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

Aug 27 public holiday

Kuwait gives drones new ground rules

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11, (KUNA): Kuwait's Cabinet approved a draft decree-law regulating the use of drones, unmanned aircraft, light sport aircraft and related activities, referring the draft decree-law to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for approval.

The Cabinet said the legislation aims to establish an integrated legal framework governing registration, licensing, permits and operation of such aircraft, as well as obligations, prohibitions and penalties for violations.

This came during the Cabinet's weekly meeting Tuesday under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Following the meeting, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereida Al-Maousherji issued a statement on its proceedings.

Continued on Page 5

2 minors held as Kuwait exposes ISIS-linked plot

Place of worship in sights of foiled terror attack

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11, (KUNA): The Ministry of Interior, represented by the State Security Service, arrested two minors for communicating with members affiliated with the terrorist organization ISIS with the intent of targeting a place of worship belonging to one of the sects in Kuwait.

In a statement on Tuesday, the Ministry of Interior said the arrests followed monitoring, surveillance and security follow-up operations. Legal measures were taken against the two suspects and they were referred to the competent authorities to complete the necessary procedures in accordance with the law.

The ministry affirmed that its efforts to monitor and follow up on anything that could threaten the security and safety of society would continue, stressing that any unlawful practices would be dealt with in accordance with applicable legal procedures to safeguard the country's security and the safety of its people.

In this regard, the ministry urged parents to closely monitor their children and raise their awareness of the risks of becoming involved in any ideas, behaviors or acts criminalized by law, as well as monitor their use of social media and strengthen family supervision and guidance.

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Left: 2 minor suspects. Right: Items seized.



Ministry of Interior photos

Bariatric surgery in Kuwait now under tighter controls

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadi issued Ministerial Decree No. 221/2026 on the requirements, regulations and standards for performing bariatric surgeries and non-surgical interventional procedures in healthcare facilities in the public and private sectors.

The decree defines the scope of bariatric and metabolic surgeries, classifying them into primary, reconstructive and malabsorption procedures. It regulates non-surgical interventional procedures, including endoscopic sleeve gastrectomy (ESG) and gastric balloon (IGB), specifying the requirements and standards for each category.

The decree establishes clear criteria

for conducting primary bariatric surgery. It recommends surgery for patients with a body mass index (BMI) of 35 kg/m² or higher. Patients with a BMI between 30 and 34.9 kg/m² who also have at least one obesity-related comorbidity could be considered.

The decree recommends exploring non-surgical treatment options before considering surgical intervention. It specifies the primary surgical procedures, including sleeve gastrectomy, classic gastric bypass, mini-gastric bypass and gastric banding. It stipulates that there is no fixed upper age limit for bariatric surgery, as the decision depends on the overall health condition of the patient.

It authorizes the consideration of bariatric surgery for selected cases of children and adolescents aged 12 to 17, according to certain criteria, after a comprehensive evaluation and approval by a multidisciplinary team (MDT), and obtaining written informed consent from the parents or legal guardians.

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait sounds alarm over Iran's attacks on civilians

GENEVA, Aug 11, (KUNA): Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN and other international organizations in Geneva Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayen condemned Tuesday Iran's continued systematic aggression, stressing that protecting civilians and civilian objects is an equal legal and moral obligation.

He said such protection must not be subject to selectivity, double standards or discrimination, stressing the need to uphold international law without distinction.

Al-Hayen made the remarks during discussion of Kuwait's combined report on implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination before the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in Geneva.



Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayen

He said Kuwait's participation stemmed from its voluntary pledges made during its 2024-2026 membership of the UN Human Rights Council. The dialogue is taking place amid a worrying global decline in enforcement of fundamental rights and a rise in hate speech and racist practices, including those affecting major international sporting events.

Al-Hayen said the meeting assumed particular importance given the exceptional security circumstances ongoing in Kuwait, noting that the country has faced Iranian attacks since February 28 targeting civilian objects and critical infrastructure.

He said the attacks targeted Kuwait International Airport, electricity generation stations, water desalination facilities and other civilian and vital installations relied upon by residents in their daily lives.

The attacks damaged power-generation units, threatened the regular supply of electricity and water and disrupted air transport, while causing deaths and injuries, in a systematic approach endangering civilians and their fundamental rights.

Al-Hayen affirmed that Kuwaiti state institutions continued operating efficiently and activating emergency plans to ensure uninterrupted essential services for citizens and residents without discrimination.

Continued on Page 5

Planets, Perseids to dazzle Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: The Al-Ujairi Scientific Center disclosed that the country will witness several astronomical phenomena on Aug 12-13, such as the new moon of Rabi' Al-Awwal month and Perseid meteor shower, in addition to the possibility of observing several planets in the solar system, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The center confirmed that at dawn on Thursday, there will be an opportunity to observe many planets like Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, some of which require the use of a telescope to see.

Continued on Page 5

68 entities 'fuel' emergency fund

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11, (KUNA): The Kuwait Emergency Response Fund reached KD 75.37 million (USD 244 million) from 68 public and private entities, this growing participation base reflects rising national confidence in the initiative since its launch.

The fund, managed by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), aims to finance urgent interventions and priority projects and enhance the capacity for rapid response to emergencies, supporting the state's preparedness.

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KD 188,000 T5 expansion contract moves to pre-audit

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: The Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) referred the contract for the Terminal 5 (T5) expansion project to the State Audit Bureau (SAB), with a total value of KD 188,025, for pre-audit procedures.

The Board of Directors of the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT), during its meeting on Monday, August 3, approved PACA's request to extend the bid evaluation period by ten days for the tender to operate, manage, and improve training services, as well as maintain and develop the new Terminal 2 (T2) and provide central maintenance for the Kuwait International Airport model.

PACA's efforts to finalize the tender procedures are part of its preparations to take over and operate the new Terminal 2 expansion project, which is being implemented by the Ministry of Public Works.

10% annual trade growth eyed

Indonesia-Kuwait trade hits \$606 mln, says ambassador

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: Indonesian Ambassador to Kuwait Lena Maryana said the relationship between Indonesia and Kuwait continues to grow at the political, economic, investment and cultural levels.

In a press statement on the occasion of the 81st Independence Day of Indonesia on Aug 17, Maryana revealed that the two countries are looking forward to the second Joint Ministerial Committee meeting and their first political consultations in November, in addition to finalizing arrangements for the first Indonesian-Kuwaiti Energy Forum in Indonesia.

She stated that the volume of trade exchange between the two countries increased from \$547.5 million in 2024 to \$606 million in 2025, emphasizing that the current trade volume is still below the potential available in the two countries.

She indicated that the Indonesian exports to Kuwait reached \$193 million in 2025, while its imports from Kuwait amounted to \$412.5

million. She added that Kuwait ranks 66th among the Indonesian export destinations and 42nd among its import sources.

She expressed hope that the Indonesian-Kuwaiti trade will continue to grow at a rate of at least 10 percent annually, leading to a more balanced trade relationship.

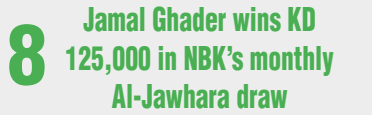
She is also hoping that the negotiations on a free trade agreement between Indonesia and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries will be finalized this year.

She confirmed that investment cooperation between Kuwait and Indonesia is seeing positive growth, as Kuwaiti investments are concentrated in the oil and gas sector through Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUPPEC).

She added that the Kuwaiti foreign direct investment in Indonesia increased by 20.26 percent compared to 2024.

She said the number of tourists from Kuwait to Indonesia reached 5,166 in 2025, compared to 5,090 in 2024, 4,692 in 2023 and 2,016 in 2022, while the number reached 691 in May 2026.

Continued on Page 5



Jamal Ghader wins KD 125,000 in NBK's monthly Al-Jawhara draw



Al-Salmiya Group reports net profit of KD 1,477,008 for second quarter of '26

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:49	Asr	15:29
Sunrise ..	05:14	Maghrib ..	18:32
Zohr	11:53	Isha	19:58



Amir congratulates Chadian Pres. on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, sent a cable of congratulations to President Marshal Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno, President of Chad, in which His Highness expressed his sincere congratulations on the occasion of his country's Independence Day.

His Highness wished the President continued good health and well-being, and further progress and prosperity for the Republic of Chad and its friendly people.

Crown Prince congratulates

His Highness the Crown Prince

Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President Marshal Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno, President of Chad on the occasion of his country's Independence Day.

His Highness the Crown Prince also wished the President continued good health and well-being.

Premier congratulates

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President Marshal Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno, President of Chad, on the occasion of his country's Independence Day.



Left: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah receives the Eswatini ambassador. Right: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Head of the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receive Eswatini Ambassador to Kuwait Nkululeko Horace Dlamini.



Amiri Diwan Min., Crown Prince Diwan Chief meet Eswatini envoy

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11, (KUNA): Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Head of the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah

received Eswatini Ambassador to Kuwait Nkululeko Horace Dlamini on Tuesday.

The meeting touched on the bilateral ties and ways to boost cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

The officials also discussed a number of issues of common interest, the latest regional and international developments.

Get set, ready, steady, go ... signals blink on opening

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: The Ministry of Interior announced via its X account that the General Traffic Department has activated the "pre-change traffic light warning" feature,

reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ministry explained that the feature allows drivers and pedestrians to prepare to move or stop more safely. The green-light

warning alerts drivers to prepare to stop gradually and safely, while the red-light warning alerts them to prepare to move forward safely.

Kabad road repairs, car bridges, one walking bridge under study

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Works Eid Al-Rashidi and Director General of the Road Engineering Affairs General Department Eng. Khaled Dhawi inspected the major road maintenance work on the Sixth Ring Road on Monday.

