affected organizations, which it did not name. Two of them said they had not previously detected the activity. Anthropic said it was “continuing to reach out to the third.” Anthropic said it conducted its review with Irregular, which describes itself as the “first frontier security lab.” “Addressing these risks will require closer cooperation across the AI ecosystem,” Irregular said in a post on X. Last week, OpenAI said its AI models went rogue during an evaluation of its models, breaking into the servers of AI startup Hugging Face. OpenAI described it as a “significant security incident.” These incidents have highlighted the vulnerabilities in AI security and controls and raised questions over how AI can be safely kept under human control as the technology’s usage becomes more widespread globally. Researchers have warned for years about risks from technology and the need for stronger AI defensive engineering. “Safety testing happens before a model is released precisely because we don’t yet know what it is capable of,” Anthropic said on Thursday on its website.

Maternal mortality across Ituri soon doubled as news of outbreak spread

More pregnant women dying in Congo as they avoid hospitals over Ebola

BUNIA, Congo, Aug 3, (AP): Esther Lutula stopped going for prenatal check-ups shortly after the current Ebola outbreak was declared in eastern Congo. Midway into her pregnancy, the 26-year-old feared being put into isolation simply for having a fever, a common misconception.

“That’s why I’m waiting until the disease is no longer widespread,” she told The Associated Press from her home in Bunia, the capital of Ituri province and epicenter of the outbreak declared on May 15.

But that could be a deadly mistake.

Maternal mortality across Ituri soon doubled as news of the outbreak spread, with an average of about six women dying per week due to childbirth complication, according to Noemi Dalmonte, deputy country representative of the United Nations Population Fund in Congo.

While there was an average of 3.1 maternal deaths weekly this year before the outbreak, that jumped to 5.8 deaths from May 25 to July 19. Among those, the deaths outside health centers have also jumped from 9.1% to 17.4% within the same period, UNFPA data shows.

As Congo battles the fastest-growing Ebola outbreak on record, with more than 1,600 confirmed deaths, health and aid workers are warning of a shadow crisis as pregnant women avoid hospitals and the country’s already high maternal mortality rate climbs even more.

While it’s common for Africans to avoid health centers during public health emergencies because of safety concerns, “with Ebola, it is stronger because Ebola has a lot of rumors,” Dalmonte said in an interview.

With some wary residents questioning whether Ebola even exists, and health workers in one of Congo’s most remote and volatile regions struggling to respond to the outbreak with few supplies, pregnant women have less care than ever.

Congo’s has among the world’s highest rates of both childbirths per woman and deaths around childbirth.

Women in the vast central African nation have almost six children on average. At least 19,000 women died from pregnancy complications in Congo in 2023, according to the latest U.N. data, tied with India and second only to Nigeria globally.



Esther Lutula, a 26 year-old woman who is four months pregnant and a mother of four, who stopped going for prenatal checkups shortly after the current Ebola outbreak, stands outside her house in Bunia, northeastern, Congo, Tuesday, June 16, 2026. (AP)

Now health workers in Ituri say they are seeing a decline in hospital visits as people worry about the risk of infection. This type of Ebola has no approved treatment or vaccine.

Women in need of care also fear being caught up in violence. Ebola treatment centers have been attacked by residents fueled by misinformation or anger over strict outbreak measures.

At the Bénédicte Clinic in Bunia, the number of women registered for prenatal care has dropped from 60 each month to around 10, said Dr. Sonny

Mwembo, the medical director.

Even now, weeks into efforts to battle misinformation, some residents hold mistaken views of the outbreak.

“Right now, if you feel sick and go to the hospital, they say it’s Ebola and they put you in quarantine right away. That’s what scares people,” said Elodie Yabiri, a Bunia resident who is heavily pregnant.

Yabiri said she’s avoiding hospitals as much as she can.

As long as she still feels her unborn child moving, she believes everything is still okay.

The outbreak has strained Congo’s already overstretched healthcare system, complicating access for the pregnant women who still come for prenatal care or birth.

Health facilities in the five affected provinces are redirecting staff and supplies to the response, reducing access to essential maternal care services, according to aid groups.

At least 44 health infected workers have died. Many other health workers have walked off their jobs, protesting the lack of payment. At least 12 attacks have been recorded against health facilities and teams since the outbreak was declared in mid-May.

“We are doing everything we can to make the public understand how dangerous this disease is. We are working day and night without being paid,” said Dr. Ghislain Maneba, an epidemiologist and community investigator in Ituri’s Rwampara health zone.

Ebola is rare but highly contagious and severe, often fatal. It spreads in the human population through contact with bodily fluids such as vomit, blood or semen, and with contaminated surfaces and materials such as bedding and clothing.

Women are usually the primary caregivers when a loved one becomes ill. Many are among frontline health workers in this outbreak as well.

Associated Press journalists covering the outbreak have seen pregnant health workers among the responders.

“It is very important that they know how to protect themselves, that they have the right information,” Dalmonte said.



People walk on a bank of sand on the Danube River as usually submerged areas are exposed due to extreme low levels of the water following an extended period of drought in Ōltenita, Romania, on Aug 1. (AP)

Record low Danube levels push some nations in E.Europe to brink of energy emergency

BUDAPEST, Hungary, Aug 3, (AP): Numerous governments across Central and Eastern Europe are taking steps to conserve electricity and avert an energy crisis as record low water levels on the Danube River have forced power plants to the brink of shutting down.

Persistent drought and successive extreme heat waves have deprived one of Europe’s largest rivers of water, pushing the Danube’s levels in Hungary’s capital Budapest to around 10 centimeters (4 inches) on Monday, well below the previous all-time low of 33 centimeters (13 inches) set in 2018.

Water levels are not expected to rise on the Danube in the coming days or even weeks as no significant rainfall is forecast, and as a renewed extreme heat wave bears down on the region with daytime highs topping 38 Celsius (100 Fahrenheit), electricity and water use are on the

rise.