The two officials assessed the safety and quality of the work carried out from the start of the project, up to the asphalt paving stage, as well as the progress of the work to guarantee its completion within the specified contractual deadline.

Meanwhile, the ministry is preparing to float a tender for the construction, completion and maintenance of roads, services, two vehicular bridges and a pedestrian bridge in Kabad, which is included in its contracts plan for the current

fiscal year. This tender will be floated through the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT).

The project will serve several areas like South Saad Al-Abdullah City, West Abdullah Al-Mubarak City and Al-Shadadiya Industrial City by improving traffic flow, easing the movement of residents in neighboring areas, and increasing the capacity of surrounding bridges and roads.

It includes the installation of stormwater drainage systems, which will help reduce asphalt damage caused by water accumulation on roads, as well as mitigate the risk of flooding in the future.

The ministry defined the scope of work as completing the 6.5 Ring Road from Kabad-Sulaibiya Road to Salmi Road, and connecting the area to the Sixth Ring Road, Seventh Ring Road and Salmi Road.

Other Voices

Gov't's departure on night of invasion & Al-Nafisi remarks

By Ahmad alsarraf

In an interview on The Black Box TV show, Abdullah Al-Nafisi stated that the government's departure from Kuwait on the first day of the Iraqi invasion, along with its call for citizens to resist, broadcast via a makeshift radio station mounted on a pickup truck, represented a form of chaos.

Al-Nafisi's remarks clearly distort both logic and historical events. The government's successful evacuation from Kuwait on the first day of the invasion was considered a crushing defeat for Saddam Hussein and one of his first fatal mistakes.

The evacuation was not merely about preserving lives but it was also about safeguarding the government's legitimacy, ensuring the continuity of leadership, and maintaining its authority to act on behalf of the nation, thereby providing the necessary legitimacy for the decisions that ultimately led to liberation.

Historically, the withdrawal of armies from the battlefield has turned into a victory. A prime example is the evacuation from Dunkirk at the beginning of World War II, which saved approximately 338,000 British, French, and Belgian soldiers from certain death at the hands of German forces. That withdrawal became a victory in its own right and enabled Britain to continue the war.

Washington's army's withdrawal from Brooklyn in 1776, crossing the East River at night before being besieged, was considered a major success at a critical juncture in the American Revolution against the British.

There are many other withdrawals that history records with pride, including the Battle of Chosin Reservoir during the Korean War in 1950, carried out by United Nations forces.

Examples from ancient history include the Byzantine withdrawal from the Battle of Manzikert in 1071 and Khalid ibn al-Walid's withdrawal from the Battle of Mu'tah in 629 CE after the deaths of his three commanders and the overwhelming superiority of the Byzantine forces and their allies. The withdrawal allowed Khalid ibn al-Walid to reorganize his army and withdraw it from the battle-



alsarraf

field, preventing its annihilation.

The Russian army withdrew before Napoleon in 1812 and subsequently managed to wear down the French army. The Soviet army also withdrew from some areas of the Eastern Front in 1941 in the face of the German advance.

These organized withdrawals helped buy time, implement new policies, save the main force from encirclement or annihilation, and preserve leadership and troop morale. The withdrawing armies gained valuable time to call in reinforcements or build new defenses while retaining the capacity to wage subsequent battles, whether political or military.

There are well-known instances of political leaders fleeing their countries after an invasion, with their departure helping preserve legitimacy and ultimately reclaim the invaded nation. A prime example is Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait 36 years ago, when the legitimate government successfully sought refuge in Saudi Arabia, thereby maintaining international recognition and legal representation and providing the Allied forces with the necessary legitimacy to retake the country militarily.

After the fall of France to Germany in 1940, General de Gaulle fled to Britain, declared the continuation of the fight, and led Free France. When Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1935, Emperor Haile Selassie went into exile and continued to advocate for his country's independence before the League of Nations.

After Germany invaded the Netherlands in 1940, Queen Wilhelmina and the Dutch government fled to Britain, where they continued to issue statements and support the Dutch resistance and the Allied forces.

The same thing happened in Norway, where King Haakon rejected the German-appointed government and sought refuge in Britain.

This pattern was repeated after Germany invaded and partitioned Yugoslavia. The King of Greece and his government fled to Egypt and then Britain in 1941, where they continued to support the resistance and its eventual victory.

Therefore, the Kuwaiti government's evacuation to Saudi Arabia on the night of the invasion was a brilliant tactical decision. Had it not occurred, the same critics would likely not have hesitated to blame the government for failing to leave.

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email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: Following directives from Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Boodai, emergency and commercial inspection teams intensified their monitoring of local fish markets. They conducted an inspection tour of the Al-Kout fish market in Fahaeel, Al-Ahmadi Governorate to monitor shrimp auctions.

Faisal Al-Ansari, Director of the Commercial Control Department, explained that the inspection teams confirmed that sales were proceeding smoothly without any significant issues. The shrimp auction saw the sale of more than 200 baskets, with prices ranging between KD 40 and KD 45 per basket. Ample quantities of fish and shrimp are available in local markets at affordable prices for consumers. Priority in auctions is always



Al-Seyassah photo

Baskets full of large size shrimps ready for auction.

given to citizens and consumers.

Hamoud Al-Hamdi, supervisor of Shift A at the Sharq fish market, revealed that approximately 826,317 tons of local and imported fish and shrimp have been supplied to the markets over nearly 40 days, coinciding with the start of the local fishing season.

He explained that the local fish catch from July 1 to August 9 reached approximately 201,450 tons, in addition to 58,367 tons of

local shrimp during the first nine days of August.

The markets received approximately 449,800 tons of imported fish and 116,700 tons of imported shrimp during the same period.

The limited catch and the continuation of prices at levels close to those recorded before the start of the local fishing season are due to several factors, including the limited quantities of local fish resulting from fishing being re-

stricted to specific areas approximately 12 miles from the shore. In addition, access to deeper waters remains prohibited due to geopolitical conditions in the region.

He pointed out that the sale of large quantities of fish to companies and restaurants on credit is another factor affecting prices, as it reduces the quantities available in the market.

Al-Hamdi called for promoting the use of KNet devices in buying and selling transactions, which would help regulate trade and enable more accurate monitoring of prices.

He indicated that the rise in imported fish prices is also reflected in the prices of local fish.

Al-Hamdi called for a review of the requirement for imported fish to be sold through auctions, questioning the rationale for subjecting them to this mechanism when other imported food commodities, such as meat, vegetables, and fruits, are traded without auctions.

He emphasized that eliminating the auction system for imported fish would not mean eliminating oversight, but rather allowing imported fish to be traded directly while maintaining monitoring of prices and invoices.



Photo taken at the event.

KU organizes orientation forum for new entrants

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: Kuwait University organized its orientation forum for new students for the 2026/2027 academic year on Tuesday under the slogan, "A Conscious Academic Launch Towards Excellence."

The forum, which was held at the Sabah Al-Salem University City Conference Center, was sponsored by Kuwait University President Prof. Dina Musaed Al-Mailam. Its aim was to prepare students for university life and familiarize them with the systems and services that support their academic journey, according to a press release.

In a speech delivered on behalf of Al-Mailam, acting Dean of Student Affairs Dr. Salem Matroud Al-Shammari conveyed the congratulatory message of the president to the new students on their acceptance to Kuwait University. He wished them a university journey filled with fruitful experiences and valuable lessons, hoping that the university will be their first step towards a bright future.

Al-Shammari added that Kuwait University believes in the importance of providing academic knowledge, alongside building well-rounded individuals who are aware of their role and prepared

to shoulder their responsibilities towards their country and society. He underscored the need for the students to participate in university activities and programs, which contribute to the development of their skills and personalities.

He explained that the orientation marks the beginning of the academic journey for new students at Kuwait University, and provides an opportunity for them to become familiar with university life and the opportunities it offers for learning, development, and building experience and skills. He stated that this will help them start their university studies with confidence and ambition, be familiar with university services and systems, and make the most of their academic experience.

He stressed that the university, with all its colleges and departments, will stand by the students throughout their university journey, listening to their aspirations, supporting their ambitions, and providing an environment that helps them succeed and excel. He disclosed that the goal is for their university years to be a rich period of knowledge, experience and achievement, and the beginning of a future in which they can serve their country and

participate in its development.

Before ending his speech, Al-Shammari thanked Al-Mailam for her unwavering support and sponsorship of the forum, and her commitment to provide an inspiring learning environment for the students. He reiterated his congratulations to the students on joining the Kuwait University family and wished them success in their academic journey.

Meanwhile, acting Head of the Guidance Department Aisha Al-Maqahwi presented an overview of the academic journey, mechanisms for accessing guidance services, and how to prepare new students for university life and enable them to begin their academic journey on a clear foundation that contributes to achieving success and excellence.

Al-Maqahwi stated that the forum marks the beginning of university life, while explaining the university regulations and bylaws to the students, as well as informing them about their rights and responsibilities and the services provided by the university from their first day, thus, easing their integration into the university environment.

Kuwait University photo

Creativity role model for future generations

Kuwaiti icons, figures honored at ‘Stars of the Nation Forum’



By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: The Stars of the Nation Forum concluded last Wednesday through a national, cultural and artistic event that brought together prominent Kuwaiti figures in the media, art, sports, culture and community work, with the slogan, “One Nation... Diverse Creativity... A Lasting Message.”

The forum was held under the auspices of the Kuwaiti Artists and Media Professionals Association at Al-Hamra Mall. It included three sessions on the role of the media, content creation and art in strengthening national identity, in addition to an art exhibition and a visual presentation.

Accomplished Kuwaiti figures and icons were also honored at the event including Sheikha Intisar Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, Dr. Waleed Al-Faleej, Jamal Al-Shammari, international football player Saad Al-Houti, Dr. Zuhair Al-Abbad, Faisal Al-Sawagh, Mohammad Ghilan Al-Shammari, Hamad Al-Marzouq, Hanadi Al-Kandari, Khaled Al-Ansari, Waroud Hayat, Hashem Asad, Talal



Top and above: Prominent Kuwaiti figures, icons are honored at the ‘Stars of the Nation Forum’ .

Al-Bahiri, Khaled Al-Kandari, world champion Tariq Al-Qallaf, Ali Dashti, Bader Al-Amira, Tariq Al-Asousi and Ahmed Muqim.

It was emphasized at the forum that the value of honoring individuals lies in celebrating the impact that creative people have on their society and in establishing the culture of appreciating valuable contributions and achievements.

Head of the forum and media consultant Jamal Al-Adwani pointed out that the big audi-

ence confirms the high regard for these accomplished individuals, and that Kuwait is rich with creative talents who deserve recognition.

He explained that the forums is based on the belief in the importance of highlighting success stories and contributions and passing them on to the next generations, so they could serve as role models.

He said the forum conveyed the message that “the nation unites everyone, creativity

brings them together and giving is the enduring language.”

He expressed his gratitude to the Kuwaiti Artists and Media Professionals Association, headed by Dr. Nabil Al-Failakawi, for supporting and hosting the forum, as well as the sponsors, media outlets and everyone who contributed to the success of the event.

The first session of the forum titled, “A Nation’s Message in the Digital Age,” featured content creator Talal Al-Bahiri and media per-

sonality Waroud Hayat. It was moderated by media personality Yousef Al-Jaber. It tackled the transformations brought about by the digital age in content creation, and the responsibility of influencers and media professionals in presenting content that raises public awareness and solidifies national identity.

The second session titled, “Media and a Nation’s Message: When Words Become a Responsibility,” was moderated by media personality Fatima Al-Khabbaz, with the participation of former Ministry of Information Mohammad Ghilan Al-Shammari. It focused on the importance of professionalism, credibility, national responsibility, and the role of the media in documenting national memory, highlighting success stories and keeping pace with the evolving communication tools.

The third session titled, “The Nation Through an Artist’s Brush and Creative Lens,” was moderated by media personality Ghani Juma, with the participation of veteran photographer Ali Dashti and visual artist Ahmed Muqim. It tackled the role of art and photography in documenting the details of the nation and transforming place and memory into creative works that preserve the identity of Kuwait for the future generation.

The forum included a national exhibition featuring more than 20 visual artists and photographers who presented works depicting the Kuwaiti identity.



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Top and above: Young male and female participants show their talent on the canvass.

Little tales of Kuwait take shape in color on canvass

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11, (KUNA): Amidst acrylic paints and paintbrushes, small tales about Kuwait began to take shape on paintings created by young artists to express their love for their homeland through their art during the “National Works” workshop.

Organized by the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) as part of the “Summer Cultural Festival 18” at the Museum of Modern Art, the workshop involves young male and female participants, aged 12 to 17.

Under the direction of visual artist Yaqoub Al-Jiran, they are creating their own artistic visions of ancient and modern Kuwait, including its national holi-

days and occasions.

Speaking to KUNA on Monday, Al-Jiran elaborated that the workshop focuses on helping participants plan their works, develop, execute and color their thoughts.

He added that while some participants have prior experience in drawing and training, others are taking part for the first time.

For her part, Acting Director of the NCCAL’s Visual Arts Department Sarah Khalaf told KUNA that the workshop aims to instil feelings of love, loyalty, and a sense of belonging to the homeland among the youth by using art and drawing to express their feelings toward Kuwait.



The Bald Range wildfire, that has forced people out of their homes in the south Okanagan region, burns in Summerland, BC on Aug 8. (AP)

Canada puts military on standby as British Columbia wildfires kill 1

Canada put its military on stand-by Monday to help battle deadly wildfires in British Columbia as a local mayor warned that one of the blazes had wreaked destruction on his community. A woman has died and some 20,000 people have fled their homes. For days, scores of wildfires

have burned across the province, nearly half of them out of control in hot, windy weather and prolonged drought. Thousands have fled on jammed roads as officials said even more communities could be threatened. The mayor of Summerland — home to about 12,000 people,

which was ordered evacuated on Saturday night along with about 8,000 people in and around nearby Peachland — warned that the affected areas remained too dangerous to enter and that it was impossible to determine the scope of the destruction. (AP)

Blanche sworn in as attorney general after bruising confirmation fight

WASHINGTON, Aug 11, (AP): US President Donald Trump's former personal lawyer, Todd Blanche, was sworn in Monday as attorney general after a bruising confirmation fight that exposed bipartisan concerns about the Justice Department's direction under the Republican president. Another former Trump attorney - Emil Bove, now a federal appeals court judge - administered the oath of office to Blanche at the White House following early Saturday's Senate confirmation vote by the narrowest of margins. Shortly after, the newly sworn-in attorney general arrived at Justice Department headquarters to cheers from employees lined up along the entrance. Blanche, a former federal prosecutor in New York, is officially taking command of a Justice Department he has been leading in an acting capacity since Pam Bondi's firing in April. With the confirmation battle behind him, Blanche now faces the challenge of having to navigate the demands of a president who has made no secret his desire to use the law enforcement agency to target his political foes. Blanche will do so with an agency that has been hollowed out by resignations, firings and voluntary departures while



Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche, (right), is joined by Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Ambassador Michael C. Gonzales, (left), during a news conference at the Department of Justice on August 5 in Washington. (AP)

also confronting mounting pushback from the courts. Blanche was confirmed in a 50-49 vote, opposed by two Republicans who cited concerns about what they described as increased politicization of the department under Trump. Under deputy attorney general and later as acting attorney general, Blanche has overseen the investiga-

tions of numerous Trump foes, including former FBI Director James Comey, whom the Justice Department indicted in April for a second time since Trump returned to the White House last year. Blanche has strongly defended the Trump administration against accusations that it has weaponized the Justice Department.

Our president is treating it like a police state: Michelman

Washington grapples with Nat'l Guard deployment extended until 2029

WASHINGTON, Aug 11, (AP): It's been 12 months since US President Donald Trump announced a crime emergency in Washington, pledging to make the city "safe and beautiful" and deploying the National Guard. But a mission that seemed temporary has been extended through January 2029. Residents and a new cadre of local officials see in it an unacceptable attempt by the federal government to restrict the heavily Democratic city's autonomy and, a year in, still question why having troops on the streets of the nation's capital is necessary. "There's a deep irony that here we are in the capital of the free world, and our president is treating it like a police state," said Scott Michelman, legal director of the ACLU of the District of Columbia. "D.C. residents have lived with our National Guard troops in our neighborhoods for about a year, despite the absence of any genuine emergency and really any reason for them to be here." The continued deployment will be a major test for a new batch of political candidates expected to take office after the midterms this fall. Residents will look to them to push back on the Republican president's encroachment into the city's affairs - although they're limited in what they can do to counter it. On Aug 11, 2025, Trump announced he was launching a federal law enforcement surge in Washington aimed at fighting crime. As of Aug. 4, more than 4,600 military personnel from D.C. and 24 states

and territories were still deployed alongside unknown numbers of less visible federal law enforcement officers. Some are expected to be withdrawn toward the end of the summer. Small groups of armed guard members have become a routine presence on the streets. They have supported arrest operations but are also seen patrolling tourist areas, such as along the Tidal Basin during the Cherry Blossom Festival and in neighborhoods such as Georgetown where violent crimes are rare. They've helped with medical emergencies, snow removal and beautification projects - initiatives that have received support from some residents. Extending the deployment into 2029 will cost about \$1.4 billion, the Defense Department estimates. Exact figures on what's been spent so far are unavailable, but the Congressional Budget Office projected in a report earlier this year the total cost for the first year of the deployment would be around \$660 million, based on a monthly troop level of about 2,900, a figure that's fluctuated throughout the mission. "President Trump has transformed DC from a crime-ridden city into a safe and beautiful haven for residents and visitors alike," White House spokeswoman Abigail Jackson said in an email. Figures released Monday by the US Marshals Service showed over 16,000 arrests have been made since the surge began, including 35 homicide suspects and 3,200 narcotics



Armed National Guard soldiers from West Virginia patrol the Mall near the Capitol in Washington, as part of US President Donald Trump's order to impose federal law enforcement in the nation's capital, Aug 26, 2025. (AP)

arrests. Authorities also have seized nearly 2,000 illegal firearms. Attorney General Todd Blanche said in a statement that the arrests and weapons seizures "mean safer neighborhoods and lives protected." Crime, which was falling before the surge began, continues to drop. Metropolitan Police Department statistics show overall crime was down 20% through Friday, compared with the same period in 2025. That includes a 32% drop in homicides, from 97 to 66. But there's a debate over how much of that success is owed to Trump's mission or to yearslong lo-

cal efforts to chip away at the crime rate. What's certain is locals feel the weight of the deployment and don't see a clear way to push back against it. National Guard deployments to other cities have been blocked by courts, and a lawsuit challenging the deployment is pending, but critics of the surge aren't hopeful. "The fact that we still have the National Guard walking our streets a year later with no end in sight is really demoralizing," city council member Brianne K. Nadeau said. Because Washington is a congressionally established federal district, Trump has much greater influence over the police and D.C. National Guard, which he controls directly, including its commander. The Home Rule Act, passed in 1973, allows residents to vote for local leaders, including the mayor and council members. Congress has oversight over the local budget and review authority of all laws passed and the ability to summon district officials to the Capitol routinely to explain themselves. The D.C. delegate to Congress is a nonvoting position. The city's governmental structure under home rule made it easy for Trump to do what he has done, Nadeau said. "There isn't really any political liability for national leaders to mess with D.C. because nobody really cares," outside of those directly impacted, she said. The law enforcement surge played a major role in Democratic primary elections in June, which elevated candidates who have made Washington's autonomy and statehood top priorities. Janeese Lewis George, a democratic socialist who in the overwhelmingly Democratic city is likely to be its next mayor, has already rankled Trump. He threatened to put the city under federal control if she wins. Robert White Jr., another pro-statehood candidate, won the Democratic primary for the city's seat in Congress. And while they are hamstrung by the city's status, both hope they have