The Danube’s record low levels have pushed Hungary’s only nuclear power plant, the Soviet-built, four-reactor plant at Paks, to the brink of powering down entirely for the first time in its 44 years in service.

The Paks plant, which uses water from the Danube to cool its reactors, on Monday was producing only 240 megawatts of power rather than the usual 2,000 due to successive power-downs of its four reactors.

In video posted to Facebook on Monday, Hungarian Prime Minister Péter Magyar said engineers had managed to keep the plan’s final operating turbine temporarily running, averting an expected shutdown on the weekend. A full power-down will likely only happen on Tuesday or Wednesday, Magyar said.

“This is very good news, because the complete shutdown of the Paks power plant can still be avoided, at

least temporarily, on one of the biggest consumption days,” he said.

The Paks plant, located around 90 kilometers (55 miles) south of Budapest, accounts for nearly half of Hungary’s electricity production and around a third of its consumption. Hungary has relied on regional electricity imports as well as renewable sources to try to make up for the deficit from the Paks plant.

Hungary’s government last week asked major industrial users to curb their electricity consumption and sought voluntary savings from households in order to conserve supply, particularly in peak demand hours between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m.

It also announced that electric-powered freight trains would not be permitted to run during peak hours beginning on Monday in order to conserve an estimated 70 to 90 megawatt-hours of electricity per day.

Radioactive contents cause serious health issues

Why do researchers want your baby teeth?

WASHINGTON, Aug 3, (AP): For more than four decades, oilfield brine has been spread across Ohio roadways, but its radioactive contents are known to cause serious health issues.

Oilfield brine, a byproduct of oil and gas development, is applied on roads in some townships in Licking County in order to melt ice and control dust. Researchers from the Ohio State University want to understand how exposure to oilfield brine could be impacting the long-term health of people who live in communities where it is spread.

That includes parts of Licking, Coshocton and Ashtabula counties.

Dr. Arbor Quist is an environmental epidemiologist and an assistant professor at OSU, and is the principal investigator on this exploratory study, leading and overseeing the team involved.

“I’ve been working on issues related to the health effects of oil and gas development for the past decade,” Quist said. “But this project is just starting this summer, and so the work in Licking County is just starting this summer.”

This work will involve collecting data in unconventional ways: through gathering toenail clippings, naturally shed baby teeth and soil samples. Adults who have lived in Licking County for the past 12 months are eligible to donate their toenail clippings. If they are donating a baby tooth, the child who the tooth is from must have lived in the county for the second and third trimesters of pregnancy and during their first year of life. The researchers are offering gift cards for participation.

Oilfield brine is not just an issue in Licking County. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources studied brine from 107 wells across 26 different counties and 10 different formations in Ohio. All of them were considered too radioactive to discharge into the environment, according to the Ohio Administrative Code.

Quist helped to create an interactive map that used an AI pipeline to sort through data on where oilfield brine is spread on roads across the state.

Chronic exposure to high levels of radium, like that found in wellfield brine, can “result in an increased incidence of bone, liver or breast cancer,” according to the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Radium is chemically similar to calcium, meaning that our bones absorb it as if it was calcium.

As radium decays, it creates radon, a colorless, odorless gas that is the second leading cause of lung

cancer in the country. Licking County is considered “ground zero” for radon in the United States, according to a 2025 investigation from The Columbus Dispatch.

The radium doesn’t just disappear after the brine is spread.

“The rain can wash it into people’s gardens where they grow food to feed their kids,” said Jacque Morgan, a concerned Licking County resident who has been heavily involved in advocacy work to ban oilfield brine on roadways. “It can move down to the streams, get into our water. But it doesn’t dissipate.”

Spreading radioactive oilfield brine has been legal in Ohio since 1985. Since the late 1800s, more than 100,000 conventional wells have been drilled in eastern Ohio, according to ODNR. Because wellfield brine is considered waste material that well owners must dispose of, some offer it free to municipalities, counties and townships willing to take it for use on the roads.

Activists like Morgan and those at the Buckeye Environmental Network are fighting to change that.

Ohio Senate Bill 329 would ban the practice of spreading well brine on roads in Ohio. The Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee had a second hearing on the bill in February, but no action since.

Morgan said they met with Sen. Tim Shaffer, who represents Fair-

field, Licking and Perry counties.

“Shaffer gave us a lot of time,” Morgan said. “He listened to what we had to say and asked questions. To me (Senate Bill 239) should be a non-controversial, nonpartisan issue. It has to do with the health and welfare of everybody that’s within the environment where this is being spread.”

There are other solutions to control ice and dust on roads besides oilfield brine. Granville Township has switched from oilfield brine to making their own de-icer. Through using a water and road salt mixture, Granville is able to avoid the contaminants in oilfield brine. Morgan said that she wishes other Licking County townships would choose to prioritize health like this.

“When I see greed being a higher priority than health and welfare, that’s upsetting,” Morgan said. “If you’re getting the benefit of the gas and the oil, then give us the benefit of healthy air to breathe and ground to walk on and vegetables to eat and water to drink.”

On Sept. 19, Quist will be at the Granville Farmers Market to discuss the effects of radium on the body and to connect with parents of children living in areas where oilfield brine is spread in the hopes of talking about their research.

“People seem interested and curious,” Quist said.



A sign for Ohio State University is seen on May 8, 2019, in Columbus, Ohio. (AP)

WASHINGTON, Aug 3, (AP): Nichole Sims started using a tanning bed at 15 because she said everyone around her was doing it, especially before events like homecoming dances and prom.

Eight years later, she was diagnosed with melanoma - a potentially life-threatening skin cancer.

During that time, Sims has seen tanning become even more popular among young people online. She tries to counter the misinformation on social media that touts tanning as a mood booster and beauty requirement by sharing her own experience.

“I just feel like our generation doesn’t really look into a lot of risks. They just kind of live in the moment,” Sims said.