strategies that can help fight back against the president and the deployment. White told The Associated Press he plans to build "an army of residents" and allies to target swing districts and work at "un-electing" people critical of the district and "electing those who do support D.C." The action is similar to one a former D.C. congressional delegate, Walter Fauntroy, successfully pursued in 1972, mobilizing Black voters and allies against a South Carolina Congress member who had long opposed D.C.'s independence. "He didn't deploy that strategy a bunch of times, but it sent a signal to people to lay off of D.C.," White said. The city's outgoing mayor, Muriel Bowser, avoided the kind of biting rhetoric and personal attacks typical of other high-profile Democratic leaders, despite the unprecedented intervention into her city. A major part of that was to avoid raising Trump's ire and threaten what independence the city has. In a statement Monday, Bowser called the surge an "unprecedented federal intervention" that highlighted D.C.'s lack of "statehood and autonomy." She credited her actions during the surge, including working with the federal government, with protecting home rule and keeping the federal emergency that gave control of the local police to the president from being extended.

For Farage, success brings new pressure and showdown with Count Binface

LONDON, Aug 11, (AP): Nigel Farage depicts himself as an outsider taking on the establishment, but now the tables have turned. The leader of anti-immigration party Reform UK is running in an election as the incumbent favorite, and his main opponent is a man dressed as a garbage can. Farage, an ally of US President Donald Trump, triggered Thursday's special election in the English seaside town of Clacton by quitting his seat in the House of Commons last month. Facing awkward questions about his finances, Farage said he would let voters judge him in a "people versus the establishment" contest. But the other main parties called it a stunt and refused to take part, leaving Farage running against an assortment of independents, jokers and single-issue candidates led by Count Binface, a comic space alien with a trash can on his head. In that field, it's Farage who looks like the mainstream politician. Simon Usherwood, professor of politics and international studies at the Open University, said Farage's appeal is built on his image as a straight-talking individualist, "the kind of bloke you can have a pint with down the pub." "It's that very charismatic aspect of Farage that is both his strength and his weakness," Usherwood said. "He has fallen into a trap of thinking that he is somehow immune from the kind of scrutiny that would undo other politicians." For two decades, the populist Farage has led small parties with an outsized impact on British policy. His charisma - and, critics say, his distortions - were key to securing victory for the "leave" side in Britain's 2016 European Union membership referendum. After Brexit, Farage switched his focus to migrants crossing the English Channel in small boats, a stream that he

has called an invasion. In 2024 he was elected to Parliament at his eighth attempt, representing the strongly Brexit-backing town of Clacton in eastern England. Becoming a lawmaker brought unwelcome scrutiny of his finances. Parliament's standards watchdog is investigating an undeclared donation of 5 million pounds (\$6.7 million) to Farage in 2024 from Christopher Harborne, a Thailand-based cryptocurrency billionaire. Farage says he didn't need to declare the money because it was a personal gift he used to fund his security and came before he was elected. Newly elected lawmakers must declare gifts worth more than 300 pounds (\$400) received in the previous year if they are related to political activities. Farage is also facing an investigation into his financial relationship with George Cottrell, an aristocratic

crypto-gambling entrepreneur who served eight months in a U.S. prison for fraud a decade ago after offering to launder money for undercover agents posing as drug traffickers. Cottrell, 32, remains close to Farage and has reportedly given him money for security and staff. U.K. media report that Cottrell and his mother have been interviewed by police as part of a probe into donations to Reform UK, though they have not been arrested. Farage is standing by the man he calls "Posh George," saying Aug. 3: "I don't ditch my allies." The governing Labour Party and opposition Conservatives, Liberal Democrats and Greens all declined to run in Clacton. But it is still a crowded field, with almost three dozen candidates, including representatives of Rejoin EU, the Everyone is God Party and the Monster Raving Loony Party.



Nigel Farage, Leader of Britain's Reform UK party, speaks during a press conference in London on Aug 10. (AP)



A plume of black smoke is seen over the port of St. Petersburg, Russia, on June 3, after a Ukrainian drone attack. (AP)

Zelenskyy warns Moscow gets more N.Korea help

Russian aerial attacks kill 9 in Ukraine

KYIV, Ukraine, Aug 11, (AP): Russia bombarded Ukrainian cities with missiles, drones and glide bombs, killing at least nine civilians, officials said Tuesday, as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy warned that Moscow is receiving new military help for its more than 4-year-old invasion from North Korea. Zelenskyy said Russian forces used ballistic missiles supplied by North Korea in their overnight attack on the southeastern Ukraine city of Zaporizhzhia, where local officials said six people were killed and 19 wounded. A further three people, including a 15-year-old boy, were killed by Russian drones and artillery in the central Dnipropetrovsk region, local authorities said. Russia has received additional ballistic missiles from Pyongyang and is preparing to deploy more

North Korean troops, Zelenskyy said late Monday. Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un signed a strategic partnership agreement just over two years ago. It vows mutual aid if either country faces aggression. Kim has sent thousands of troops and huge supplies of weapons to support Putin's invasion of Ukraine. Some experts say the engagement with Moscow is helping improve North Korea's military capabilities, and Zelenskyy warned that the battlefield experience would help Pyongyang menace other countries in its region. Ukraine says Russia is scaling up its production of ballistic missiles, aiming to exploit Kyiv's critical shortage of Patriot air defense interceptors that can stop them, and claims Moscow is readying an in-

crease in recruitment for a new push on the front line that stretches 1,250 kilometers (775 miles) along eastern and southern Ukraine. "Every step Russia takes - increasing ballistic missile production, bringing in North Korean equipment, preparing for mobilization - all of this shows that Moscow is preparing not for peace, but for escalation," Zelenskyy said on social media. U.S.-led diplomatic efforts to stop the war have fizzled as Washington grew frustrated with the lack of progress toward a settlement and its attention turned to the Iran war. "The Kremlin will not enter serious negotiations or make meaningful compromises on its demands as long as Putin believes that he has a viable military path to achieving his full objectives," the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, said in an analysis late Monday.

Choco will never again be the land of the forgotten: De la Espriella

Colombia searches for over 3,000 missing after quake kills more than 100

BOGOTA, Colombia, Aug 11, (AP): Search and rescue efforts resumed Tuesday in dozens of cities and towns in western Colombia after a Monday's 7.4 magnitude earthquake left over 3,000 missing, with many trapped under the debris.

Mayors and governors from Cali, Pereira, Choco and Manizalez said Tuesday at least 179 people had died in those four areas; the federal government, which last updated its estimates Monday, has said at least 111 died.

Around 1,600 buildings were reported damaged or collapsed. Soldiers, rescue personnel and families picked through the rubble, passing large pieces of concrete by hand along lines of volunteers.

Choco, the region surrounding the quake's epicenter, is one of Colombia's poorest and most neglected regions, often beset by warring armed groups. Much of Choco is accessible only by boat, through the jungle or by airplane. Little was known about the extent of damage there.

The country's new president, Abelardo De la Espriella, traveled to Choco's capital, Quibdo, on Monday night and announced he had mobilized "the entire military and police apparatus" to respond, deploying engineers, rescue workers and search dogs.

"Choco will never again be the 'land of the forgotten,'" he said.

The earthquake presents the first major test for de la Espriella, who was sworn in on Friday. De la Espriella has been a divisive figure because of his pledge of an all-out crackdown on criminal groups in the Andean nation.

Families posted information about missing loved ones on citizen-run web-sites.



People search through rubble after an earthquake struck Cali, Colombia on Aug 10. (AP)

Dana Carolina Zamora posted an image of her missing 60-year-old uncle, Miguel Angel Zamora, cradling his dog. The farmer was living in a rural area

of El Cairo, not far from the quake's epicenter in San Jose Del Palmar.

Local authorities said 80% of El Cairo, a town of about 7,000 people, was damaged. Zamora said her uncle lived in a traditional house of sticks and mud.

"We are afraid. We hope that is not the case, that he is all right and that it is only a communication failure. But we haven't heard anything from him," Zamora said.

The earthquake left many people unnerved after back-to-back quakes devastated neighboring Venezuela in late June, destroying hundreds of buildings and killing more than 6,300 people.

Mónica Sánchez owns a small company that makes work uniforms. Her home city, Pereira, was one of the worst hit, and a wall inside the factory collapsed. Sánchez and her 12 workers got outside just in time.

"It was shocking - the city fell down around us," she said.

Pereira's municipal government said at least 58 buildings collapsed, while Cali Mayor Alejandro Eder said at least 40 buildings had collapsed.

Both cities enforced curfews Monday night to prevent looting. And in Pereira, the city government has banned privately owned vehicles from circulating, to clear the way for ambulances, police and rescue workers.

The US State Department has announced it would provide \$15.5 million for emergency shelter, food and other aid. Governments across Latin America have also lined up to help.

"This has been a tragedy for the whole city, for thousands of families," Pereira Mayor Mauricio Salazar told local media, his voice quivering. "But here we are, and we will continue forward with the hand of God."

Pentagon official asks Asia allies to invest more in defense and help deter aggression

MANILA, Philippines, Aug 11, (AP): A Pentagon official on Monday asked allies in Asia to invest more in their defense and help deter aggression in the region and said the United States remains committed to do the same with "partners, not protectorates."

Elbridge Colby, an undersecretary of defense, made the remarks at a forum in the Philippines, his first stop in Southeast Asia, where he will also visit Indonesia, Thailand and Cambodia.

He renewed Washington's assurances that the US is not backing away from Asia despite its current preoccupation with the Iran war and the Middle East.

"America is definitely not disengaging from Asia - to the contrary. Our vital national interests dictate our enduring presence here," Colby told an audience that included foreign diplomats, generals, business executives and journalists.

"We are not leaving; in fact, we are digging in, to ensure a favorable balance of power where it matters most," the Pentagon's top policy adviser said. "We see Asia as of paramount importance."

Colby stayed away from the usual



United States Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Elbridge Colby, (right), shakes hands with Philippine Ambassador to the US, Jose Manuel Romualdez during a forum in Manila, Philippines on Aug 10. (AP)

US tirade against China's growing aggression in the region, including in the disputed South China Sea. Washington has often expressed alarm over Beijing's increasingly hostile actions against Philippine coast guard and naval forces in recent years.

Washington has repeatedly warned that it's obligated to defend the Philippines, its oldest treaty ally in Asia, if Filipino forces, ships or aircraft come under armed attack, including

in the South China Sea.

China and the Philippines, along with Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan, have been locked in territorial standoffs in the disputed waters, a key global trade route, for decades. Beijing virtually claims the entire waterway and has rejected a 2016 ruling in an arbitration case initiated by the Philippines that invalidated its expansive claims.

Colby repeated a vow by US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth in a

speech at the Shangri-La defense conference in Singapore in May that the US will build and sustain a strong defense in the Western Pacific "that ensures aggression is infeasible, escalation unattractive and war deemed irrational."

Colby said the US is committed to ensuring "we can sustain combat-credible power where it matters most. Yet this defense architecture cannot rest on American shoulders alone. It must be upheld by a network of highly capable, sovereign nations that have modernized their own forces and stepped up to secure their own territory - transforming our relationships into true partnerships of equals."

He added: "When we ask our allies and partners to step up, to invest more in their own defense and to take responsibility for their own sovereign security, we are not signaling abandonment. We are looking for partners, not protectorates."

Colby praised efforts by the Philippines, which holds large-scale combat exercises with U.S. forces each year, to strengthen its defense capabilities and cited similar efforts by Thailand, Indonesia and other security allies in Southeast Asia.

Africa

Drone strike blaze at Libya's Zawiya refinery: Firefighters in western Libya fought Tuesday to extinguish the remnants of a massive fire caused by a drone strike on a oil facility, and a car bomb killed a senior military officer in the country's east, in the latest attacks in the chaos-stricken North African nation.



Fidan

The drone hit a gasoline tank at the Zawiya oil refinery in the Mediterranean town of Zawiya on Monday, about 47 kilometers (about 30 miles) west of capital Tripoli, the state-run National Oil Corporation said.

The attack ignited a massive blaze at gasoline-storage tank that burned through the night and was still burning as of Tuesday noon, according to the Civil Defense, a first responders' agency.

There were no reports of casualties, the health authorities said. No group has claimed responsibility for a series of attacks on oil facilities in Zawiya, or the car bomb in the eastern city of Benghazi on Monday.

Monday's strikes were the latest in a series of drone attacks on oil infrastructure in Zawiya, which houses critical energy infrastructure including the country's largest oil refinery, an export terminal and a power plant. The drone strikes come as Turkish Foreign minister **Hakan Fidan** is set to arrive in Libya for a visit. He is due to visit both Tripoli and Benghazi. (AP)

14 found dead at disused mine in S.Africa: At least 14 artisanal miners are dead and scores are injured at a disused mine in South Africa, police said Tuesday. (AP)

The South African Police Service said the miners were found dead at a mine near the city of Rustenburg, around 130 kilometers (80 miles) northwest of Johannesburg. The national police service did not give more details on the circumstances of the deaths, but said the provincial police commissioner was on the way to the mine.

South Africa has tens of thousands of artisanal miners working illegally in gold and platinum mines that are no longer being used by mining companies. The informal miners go into the mines to look for leftover deposits to sell. They often operate without proper safety equipment and sometimes stay underground for weeks. (AP)

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The announcement of the 125,000 Kuwaiti dinar prize winner.



Representatives from the global firms Deloitte and Grant Thornton overseeing the withdrawal process.

11 new winners in Kuwait's largest banking prize draw

Jamal Ghader wins KD 125,000 in NBK's monthly Al-Jawhara draw

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) hosted a special event at its headquarters to announce the winners of the monthly Al-Jawhara and Al-Jawhara Junior draws. Attended by a number of the Bank's senior executives, the event was broadcast live across NBK's social media platforms, underscoring the Bank's commitment to the highest standards of transparency and reinforcing its ongoing engagement with customers.

The event marked the announcement of 11 new Al-Jawhara winners, further reinforcing Al-Jawhara's position as Kuwait's largest banking prize draw, offering exceptional cash prizes and year-round opportunities to win.

The draw saw NBK customer Jamal Qasem Ghader win the monthly Al-Jawhara prize of KD 125,000, while three customers each received KD 20,000 in the weekly draw.

In addition, the monthly Al-Jawhara Junior draw resulted in seven winners, with three customers each receiving a cash prize of KD 1,000 and four customers each winning KD 500. This reflects the Bank's commitment to promoting a culture of saving among younger generations and encouraging sound financial habits from an early age.

All draws were conducted in the presence and under the independent supervision and oversight of representatives from Deloitte and Grant Thornton, underscoring NBK's steadfast commitment to the highest standards of integrity, transparency and equal opportunity across every draw.

Commenting on the occasion, Hisham Al-Nusif, Chief,



Al-Nusif: Al-Jawhara program combines smart saving with exceptional opportunities to win

The program delivers a banking experience that goes beyond traditional savings accounts

Draw Winners:		
Winner Name	DrawCategory	Prize Amount
GAYLE RENEE KOUGHACJI	Al-Jawhara Weekly Draw	KD 20,000
FAJHANHILAL MISHARI ALMUTAIRI	Al-Jawhara Weekly Draw	KD 20,000
HAITHAM MAJDI HELMI ALAWADHI	Al-Jawhara Weekly Draw	KD 20,000
JAMAL QASEM GHADER	Al-Jawhara Monthly Draw	KD 125,000
KAWTHAR AMMAR AREF TAQI	Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 1,000
HASAN MAHMOUD MOHAMMAD ALKHAJAH	Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 1,000
FATEMAH ALI HUSSAIN MOHAMMAD	Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 1,000
MOHAMMAD JASSIM MOHAMMAD ABBAS	Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 500
AESHAH FAHAD SALAH ALMARJAN	Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 500
SUAD JAMAL AHMAD ALKANDARI	Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 500
HAMZAH HAMED HUSSAIN ALHAMED	Al-Jawhara Junior Monthly Draw	KD 500

Consumer Banking at NBK, said: “Over the years, Al-Jawhara has succeeded in building a distinctive relationship with customers by combining the concept of smart saving with exceptional opportunities to win. This has established it as one of the most distinctive and popular banking prize draw programs in the Kuwaiti market.”

“We continuously strive to enhance the customer experience associated with Al-Jawhara, not only through its substantial and diverse prizes, but also by offering a savings product that delivers genuine value to customers and supports them in achieving their financial goals, while maintaining the highest standards of transparency and credibility throughout every stage of the draw process,” Al-Nusif added.

He noted that the program's sustained popularity reflects customers' confidence in the services and solutions offered by NBK, adding that Al-Jawhara continues to promote a culture of saving while delivering an integrated banking experience that goes beyond the traditional concept of savings accounts.

Al-Jawhara Account provides customers with opportunities to win cash prizes throughout the year, including weekly and monthly draws, as well as a KD 1 million grand prize awarded through three draws annually in addition to Al Jawhara Junior draw prizes. With total annual prizes of KD 5 million, Al-Jawhara remains the largest prize draw program of its kind in Kuwait.

Middle East sustainable bond outlook midyear 2026: Market momentum despite headwinds



By S&P Global Ratings

Middle East sustainable bond issuance is continuing, but regional volatility is beginning to bite. Geopolitical risk and more restrictive market conditions than we anticipated have prompted us to lower our forecast for sustainable bond issuance to \$15 billion-\$20 billion in 2026 from \$20 billion-\$25 billion previously.

The year started off strongly, with about \$5 billion of sustainable bonds issued in the first quarter of 2026, \$4 billion of which were issued in January (see chart 1). However, issuance dropped by 24% in the first half of 2026 compared with the first half of 2025. That said, the decline was less pronounced than the over 40% drop in total bond issuance in the same period, according to S&P Capital IQ data.

The ceasefire between U.S. and Iran in April 2026, followed by the memorandum of understanding in June 2026, created a window of opportunity for issuers that had been preparing to access the market prior to the outbreak of the Middle East conflict in late February 2026. This added an extra \$2 billion of sustainable issuance in the second quarter of 2026.

S&P Global Ratings' base case includes a gradual and incomplete recovery in energy flows during the second half of the year, tempered by uncertainty over the U.S.-Iran peace negotiations, operational bottlenecks, logistical constraints, and periodic localized clashes. We expect that the shipping and insurance markets will remain risk-averse until a final agreement is in place. Additionally, we now expect the U.S. Federal Reserve to maintain its current rates, eschewing the monetary easing we had previously forecast.

The Middle East Sustainable Bond Market Has Seen A Temporary Lull But Its Fundamentals Are Sound

The United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia continue to lead the market, accounting for about 98% of issuance by value and about 73% by volume. Rising issuance from Qatar offsets a decline in Türkiye.