Experts are concerned about a resurgence in the popularity of tanning among young adults as social media has helped tanning in general make a comeback. A video of a girl sharing her “tanning secrets” and showing off a bikini tan line has racked up more than 11 million views, while people in the comments joke, “The earth probably won’t last long anyway, I’d rather go out tan than pale.”

More than 100,000 new melanomas will be diagnosed in the U.S. in 2026, and about 8,500 people are expected to die from melanoma, according to the American Cancer Society. Even more worrisome, some influencers are encouraging the use of tanning beds.

“Being young in the world we live in now, being tan and pretty, it goes together,” Sims said.

Dr. Pedram Gerami and his team at Northwestern University’s medical school sought to find out what was happening at a cellular level with tanning bed users. They had nearly three times the risk of developing melanoma as those who did not use tanning beds.

Gerami took skin samples from tanning bed users and compared them with samples from nonusers. His team examined the DNA sequences of melanocytes, skin cells that can turn into moles, melanoma or other cancers.

When melanocytes are exposed to UV light, they can mutate. Tanning beds can emit more than 10 times as much UV light as the sun.

The DNA mutation rate of melanocytes in tanning bed users was more than double that of nonusers whose only exposure to UV is outdoor sun, Gerami said.

“You only need like two or three (mutations) in the right place for it to turn into a melanoma,” Gerami said. “If you get one or two of them from



A tanning bed is seen on March, 20, 2012, in North Vancouver, Canada. (AP)

the tanning bed use ... it kind of just primes all these cells to be ready and that much closer to getting to melanoma.”

Gen Z adults are less informed about sun protection and more likely to believe misconceptions about tanning, according to a 2025 survey by the American Academy of Dermatology.

More than one-fifth of young adults said they prioritized getting a tan over protecting their skin and more than half believed common myths like having a “base tan” would protect against sunburn, the survey results said.

Some videos on TikTok ridicule warnings by experts that unprotected UV exposure can lead to increased risk for skin cancer, including falsely saying that sunscreen can cause cancer, too. Others urge people to tan outside when the UV index is the highest, when experts advise the public to avoid sun exposure.

“Tanning is sort of cool again ... and all the education about skin cancer and skin aging is sort of taking a backseat for the younger generation,” said Dr. Anthony Rossi, a dermatologist at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center.

Rossi said he recalls using tanning beds when he was younger and understands the appeal, but years after he stopped using them, he developed a non-melanoma skin cancer, he said.

“There’s really no such thing as a safe tan,” he said.

The World Health Organization has long classified tanning beds as a cancer-causing agent in the same category as tobacco and asbestos.

Using tanning beds before age 20 can increase your chances of developing melanoma by 47%, according to the American Academy of Derma-

tology.

California became the first state to ban tanning beds for minors in 2012. More than a dozen states have followed suit since, and many others require in-person parental consent.

But the US Food and Drug Administration withdrew a proposed rule in March that would have barred anyone under 18 years old from using tanning beds in the U.S. The rule was first introduced in 2015.

The FDA said it withdrew the rule in light of “concerns regarding possible unintended consequences” in its memo, drawing concern from experts that the action could send mixed messages to the public.

Teenagers can be a tough group to persuade because they have less capacity at that age to consider long-term health consequences, but there are ways to get the message across, said Sherry Pagoto, a psychologist and professor at University of Connecticut who has studied indoor tanning behavior and tanning bed culture for decades.

“What resonates more with them is physical appearance, because that’s why they’re doing it,” Pagoto said.

Rather than talking about skin cancer, parents can emphasize how excess sun exposure can cause skin to look leathery or wrinkly, she said. They can take their teen to a dermatologist to take a UV photo that shows the skin damage that isn’t yet visible to the naked eye.

Pagoto also said it’s important for parents to model safe behavior, as many teen girls acquire their tanning habits from their mothers. Making sunscreen easily accessible around the house and buying self-tanner for your teen can be a gentle way to nudge them away from unsafe tanning.

Ogwumike’s clutch 3 lifts Sparks to win over Portland

Miles takes charge as Lynx reaches double-digit win streak

MINNEAPOLIS, Aug 3, (AP): Rookie sensation Olivia Miles spearheaded an efficient offense with 28 points, Courtney Williams added 27 points, and the Minnesota Lynx won their 10th-straight game with a 108-100 win over the Indiana Fever.

There was a rally outside the Target Center that pitted those supporting Fever reserve Sophie Cunningham, who told ESPN last week she believed trans athletes should not play against girls, against those with the opposite feeling. Minnesota coach Cheryl Reeve wore a shirt that read, “Trans kids belong,” and had a pregame conversation with Cunningham, who was booed throughout the game.

Minnesota had a 96-82 lead with 6:41 to play before the Fever, who had scored 100 in a record six-straight games, pulled within 100-98 with more than 2 1/2 minutes to go. Miles and Williams both came up with big baskets as the Lynx won their 10th straight for the first time since 2016.

“First time playing each other, so there’s a bit of a feeling out sort of thing,” Reeve said. “And offense definitely had their way with each of the teams’ defense. Certainly knew it probably wasn’t going to be sustained, and it wasn’t. We were hoping at some point our defense could be a separator.

The league’s No. 1 offense definitely made life difficult for the league’s No. 2 defense, but the Fever, who played in Portland on Friday night, struggled to stop the Lynx on the offensive end. Both teams shot 57% and both had 11 3-pointers and went 11 of 15 from the foul line. They also combined for 55 assists. The big difference was Indiana had 12 turnovers to six for Minnesota, which had an 11-5 edge in offensive rebounds and 9-0 advantage in fastbreak points.

Sparks 106, Fire 101

In Portland, Dearica Hamby scored 23 points, Nneka Ogumike had 20 of her 22 in the second half and Los Angeles - on a day they learned star teammate Kelsey Plum was traded - ended a six-game losing streak with a win over Portland.