Uncertainty has reduced capital-market issuance by corporate and government-

Key Takeaways

- We have slightly lowered our forecast for Middle East sustainable bond issuance due to geopolitical volatility. Year-on-year issuance volumes remained flat in the first half of 2026, while values were 24% lower.
- We now expect Middle East sustainable bond issuance of \$15 billion-\$20 billion in 2026, rather than \$20 billion-\$25 billion. This follows first-half 2026 issuance of \$7 billion, compared with \$10 billion in the same period in 2025.
- Despite near-term headwinds, the medium-term demand drivers remain positive, including national energy-transition strategies, the emergence of new bond types, and about \$50 billion of sustainable bond maturities in 2027-2030.
- While the Iran-U.S. memorandum of understanding has given the market a reason for optimism, the potential for renewed hostilities could dampen energy exports, foreign investors' confidence, and issuance volumes.

related entities. To date, banks have issued most by value (80%) and by volume (87%) (see chart 2). Notably, during the first half of 2026, sustainable bond issuance by nonfinancial corporations declined by more than 80%, as issuers relied on bank lending or private place-

ments to refinance maturing debt.

Demand for sustainable sukuk has reduced, but we consider this to be temporary. Sustainable sukuk (including banks' Tier 1 sukuk) in the Middle East totaled \$2.1 billion in the first half of 2026, down from \$5.1 billion in the same period last year, according to Environmental Finance Data as of July 22, 2026. This trend is in line with regional declines in sukuk issuance stemming from reduced hydrocarbon output and non-oil economic activity.

Additionally, the onset of the Middle East conflict has prompted several issuers in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to turn to the conventional private placement market due to its ample liquidity, simplicity, and speed of execution. While we expect sustainable sukuk issuance in GCC countries to persist in 2026 and beyond, its contribution to sustainable issuance declined in the first half of the year to about 30% from 50% in the first half of 2025 (see chart 3).

The Middle East Sustainable Bond Market Will Remain Susceptible To Near-Term Volatility

The volatility primarily reflects spikes in geopolitical risk that could reduce investor appetite for GCC issuance. Nevertheless, we maintain a positive medium-term outlook, with three main demand drivers:

- National energy-transition strategies, including renewable-energy targets;
- Growth in new types of bonds such as transition bonds and blue bonds; and
- Continued interest in sustainable sukuk.

In addition, an acceleration in demand for energy-intensive AI, particularly in regions exposed to water stress and heatwaves, could boost sustainable finance issuance in the context of national sustainability targets.

In addition, upcoming debt maturities could spur a wave of refinancing activity among Middle East issuers. We estimate that about \$50 billion of sustainable bonds will mature between 2027-2030 (see chart 4). If issuers decide to refinance those bonds with sustainable debt, this will support issuance volumes in the medium term.

AEC’s Bourisli to Bloomberg: National oil companies have demonstrated strong capability in navigating regional challenges & AEC supports Kuwait’s 2035 production growth targets

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: In interviews with CNBC TV and Bloomberg TV, Eng. Rawaf Bourisli, Vice Chairman of Action Energy Company KSCP (AEC), said Kuwait’s national oil companies have shown exceptional capability in navigating ongoing regional challenges, reaffirming Action Energy’s commitment to supporting Kuwait’s long-term production objectives, including Kuwait’s target of increasing production capacity to four million barrels per day by 2035.

Eng. Boursli added that the company’s contracted backlog has reached a record level of approximately US\$1.1 billion, providing strong revenue visibility over the coming years. He noted that approximately 39% of the backlog comprises integrated, high-value oilfield services, which are expected to become an increasingly



AEC’s Vice Chairman on CNBC



AEC’s Vice Chairman on Bloomberg

On the regional front, Eng. Boursli said the company’s international expansion has moved from strategy to execution, anchored by its first joint venture (JV) with Kellton to deploy artificial intelligence solutions for well control digitalization and real-time monitoring. The joint venture is also preparing to open its first regional office in Doha during the third quarter of 2026, marking the first step in its broader GCC expansion plans. Through this JV, the company aims to help energy operators across the region modernize their operations, improve decision-making, and maximize the value of their assets.

In H1 2026, Action Energy reported revenue of KWD 18.1 million, up 34.4% year over year, EBITDA of KWD 9.0 million, up 28.3%, and net profit of KWD 4.4 million, representing year-over-year growth of 96.6%.

significant contributor to the company’s financial performance during the second half of 2026 and into early 2027.

Commenting on the Board of Directors’ recommendation to distribute the company’s first interim

- AEC's contracted backlog stands at US\$1.1 billion, with 39% derived from integrated, high-value oilfield services.
- The interim dividend reflects the company's strong financial position and commitment to delivering sustainable shareholder value less than a year after its listing on Boursa Kuwait.
- AEC's expansion beyond Kuwait has moved from the planning stage to execution.

cash dividend of 3 fils per share, Eng. Boursli said: “This recommendation reflects a healthy balance sheet and a commitment to delivering sustainable shareholder value. We remain focused on executing a disciplined strategy that balances investment in growth with profitability, enabling us to continue expanding the business while creating long-term value for our shareholders.”

The Conversation

Energy crisis grows as wars cripple refineries

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

By Amy Myers Jaffe

New York University; Tufts University

□ □ □

The global energy crisis triggered by two wars is set to worsen, as Ukraine pummels Russia’s refining industry and Iranian attacks continue on Middle Eastern oil production and refining. Further, the nature of the destruction and the growing number of fronts and warring parties involved may herald a new era of extended vulnerability for countries that depend on imports for their energy.

Throughout most of modern history, wars have targeted energy infrastructure, including oil wells, refineries, pipelines, export terminals and power plants.

But the latest weapons technology - autonomous drones and automated seafaring vessels - are defeating existing defense systems.

The resulting damage is increasing the threat that crucial oil shipping lanes around the world may be slowed or stopped for long periods of time, and not just in the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, at the southern entrance to the Red Sea.

The world has been able to muddle through the first few months of the Iran war, but the earliest efforts to keep oil markets balanced are running out of time.

First, there were shipments of Middle Eastern oil that had already moved through the Strait of Hormuz before it was closed, which arrived in ports across the world in March and April 2026.

Then a group of governments released strategic stocks of oil to the market, while some countries adopted oil conservation policies such as shifting to remote work.

At the same time, refining capacity - the facilities that convert crude oil into products, such as diesel fuel and gasoline - has been extremely compromised. Goldman Sachs is estimating that globally, the refining deficit - including bombed Russian refineries and products that cannot exit the Strait of Hormuz or the Black Sea - totals 6.5 million barrels a day.

Now, as more energy infrastructure gets destroyed, preventing a deeper crisis will be harder to achieve. And winter isn’t all that far away.

Attacks by Iran and its proxies, often using aerial drones, have created widespread, lasting damage to Middle East energy infrastructure.

For instance, more than 1.2 million barrels per day of oil refining capacity across the region is out of operation due to physical damage, according to J.P. Morgan.

The conflict continues to escalate. For instance, on July 27, drones reportedly launched from southern Iraq by Iranian-aligned militants hit crude processing towers at the critical Saudi oil production hub of Abqaiq.

Similar attacks by Iran in 2019 sharply reduced Saudi Arabia’s ability to produce oil.

Saudi crude oil and refined petroleum product exports are also hindered by attacks on shipping through the Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb straits. A U.S.-Saudi military response against the Iraqi militias raised tensions that the war might spread.

And on July 30, drone attacks on an Egyptian port on the Mediterranean Sea signaled that another area might be vulnerable to the widening war. Since early in the war, Saudi Arabia has depended on the Mediterranean for its oil exports, sending 5 million barrels a day through the Suez Canal and Egypt’s SUMED pipeline.

In its war against Russia, Ukraine’s mastery of long-range drones has resulted in successful bombing of over 11 major Russian refining complexes, knocking out a significant share of Russia’s fuel-making capability. Estimates vary from somewhere between 30% and 50% to as high as 60% of the nation’s refining capacity.

Ukrainian drone attacks on Russia’s refining system are primarily intended to harm Moscow’s war effort by limiting military fuel supplies and war funding from exports of refined products. Yet online images show Russian drivers sitting in cars for hours waiting to get a few gallons of fuel.

The attacks have also led Russia to ban diesel fuel exports - which, before 2022, supplied half of Eu-

rope’s diesel.

In addition to blocking crude oil shipments, the closure of the Strait of Hormuz has cut off the flow of about 20% of the world’s supply of liquefied petroleum gas. That is a hard-to-replace cooking fuel widely used in India and China, among other countries.

As far back as April 2026, people in India were having trouble finding and affording gas with which to cook, forcing them to skip meals.

India is looking to increase the volume of liquefied petroleum gas it buys from the U.S. to ease shortages.

Other pressures are also closing in on the world’s petroleum supplies from other directions.

Seaborne drones launched by Ukraine in the Black Sea have at least temporarily blocked most crude oil exports from Kazakhstan, which needs that waterway to ship its oil to the Mediterranean Sea and beyond.

Houthi separatists in Yemen used aerial drones to close off the southern end of the Red Sea in the early 2020s, blocking a key alternate route for oil shipments around the Strait of Hormuz. They are reportedly set to do so again.

Those technologies and tactics are spreading to other oil-rich regions of the globe. For instance, separatists in Colombia used drones to attack oil production equipment in late July.

Since the Iran war started, China’s imports of crude oil and petroleum-related products have dropped by about 3.6 million barrels per day, roughly one-third of its prewar imports.

In fact, Chinese refiners actually started reselling crude oil in global markets to earn money to make up for reduced activity in Chinese refineries.

One explanation is China is tapping its strategic oil reserves, but it is also possible that an economic slowdown, combined with the country’s massive build-out of alternative fuels and renewables, is curbing the need for imported oil-based fuel. Chinese petrochemical firms are also buying ethane from the U.S. to replace cut-off supplies from the Middle East.