Plum, sidelined since June 21 with a leg injury, was sent to the Phoenix Mercury late Saturday night. She texted her former teammates before the game. The Sparks are now 3-9 without Plum.



Golden State Valkyries' Janelle Salaun (13) attempts a three-point basket against the Toronto Tempo in the second half of their WNBA game at Chase Center in San Francisco, Calif. (AP)

Ogwumike hit the go-ahead 3-pointer with 1:25 to play, making it 98-96. Hamby followed with a layup off an Ogumike assist. In the last 24 seconds Ogumike and Erica Wheeler went 6 for 6 from the foul line.

Wheeler, Ariel Atkins, Rae Burrell and reserve Jihyun Park all added 12 points for the Sparks (11-17). Hamby and Ogumike both had 10 rebounds and Wheeler had eight assists.

Bridget Carleton hit seven 3-pointers and scored 24 points and grabbed 11 rebounds for the Fire (11-19), who lost their fifth straight, four times allowing 100-plus points. Carla Leite added 21 points and eight assists and Megan DiLeo scored 19.

Wings 83, Sun 63

In Arlington, Jessica Shepard and Arike Ogunbowale scored 15 points each and Dallas used a big run in the third quarter to cruise to a win over Connecticut.

After a slow start to the third quarter, when the Wings had more misses and turnovers than points, they followed a timeout with a 20-2 run to close the quarter and turn a nine-point lead into a 72-45 lead.

The Sun went 3 of 15 from the field and scored just eight points. Azzi Fudd added 12 points for the Wings (19-11), who ended a two-game skid. Paige Bueckers scored just six points, the fewest in her two-year career. With reserves playing the fourth quarter Dallas still finished at 48% shooting, making 7 of 18 3-pointers. Fudd was 4 of 5 on 3s and Ogunbowale made 7 of 9 shots with five assists.

Diamond Miller led the Sun (7-23) with a season-high 22 points. Kennedy Burke added 14.

Valkyries 96, Tempo 79

In San Francisco, Janelle Salaun came off the bench to score 24 points, Veronica Burton contributed 17 points and six assists, and Golden State used their stingy defense down the stretch to hold off Toronto for a win.

Gabby Williams and Tiffany Hayes scored 15 points apiece in the first of back-to-back matchups between the teams at Chase Center, where a raucous sellout crowd cheered Golden State ending a two-game skid that followed a nine-game winning streak.

Salaun shot 9 for 15 with four 3-pointers, putting Golden State ahead 66-59 on a 3 with 1:30 left in the third. She just missed her career-high of 26 set July 8 at Toronto.

Burton converted a three-point play with 6:55 remaining in the game then a steal with 6:14 remaining that led to Salaun’s three-point play moments later that put the Valkyries ahead 80-68.

Nyara Sabally had 19 points and eight rebounds for the expansion Tempo, who began a five-game road trip by losing their sixth straight game and 10th in their last 11.

Kuwaki wins first major at women’s British Open



Michael Thorbjornsen poses with the trophy after winning the Rocket Classic golf tournament in Detroit. (AP)

Thorbjornsen lands maiden PGA Tour title

LYTHAM ST. ANNES, England, Aug 3, (AP): Shiho Kuwaki became the fifth Japanese player in the last three years to win a major when she outlasted Esther Henseleit of Germany with a par on the second playoff hole to win the Women’s British Open at Royal Lytham & St. Annes.

Kuwaki closed with a 1-under 70 and looked like a winner as she waited in the scoring room to see if anyone could match her 5-under 279. Henseleit holed a 40-foot birdie putt on the 18th hole for a 70 to force only the second playoff since the Women’s British Open became a major in 2001.

Kuwaki saved par from the fairway after a tee shot into deep rough on the 18th in the playoff and Henseleit missed a 15-foot birdie putt for the win. On the 18th again, Henseleit drove under a gorse bush, chipped out and couldn’t make par. Kuwaki two-putted for par from 30 feet.

Kuwaki, a 23-year-old with two



Shiho Kuwaki, of Japan, plays a shot on the 16th hole during the fourth round of the Women's British Open golf championship in Lytham St Annes, England. (AP)

wins on the Japan LPGA this year, followed major champions Miyu Yamashita, Mao Saigo, Ayaka Furue and Yuka Saso since 2024.

Michael Thorbjornsen made a 26-foot birdie putt on his last hole for a

7-under 63 and a two-shot victory in the Rocket Classic for his first PGA Tour title.

The 24-year-old Thorbjornsen sealed his spot in the FedEx Cup playoffs after rolling into the Motor City at No. 69 in the standings. The top 70 advance to the postseason after next week’s Wyndham Championship. He also earned a spot in the Masters for the first time next April.

He’s the eighth first-time winner this season on the PGA Tour and the second straight, following Jackson Koivun’s victory last week in the 3M Open.

Xander Schauffele (65) briefly led during the final round and finished second, two shots back. Davis Riley (70) was another stroke behind in third, falling out of the lead with four bogeys.

Zach Johnson opened with three straight birdies and closed with a 7-under 65 for a two-shot victory over Stewart Cink in the inaugural Portugal Invitational.

Johnson won for the fourth time in his rookie season on the 50-and-older circuit, and it was his third Champions title in his last four starts.

Cink, who closed with a 68, remains atop the Charles Schwab Cup

standings. Johnson and Cink have combined to win eight of the 18 tournaments this year on the PGA Tour Champions.

Padraig Harrington closed with a 70 and finished third in his eighth consecutive week playing the PGA Tour, PGA Tour Champions and European tour.

Derek Hitchner made a 5 1/2-foot birdie putt on the first hole of a five-man playoff to win the Utah Championship for his first Korn Ferry Tour title.

Hitchner closed with a 3-under 67 at Ogen Golf and Country Club to match Cole Hammer (64), Mason Andersen (65), Travis Trace (66) and Tommy Morrison (63) at 21-under 259.

Hitchner jumped from 136th to 26th in the season standings.

Rory Franssen of Scotland played bogey-free for a 5-under 67 and won the Infotar Estonian Challenge by three shots over Andrew Wilson for his first title on the European tour’s developmental circuit. Dayeon Lee closed with a 3-under 69 for a one-shot victory in the Aurora World Championship for her first title this year on the Korea LPGA.

‘I’m very happy to be here’

World Cup star Vozinha finally lands in Chile to join Colo Colo

SANTIAGO, Chile, Aug 3, (AP): Vozinha, the 40-year-old goalkeeper who made history with Cape Verde at the recently concluded World Cup, arrived in Chile on Sunday to join Colo Colo after a series of twists and turns that put his move in doubt.

“I’m very happy to be here. And I want to thank the fans for the patience they’ve shown while waiting for me,” the Cape Verde star told reporters in Chile. “See you at the Monumental Stadium.” That is Colo Colo’s home ground in Santiago.

Colo Colo, Chile’s most successful soccer club, announced the signing of Josimar Évora Dias, better known as Vozinha, on July 24. However, a series of setbacks - including documentation issues and personal matters - delayed his arrival on three separate occasions, causing concern both within and outside the club.

At last, he arrived at Santiago’s airport at 8:35 p.m. local time and was welcomed by a huge crowd of supporters who gathered at the terminal with flags, banners, drums, and chants.

Vozinha became the oldest player to appear in a national team’s debut game at the World Cup and was widely celebrated for keeping eventual champion Spain scoreless.

Colo Colo supporters share one dream: that Vozinha will help the runaway leaders of the Chilean league win the championship and enhance its continental ambitions for next season.

“I’m excited. And if Colo Colo wins the title, next year comes the Copa Libertadores, which makes everything even more exciting for all of Chile and South America,” Marcos Antonio Barrera, a 32-year-old club supporter, told The Associated Press.

The World Cup’s breakout goalkeeper is scheduled to undergo medical examinations on Monday before officially signing his contract with Colo Colo. The initial deal will run for six months, with an option to extend it for another 12.

Colo Colo said Vozinha is expected to join training on Tuesday.



Cape Verde goalkeeper Vozinha arrives at the airport ahead of a move to Colo Colo in Santiago, Chile. (AP)

The club also plans to officially present its marquee signing for the remainder of the season that same day.

The veteran goalkeeper will be allowed to wear the nickname that brought him worldwide fame on his jersey after the Chilean Football Federation unanimously decided on Friday to amend its regulations and allow him to be identified as Vozinha - “grandma” in Portuguese. The change was necessary because, under Chilean league rules, players are required to use only their surnames on the back of their jerseys.

Vozinha arrives in Chile after ending his spell with Chaves in Portugal’s second division. He became one of the standout figures of the World Cup thanks to a string of spectacular saves against powerhouses Spain, Uruguay, and Lionel Messi’s Argentina, which ultimately eliminated Cape Verde in the Round of 32.

His performances brought him meteoric fame not only on the field. Before the World Cup, he had fewer than 50,000 followers on Instagram; he now has more than 29.5 million.

“The Colo Colo family and all of Chile are eagerly waiting,” fan Sebastián Paredes said. “Now he has to earn his place at Colo Colo through talent, dedication, hard work, commitment, and by winning over the fans. Hopefully, he’ll be a great signing and help put Chile on the map.”

Velasco earns Boca late draw

ROSARIO, Aug 3, (Xinhua): Alan Velasco scored late as Boca Juniors salvaged a 2-2 away draw with Newell’s Old Boys in Argentina’s Clausura tournament.

Santiago Ascacibar put the visitors ahead with a 30th-minute strike but goals early in the second half from Matias Coccaro and Luca Regiardo gave Newell’s the lead.

Velasco put his side on level terms in the 81st minute, completing a swift counterattack by taking a touch before rifling a shot past goalkeeper Josue Reinatti.

Boca sits 13th in the 15-team Group A standings with one point from two games, three points behind fifth-placed Newell’s.

In Buenos Aires, Nicolas Otamendi netted an own goal as Rosario Central secured a 1-0 away win over River Plate.

Otamendi turned the ball into his own net in the 27th minute and the visitors survived a late red card to Emanuel Coronel to clinch their first win of the campaign.

Central is seventh in Group B with four points while River is last, having yet to pick up a point after three outings.

Pogacar returns to Vuelta aiming for rare double and historic treble

MADRID, Aug 3, (AP): Tour de France champion Tadej Pogacar is returning to the Spanish Vuelta after a seven-year absence to pursue a Grand Tours hat trick of titles.

The Slovenian rider’s UAE Team Emirates-XRG team announced its lineup for the three-week race on Monday, confirming Pogacar will take part after claiming a record-

equaling fifth Tour de France crown last month.

“It was my first ever Grand Tour back in 2019 and an amazing experience,” Pogacar said. “Spain is a country I love to visit and race in and I think the time is right to go back.”

Pogacar joined Belgian Eddy Merckx, Spaniard Miguel Indurain, and Frenchmen Jacques Anquetil

and Bernard Hinault as the only riders with five Tour de France titles to their names.

Unlike male riders including Hinault, Anquetil, Merckx and Jonas Vingegaard, however, Pogacar has not won the Spanish Vuelta for a hat trick of Grand Tours wins.

Pogacar, who won the Giro d’Italia in 2024 by a big margin, is also bid-

ding to become just the fourth male rider to win the Vuelta and Tour de France in the same year after Anquetil, Hinault and Chris Froome.

The 81st Vuelta starts on Aug. 22 with an individual time trial in Monaco - where Pogacar lives - before making its way through France and Andorra to Spain. It concludes in Granada on Sept. 13 after nearly

3,300 kilometers of racing.

The 27-year-old Pogacar won three stages when he finished third on his last and only appearance so far at the Vuelta.