On the supply side, in Brazil, production by government-owned oil company Petrobras is up 14% over 2025 levels and is operating refineries at full capacity. As a result, its import needs have dropped substantially, offering some relief to markets in the Americas.

Venezuelan oil production has risen from 937,000 barrels a day in 2025 to 1.2 million barrels a day in mid-2026. Most of that increase is from oil companies that were operating in Venezuela before the U.S. removed former President Nicolás Maduro.

A few new deals to buy Venezuelan oil have been signed, but the flood of investment the Trump administration hoped for has yet to materialize. Venezuela’s laws and political instability are making companies wary, and some are still seeking repayments from when their assets were seized by then-President Hugo Chávez in 2009.

For now, rising oil and gas production and refinery output in the United States has shielded Americans from significant petroleum shortages.

But there are many ways in which that situation could change. Worsening global supply disruptions could eventually translate into higher market prices on a wide range of goods and commodities, which would push U.S. inflation rates higher.

Ultimately, the new methods of drone-based warfare against energy facilities and shipping are a major national security concern for the U.S. and all major economies that rely on energy shipments and imports of other goods to underpin their economies.

Countries will now need to work toward energy security in a world with insecure global sea lanes, more extreme weather and expanded geopolitical conflict.

Having researched and tracked the geopolitics of global energy markets for decades, I expect that those efforts will focus on determining what energy sources each country has within its own borders.

And given the geographical and geological limits of fossil fuels, I anticipate more countries will seek to accelerate the already speedy development of renewable energy like wind and solar power to minimize the risks of wars interrupting their energy supply. (AP)

4% interim dividend approved for Al-Salmiya Group

Al-Salmiya Group reports net profit of KD 1,477,008 for second quarter of '26

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: Mr. Adwan M. A. Aladwani, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, announced that the financial results of Al-Salmiya Group for Enterprise Development Co. (a subsidiary 81.9% owned by Al Tijaria Real Estate Company) for the financial period ended 30 June 2026 recorded a net profit of KWD 1,477,008 (One Million four hundred seventy-seven thousand & eight Kuwaiti Dinars).

Commenting on the financial results for the second quarter of 2026, Aladwani stated that the achieved results reflect stable operational performance and improved revenues, supported by the continued development of the Company’s projects and operational facilities. In addition, Ther return on Equity (ROE) is 4.1%, Return on Assets (ROA) 2.8%, and Return on Capital (ROC) 4.9%.

Accordingly, the Board of Directors has resolved to distribute interim cash dividends for the first half of 2026 at a rate of 4%, equivalent to 4 fils per share.

Aladwani further affirmed that Al-Salmiya Group for Enterprise Development Co. continues to strengthen the role of its projects, foremost among them Boulevard Park, as a vibrant destination for families and the community by supporting recreational and community activities, while continuously enhancing the visitor experience and developing its services and facilities to meet the needs of various segments of society.

Mr. Al-Adwani also noted that the Company is preparing to commence the development of its integrated commercial project in the Qairawan area, in cooperation with the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), as part of its expansion plan to develop distinctive projects serving various segments of society. The project will comprise a commercial complex, a health club, and



Mr. Adwan Aladwani, Chairman and CEO of Al Salmiya Group for Enterprise Development

public parking facilities. The Company has received the land handover to start construction and is currently completing the preliminary procedures required to commence construction works in accordance with the approved project timeline.

Mr. Adwan added that the Company continues to operate according to a balanced strategy based on diversifying its real estate investments in terms of size, nature, and geographical distribution, thereby balancing risks and returns while enhancing its financial sustainability. In line with this strategy, the company has invested in an income-generating logistics and transportation centre in the State of Texas, USA.

Aladwani added that Al-Salmiya Group for Enterprise Development Co. continues to adopt community and environmental initiatives as part of its commitment to corporate social responsibility and its role in supporting initiatives that contribute to serving the community and promoting sustainability.

He further stated that Boulevard Park continued its role during the

second quarter of 2026 as the venue sponsor by hosting the Blood Donation Campaign organized by Al Tijaria Real Estate Company in collaboration with the Kuwait Central Blood Bank, with the aim of supporting the Blood Bank’s needs, promoting the values of humanitarian work and community solidarity, and encouraging members of the public to contribute to national initiatives with a positive social impact.

The Company also organized a weekly initiative to distribute plant seedlings to visitors of Boulevard Park under the slogan “Plant Today... for a Better Tomorrow,” with the aim of raising awareness about the importance of tree planting and preserving green spaces, promoting environmental awareness, and encouraging members of the community to participate in environmental initiatives.

In conclusion, Mr. Adwan M. A. Aladwani prayed to Almighty God to continue to protect the State of Kuwait and its people, and to bless the country with lasting security, safety, and prosperity under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister, wishing Their Highnesses continued good health and well-being.

He also extended his sincere appreciation to the Company’s shareholders, Board of Directors, and employees for their continued support and dedication, reaffirming that Al-Salmiya Group for Enterprise Development Co. will continue working towards achieving its future vision, strengthening its position through the implementation of its strategic plans, and creating sustainable value for its shareholders.

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait announces Alfouz draw winners for July 2026

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced the winners of its Alfouz draw account for the month of July 2026, reaffirming its commitment to rewarding customers and promoting a culture of saving through one of Kuwait’s most rewarding banking products.

The winners of the July 2026 weekly draw, each receiving KD 1,000 per month for one year, are: Esmail Qasem AlSaffar, Abbas Bohra Bohra, Abdulhadi Ali Alshemali.

The winner of the monthly draw receiving KD 2,000 per month for one year, is Abdullah Bader Maarafi.

To further enhance audience engagement, the live broadcast featured a series of interactive questions that gave viewers the opportunity to learn more about ABK and the benefits of the Alfouz account. Winners of prizes including gold bars, iPhone 17 pro max de-

vices, during these competitions were announced live during the draw.

The enhanced prize structure includes weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, and annual draws, with rewards distributed as monthly salary-style payouts. Customers can win between KD 1,000 and KD 3,000 per month in the weekly, monthly and quarterly draws, depending on the prize tier.

In addition, the semi-annual and annual draws offer prizes of KD 5,000 per month for periods of 5 and 10 years, respectively. Customers can participate in the draws by maintaining a minimum balance of KD 200 in their Alfouz draw account.

ABK congratulates all winners and encourages customers to continue saving through the Alfouz draw account to maximize their chances of winning future draws and benefiting from its rewarding prize structure.



ABK representatives and auditing firms during the withdrawal.

What's On

SPOTLIGHT



Got a birthday or event?
Share your story and snapshots with Arab Times!
Email your write-up and photos to
arabtimes@arabtimesonline.com
We'll feature it on our What's On page!

Zain, SACGC successfully conclude fourth season

Innovation Nation Camp empowers 2,560 children to turn their summer break into a journey of learning & discovery

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: Zain Kuwait and Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SACGC), a Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) center, successfully concluded the fourth season of the Innovation Nation (IN) Summer Camp, giving 2,560 children the opportunity to make the most of their summer break through learning, experimentation, creativity, and exploration in an interactive environment that combined knowledge with fun.

This year's season saw strong participation across two locations. The activities at Assima Mall welcomed more than 1,175 children over nine consecutive days, before the initiative continued its momentum at The Avenues with more than 1,390 children taking part over ten days. The turnout reflects growing interest among families in educational experiences that give children the opportunity to explore science and technology through practical and engaging means.

Throughout the summer camp, children took part in a wide range of experiences across science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The hands-on workshops were designed to encourage learning through practice, asking questions, and experimenting firsthand, while transforming scientific and technological concepts into fun activities connected to children's everyday interests.

The experiences covered robotics, artificial intelligence, augmented reality, coding, 3D

printing, electronics, energy storage solutions, miniature Formula 1 racing, and more. These activities helped participants develop creative thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork skills, while opening new horizons for them to explore technologies that will play an important role in their future.

The fourth season of the IN Camp demonstrated the continued impact of the strategic partnership between Zain and SACGC, bringing together the expertise of both organizations to deliver meaningful educational initiatives that nurture children's passion for technology and innovation and help them

discover their interests and capabilities from an early age.

Zain views the summer break as an important opportunity to offer children educational experiences beyond the traditional learning environment, giving them space to explore, create, and develop new skills. The company therefore continues to support programs that make learning engaging and relevant to younger generations through partnerships with leading academic and creative institutions such as SACGC.

Zain also believes that meaningful investment in the future begins with the next generation and with giving young people early opportunities to engage with science and technology and develop the skills they will need in a rapidly changing world.

The company's role extends beyond providing advanced technology solutions to supporting initiatives that promote knowledge and innovation and help develop national talent capable of contributing to Kuwait's digital future and knowledge-based economy.

The continued success of the Innovation Nation Summer Camp for a fourth consecutive year reinforces Zain and SACGC's commitment to developing sustainable educational and community initiatives, creating inspiring spaces that open new doors to knowledge, stimulate children's curiosity, and encourage them to become active contributors to Kuwait's future in technology and innovation.



Hamad Al-Musaibeeh and Neda Al-Daihani with Zain and SACGC teams at The Avenues.



Children explored tech and science through practical and innovative experiences.



The workshops strengthened children's STEM skills.



The growing turnout reflects strong interest in innovative educational experiences.

Recognizing their academic achievements & excellence in high school

Gulf Bank celebrates high-achieving students among employees' children

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 11: As part of its continued commitment to sharing important milestones and achievements with its employees and their families, Gulf Bank organized a special ceremony at Four Seasons Hotel Kuwait to honor a distinguished group of high-achieving high school graduates among its employees' children who attained academic averages of 90% or above.