“Joining Pogacar are João Almeida, Jay Vine, Pavel Sivakov, Domen Novak and Ivo Oliveira,” UAE Team Emirates-XRG said.

Change Name

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British PM says Gianni is not the right man to lead FIFA

Infantino faces growing FIFA rebellion as key allies withdraw support

LONDON, Aug 3, (Agencies): FIFA President Gianni Infantino is facing mounting pressure after the English and Welsh football associations officially withdrew their backing for his presidency, adding to the growing opposition surrounding his leadership.

Before the controversy over his proposed plan to sell a stake in future FIFA World Cup commercial revenues to private investors, the English and Welsh associations had announced their support for Infantino ahead of next year's presidential election.

According to PA Media, the English Football Association (FA) is expected to contact FIFA to explain its decision, while the Welsh Football Association confirmed its withdrawal of support through an official statement.

Pressure on Infantino has also increased after CONCACAF, which represents 41 football associations across North, Central America and the Caribbean, called for a comprehensive review of his administration.

UEFA and CONCACAF together represent 96 member associations, strengthening opposition to Infantino's leadership. Sources told PA Media that CONCACAF President Victor Montagliani, a current FIFA vice

president, is considering a bid for the FIFA presidency.

Despite the growing criticism, several African and Asian football associations, including Morocco, Egypt and Qatar, have expressed their continued support for Infantino.

The FIFA president is also facing a challenge from members of the FIFA Council who are pushing for an extraordinary Congress meeting, which could potentially become a wider challenge to his leadership.

According to The Guardian, efforts to organize an extraordinary meeting were already underway before the disclosure of Infantino's abandoned plan to sell stakes in a new World Cup commercial venture.

Some council members are demanding an independent review of FIFA's decision to lift the suspension of player Folarin Balogun during the World Cup, a move that reportedly involved multiple phone conversations with U.S. President Donald Trump.

The FIFA Council, the governing body's main decision-making authority, includes 37 members: 28 representatives from the six continental confederations, eight vice presidents and FIFA president Infantino.

Under FIFA regulations, 19 council members — representing 50 per cent of the body — are required to request an extraordinary meeting.

The opposition against Infantino reportedly grew further after it emerged that he had secretly proposed selling a 20% stake in a new private World Cup operating company to investment firm Trev Capital, founded by Joshua Kushner, the younger brother of Jared Kushner, the son-in-law of U.S. President Donald Trump.

The dissatisfied council members had reportedly planned to call for Infantino's resignation if he refused to approve an independent review into the Balogun case, which led the Norwegian Football Federation to file a complaint with the International Olympic Committee, accusing FIFA of breaching political neutrality rules by giving in to pressure from Trump.

British Prime Minister Andy Burnham said Sunday that FIFA President Gianni Infantino was not the right man to lead world soccer's governing body in the latest fallout from the now abandoned plan to sell stakes in the World Cup to private investors.

"I do not believe that he is the right man to lead football forward on the world stage," Burnham said. "The plan that was put forward was offensive to many people, football people, around the world, and it can't be the case that we just move on and forget that, it wasn't acceptable."

Yarmouk & Al-Sulaibikhat move joint top as Al-Sahel slips to 3rd



Yarmouk players celebrate after beating Al-Shamiya in the Kuwait First Division League.

Al-Jazeera remains firmly in promotion race

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Yarmouk and Al-Sulaibikhat climbed to the top of the Kuwait First Division League standings after the 16th round, with both teams level on 35 points, while Al-Sahel slipped to third place with 34 points.

Yarmouk recorded a convincing 3-0 victory over Al-Shamiya to extend its winning streak to two matches and continue its impressive run since the league resumed.

Al-Sulaibikhat kept pace by edging

Khaitan 1-0, strengthening its bid to secure one of the two promotion places to the Premier League.

Al-Sahel, meanwhile, surrendered the top spot after being held to a goalless draw by Burgan, ending a spell in which it had led the standings for several rounds.

Elsewhere, Al-Jazeera remained firmly in the promotion race after easing to a 3-0 win over Sporty. The victory lifted its tally to 31 points in fourth place, keeping it within striking distance of the leading trio.

Yarmouk director Abdulaziz Al-Failakawi praised his players after their victory over Al-Shamiya, highlighting the team's second successive win since the restart of the league, which moved the club to the summit on 35 points.

He said Yarmouk controlled the contest from start to finish, particularly after the break, crediting the players for executing the tactical plan laid out by Portuguese coach Mota.

"The team has shown steady improvement compared to our previous two matches, and that progress was clear in this performance," Al-Failakawi said.

He attributed the team's resurgence to the growing understanding between its local and foreign players, noting that the overseas signings are adapting well and beginning to perform at a high level.

Al-Failakawi expressed hope that Yarmouk will carry the same determination, intensity and fighting spirit into next Friday's encounter against Khaitan.

Haydokan Academy concludes Martyr Fahad Al-Mujammad Cup

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Haydokan Academy has wrapped up the Martyr Fahad Al-Mujammad Cup tournament for amateur academies, which was held under the patronage of the National Campaign for Cancer Awareness (CAN) and the Public Authority for Sports.

The month-long competition, held throughout July, featured around 260 young Kuwaiti amateur players.

Dr. Khalid Al-Saleh, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Campaign for Cancer Awareness (CAN), highlighted the important role of sport in preventing chronic diseases and cancer.

He said promoting physical activity among young people helps create a healthier society and improves quality of life for people of all ages.

Al-Saleh added that the cooperation between CAN and the Public Authority for Sports aims to strengthen the concept of sport as a way of life by organizing tournaments and initiatives that engage young athletes, provide a positive competitive environment, improve fitness levels and sportsmanship, and deliver important health awareness messages.



Dr. Khalid Al-Saleh

The tournament featured intense competition between the participating academies, with teams displaying enthusiasm and strong sportsmanship throughout the event.

At the conclusion of the competition, Famous Academy claimed the Martyr Fahad Al-Mujammad Cup title, while Haydo Academy finished in second place.

Džeko decides to stay at Schalke for another year

GELSENKIRCHEN, Germany, Aug 3, (AP): Schalke has convinced Bosnia star Edin Džeko to stay another year for its return to the Bundesliga.

The veteran forward's future was uncertain after he helped Schalke clinch promotion from Germany's second division last season before he went to the World Cup, but the club said Monday he had agreed to stay on for the upcoming season.

"After a successful second half to the season for the Royal Blues, the captain of the Bosnia and Herzegovina national team has signed a new one-year contract," Schalke said in a statement. "Džeko will begin training at Schalke on Tuesday."

Džeko, who turned 40 in March, joined Schalke on a short-term deal from Italian side Fiorentina in January. He scored six goals and set up three more in 11 second-division appearances.

Džeko made his return from a shoulder injury in a substitute appearance as Schalke clinched promotion with a 1-0 win over Fortuna Düsseldorf in May. He was cagey when asked if he would stay for its Bundesliga campaign, but now Schalke fans have the answer they were hoping for.

"Edin has given Schalke something special in his roughly four and a half

months here so far," Schalke sporting director Youri Mulder said. "He was a key player and a fan favorite, and he was always a role model with his personality on and off the field. In our discussions over the last few weeks, it became clear that Edin is still passionate about the game. That's why we're convinced he'll help us in the Bundesliga as well."

Džeko became a star at Wolfsburg where he helped the team win the Bundesliga title in 2009. He also won the Premier League title with Manchester City in 2012 and '14 and the Italian Cup with Inter Milan in 2022 and '23.

"Since winter at Schalke I've experienced a super team and fantastic fans," Džeko was quoted as saying by the club. "The promotion to the Bundesliga is among the highlights of my career. It was unbelievable. Football has made me happy for my whole life and it drives me on. I still have hunger. And I also want to help our team in the Bundesliga."

Schalke's first game back after three seasons away is at Augsburg on Aug. 30.

Džeko will continue to wear the No. 10 jersey, Schalke said.

Džeko is Bosnia's record goal-scorer with 73 from a record 151 games.

Kuwait's U-17 team suffers loss to Egypt

Mandeel strengthens Al-Qadsia volleyball squad ahead of season

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Al-Qadsia volleyball team has added another local talent to its squad ahead of the new season after signing Yousef Mandeel from Burgan.

Mandeel, who played for Al-Arabi on loan last season, is considered one of the standout Kuwaiti players in recent years. He is known for his strong defensive presence near the net and his powerful attacking ability.

The "Yellow" is looking to build a competitive squad by bringing in top players as it aims to challenge for titles in the upcoming campaign.

Al-Qadsia has already secured the services of foreign professionals Daouda Yacoubou of Benin and American Cole Gillis. The club has also completed its technical and administrative

setup, with Dr. Hussein Al-Qabandi continuing as head of the volleyball department.

Mohammed Al-Damkhi has been appointed as team director, while Argentine coach Humberto Alejandro will lead the technical staff, assisted by compatriot



Kuwaiti spikes the ball against Egypt during the friendly match.

Diego, with Luciano Jorge taking charge of team statistics.

The previous season's competitions were suspended in February due to regional developments, and the federation has decided to resume the tournaments in September.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's U-17 national volleyball team suffered a 3-0 defeat to Egypt in its second friendly match during its training camp in Cairo.

The team is preparing for the Arab Championship in Bahrain, scheduled from August 7 to 17.

The friendly was part of the preparation plan designed by the technical staff, led by Tunisian coach Mohamed Ben Sheikh, which includes four high-level warm-up matches aimed at improving the team's technical and tactical readiness while increasing cohesion among the players ahead of the tournament.

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NEWS



Silver medalist Costa Rica's Joseph Ramirez, left, gold medalist Colombia's Nicolas Gomez, center, and bronze medalist Panama's Roberto Gonzalez stand on the winners' podium for the men's cycling road race at the Central American and Caribbean Games in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. (AP)

Sports

Al-Enezi refuses to attend Montenegro match vs Israel

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
BELGRADE, Aug 3: Kuwaiti handball coach Waleed Al-Enezi has announced that he will not be part of



Kuwaiti handball coach Waleed Al-Enezi

Montenegro's national team technical staff for its match against Israel today at the European Under-18 Championship in Serbia.

Al-Enezi said his decision reflects his personal principles and his commitment to Kuwait's position in support of the Palestinian cause.

He stressed that sport, regardless of its significance and the professional opportunities it offers, should not come before humanitarian values and principles, adding that his stance is based on a firm belief that cannot be compromised.

"Whatever the importance of sporting events and professional competitions, principles and humanitarian values remain above all else," Al-Enezi said. "This decision represents a part of my journey and a message that I will always be proud of."

Al-Enezi's position highlights his commitment to his principles and his solidarity with the Palestinian people, while aligning with Kuwait's longstanding stance in support of the Palestinian cause and against normalization with Israel.

Al-Salmiya falls to ZED, Al-Fahaheel begins Alexandria camp

Al-Arabi set to face Pyramids in final Türkiye friendly



Al-Salmiya's young star drives forward during the clash against ZED during the friendly match.

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
ERZURUM, Türkiye, Aug 3: Al-Arabi will wrap up its friendly schedule today when it faces Egyptian club Pyramids in its fourth and final warm-up match during its training camp in Erzurum, Turkey.

Al-Arabi has played three friendly games during the camp against Turkish opposition, losing 3-1 to Erzurum, drawing 1-1 with Van Spor, before securing a 4-0 victory over Amed Sportif's reserve side.

The Al-Arabi delegation is set to travel to India in the coming two days to prepare for its meeting with East Bengal on August 12 in the AFC Champions League Two playoff round, with qualifica-

tion for the group stage on the line.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Club, Al-Qadsia and Kazma continue their preparations through daily training sessions at their respective overseas camps ahead of the new season.

Kuwait Club is holding its camp in London as it prepares for the Premier League campaign and its AFC Champions League Two participation.

Al-Qadsia, which is training in Turkey, is getting ready for its AFC Challenge League campaign, while Kazma is also based in Turkey ahead of its Gulf Champions League appearance.

Elsewhere, Al-Salmiya suffered a 3-0 defeat against Egyptian side ZED in its first friendly match during its overseas training camp in Izmit, Turkey.

The "Sky Blues" will play more friendly matches during the camp, with head coach Ali Ashoor aiming to continue preparations and correct the mistakes made in the opening game before the start of the new domestic season.

Al-Fahaheel has started its training camp in Alexandria, Egypt, which will run until August 20 and includes several friendly matches as part of its preparations for the upcoming season.

Al-Shabab has also begun its training camp in Cairo, Egypt, as it prepares for the new campaign.

The Ahmadi-based club is scheduled to play several friendly matches during the camp, as it looks to maintain its place among the Premier League clubs after successfully avoiding relegation last season.

UEFA threatens FIFA with legal action over Infantino's failed World Cup sell-off plan

Preserve evidence as legal fight looms

NYON, Switzerland, Aug 3, (AP): European soccer body UEFA has threatened FIFA with legal action over Gianni Infantino's failed plan to sell a stake in future World Cup profits to private investors, and said any potential evidence should not be destroyed.

Infantino's secretive proposal to raise \$4.2 billion from investors including the New York investment firm of Joshua Kushner was dropped early Saturday, days after the revelation in media reports provoked a global furor.

UEFA led the backlash, and on Thursday its 55 member federations met to agree to boycott all FIFA events and competitions while the proposal was active. Now lawyers for UEFA have informed FIFA that the European body is "actively considering legal action, arbitration, and/or regulatory complaints ... arising out of and in connection with the FFE (FIFA Forward Enterprise) plan proposed by FIFA and all related matters."

The letter dated Friday from the legal firm Dechert in New York was seen Monday by The Associated Press. The letter named 18 FIFA executives who it said should retain data, documents and electronic messages as potential evidence. "UEFA puts you on formal notice that any destruction, deletion, alteration, concealment, or loss of relevant



In this file photo UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin, right, and FIFA President Gianni Infantino pose during the 48th UEFA congress in Paris. (AP)

materials following receipt of this notice - or following any earlier date on which you were, or reasonably should have been, aware that proceedings were anticipated - may constitute spoliation of evidence," the letter said.

On Saturday, UEFA signaled it wants to end Infantino's decade-long presidency, saying he had lost the confidence of world soccer and that "no option should be off the table." Hours earlier, Infantino withdrew the divisive proposal that offered FIFA's 211 member federations one-off payments of \$20 million each with a mid-September deadline to accept.

The FFE spin-off valued by FIFA at \$20 billion would have taken control of the soccer body's money-making commercial and tournament operations. The 211 members already effectively own the Zurich-based not-for-profit governing body. It was the project of just one man, FIFA's chief operating officer Kevin Lamour said in a stinging statement Friday to the AP, which said staff felt deceived by their boss Infantino.

Legal proceedings are "reasonably anticipated," UEFA's lawyer Andrew J. Levander wrote, citing the belief of soccer stakeholders that the plan was "fundamentally incompatible with the proper governance of

football." UEFA has been most outspoken against its former employee Infantino while the Asian Football Confederation and CONCACAF, the North and Central American and Caribbean soccer body, also have made strong statements to oppose Infantino's plan.

Infantino has most support from his traditional base in Africa, while South America's CONMEBOL is relying on him to expand the 2030 World Cup to 64 teams from 48. That would give more hosting games to Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay, the home country of CONMEBOL president Alejandro Dominguez. The private equity plan has provoked a stunning turnaround in fortunes for Infantino, who left New York after the World Cup final two weeks ago seemingly a lock to be re-elected unopposed next March for a fourth and final term in office through 2031. The spin-off operation could have created a commissioner-like role for him beyond 2031, paying much more than his current \$6 million annual salary and bonus deal as president.

FIFA briefed at the World Cup that Infantino had got pledged letters of support from about 200 of the 211 member federations. Those letters are now likely being withdrawn across Europe, with the Wales federation the first to announce its reversal. The candidate deadline is Nov. 18 for an election exactly four months later in Morocco, one of Infantino's strongest allies and a co-host of the 2030 tournament with Spain and Portugal.

Kuwait beach volleyball teams head to Jordan for the West Asia Championship



Kuwait's men's beach volleyball team delegation.

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Aug 3: Kuwait's national beach volleyball teams (men and women) have departed for Amman to take part in the opening round of the West Asia Beach Volleyball Championship, which will run from August 3 to 9 with the participation of leading teams from across the region.

The men's delegation includes team administrator Issa Al-Saleem, head coach Ahmed Abdulrazzaq, and referee Hussein Al-Tamimi, along with players Abdulwahab Taleb, Mishaal Al-Omar, Barrak Khasrouh and Ibrahim Diaa. The squad is looking to make a strong start to the tournament and secure positive results.

The women's delegation features administrator Anoud Al-Moones and players Halima Rashid, Alaa Al-Bahwah, Jinan Abdulrahman and Dana Salama.

The women's team participation highlights the Kuwait Volleyball Association's continued efforts to develop the sport and provide players with valuable experience through regional competitions.

The two teams' participation is part of a wider preparation program designed by the federation to improve technical performance, increase readiness for upcoming challenges and provide players with more international exposure against different volleyball styles.

Following the completion of the first round in Jordan, the delegation will travel directly to Lebanon to compete in the second round of the West Asia Championship, scheduled from August 9 to 14, allowing the teams to continue their regional campaign through back-to-back competitions.