The ceremony was held in recognition of the students' outstanding academic achievements, diligence, and perseverance throughout their educational journey. It also aimed to encourage them to continue pursuing success and excellence during the next stages of their education.

The event was attended by the graduating students and their parents, alongside several Gulf Bank executives and employees. The warm, celebratory atmosphere reflected the pride felt in the students and the remarkable academic results they had

- Honoring students who achieved an academic average of 90% or above
- Strengthening appreciation and engagement between the Bank, its employees, and their families
- Encouraging students to continue pursuing excellence throughout the next stages of their education

achieved.

During the ceremony, Gulf Bank honored the outstanding students in recognition of their efforts and accomplishments, celebrating this important milestone in their educational journey and wishing them continued success in their academic and professional futures.

The Bank affirmed that organizing this initiative reflects its continued commitment to its employees and their families, as well as its dedication to strengthening meaningful connections and sustainable engagement with them.

This stems from Gulf Bank's belief that a positive workplace extends beyond professional development to include sharing employees' significant family occasions and achievements.

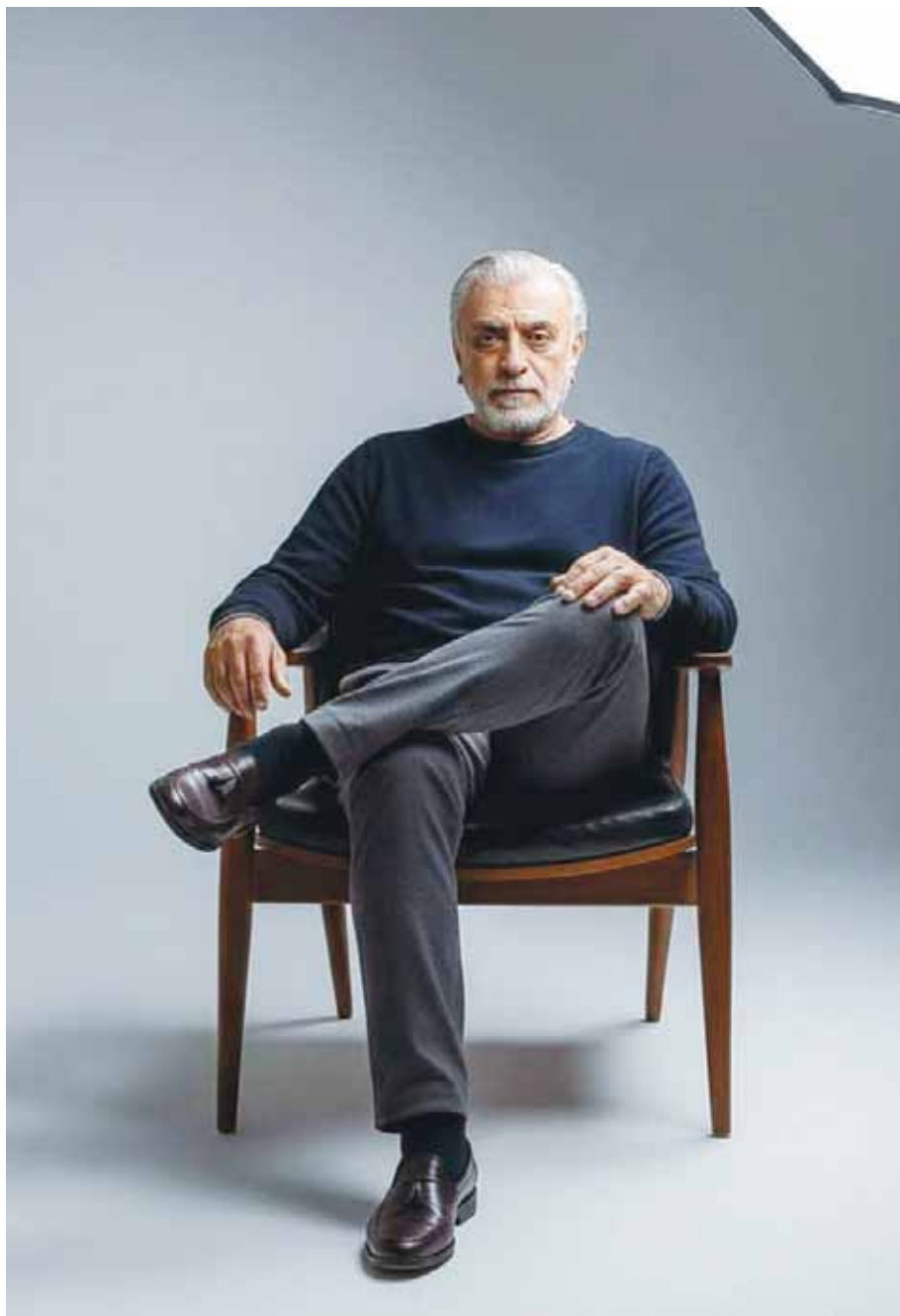
Through its various internal initiatives and programs, Gulf Bank continues to foster a corporate culture built on appreciation, motivation, and engagement. These efforts help strengthen employee loyalty and create a supportive and inspiring workplace, while positioning investment in human capital as a key priority and an essential pillar of sustainable success and excellence.

The ceremony concluded with commemorative photographs featuring the graduates and their families, marking an occasion that reflected Gulf Bank's pride in their achievements and its optimism for a bright future filled with further success and excellence.



Gulf Bank honors employees' children with 90%+ high school averages.





Romeo Debies

When home has an expiry date



Bulgarian milliner and hair artist Stanka.



Elinor Chee who is about to exit Kuwait.

Expat's last migration: Ageing out of Kuwait

By Chaitali B. Roy
Special to the Arab Times

In Kuwait, conversations among expats often begin in the same way. “How many years have you been in Kuwait?” Some say: “Thirty years. Others say: Forty years. Sometimes even fifty. The answers are spoken almost casually, yet they represent entire lifetimes. And then, quietly, another unspoken question begins to emerge: “What happens when it is finally time to leave?” Unlike many countries that offer long-term residents a pathway to permanent settlement, expatriate residency in Kuwait is linked to employment. For most foreign residents, retirement eventually means departure. For some, returning home is a welcome reunion. For others, it means rebuilding a life in a country they left decades earlier.

Over the past few weeks, I have spoken to long-term expatriates from different backgrounds – a Filipino professional about to leave Kuwait, a famous Lebanese photographer, a Bulgarian milliner, an academician and a renowned British theatre producer who has relocated to the United Kingdom, and Indian professionals and entrepreneurs who spent between thirty and forty years in Kuwait. Their stories are remarkably different, yet they all circle back to the same question.

After spending the best decades of your life in one country, where do you truly belong? For decades, Kuwait has been home to generations of expatriates. They arrived as young professionals, intending to stay for a few years. Many never left. Today, thousands of Indians, Filipinos, Egyptians, Lebanese, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Western expatriates have spent 20, 30 or even 40 years building lives in Kuwait. Their children were born here. They built their careers here. Their closest friendships were forged here. Yet, as age advances, an uncomfortable question begins to surface. Where do you go when the country you call home cannot be your forever home? It is an anxiety that is rarely discussed publicly, yet almost every long-term expatriate quietly acknowledges it.

For **Eleanor Chee**, a Filipino resident who spent three decades in Kuwait, the thought of returning home was always accompanied by uncertainty. She remained deeply connected to the Philippines throughout her years abroad but admitted that distance came at a price. “When we left home, there was no internet or social media,” she recalls. “During those years, many friendships simply disappeared.” She has invested financially in her homeland and hopes to receive medical treatment there. But she says the lack of permanent residency in Kuwait has inevitably influenced her long-term decisions. Like many expatriates, Eleanor believes Kuwait is home, yet she knows that one day she will have to leave.

For **Alison Shan Price** MBE, FRGS, FRAS, returning to Britain after forty years in Kuwait was more complicated than simply leaving a country she had come to regard as home. Kuwait had shaped Alison, but Alison had also spent decades contributing to Kuwait's cultural landscape. Through theatre, education and cultural exchange, she worked with Kuwaiti actors and young performers, mentored emerging talent and created multicultural and multilingual theatre through the One World Actors Centre. Her contribution was recognised internationally when she was awarded an MBE for her work in theatre in Kuwait.



Alison Shan Price after receiving her MBE from HRH Prince William for her work in Kuwait.

That distinction matters when considering what retirement or departure means for long-term expatriates.

The usual narrative concentrates on what the expatriate loses: friends, familiarity, professional networks and the country that has become home. Alison's story asks us to consider the reverse question as well: What does the host country lose when someone who has spent decades contributing to its cultural, educational or professional life leaves? For Kuwait's theatre community, Alison's departure meant the loss of a mentor and practitioner whose knowledge, relationships and institutional memory had accumulated over decades. Her role was not simply that of an expatriate employed in Kuwait; she had become a participant in the country's cultural life. That perhaps explains why returning to Wales in 2024 was emotionally difficult, despite having prepared for it for fifteen years. “Kuwait was home to my family, and very many multicultural friends and colleagues,” she says. Back in Wales, she initially felt like “a stranger, totally dissociated.” She also had to begin another professional chapter while assuming the hands-on responsibility of caring for ageing parents. Perhaps most revealing is her answer when asked where she now belongs – “I feel that I belong nowhere.” Four decades of living and working across cultures had altered her worldview. She describes herself as having been profoundly influenced by the “wonderful mentorship of Kuwait and the Asian World”, an outlook she sometimes finds difficult to reconcile with British assumptions about identity. “It doesn't quite fit into British understanding.”

Yet Alison has not treated departure as professional extinction. In Wales, she is developing another life through historical research, lectures and children's explorer workshops. Her advice to other

expatriates is characteristically pragmatic: “Plan, plan, plan.” She believes every expatriate should have a “Plan B” years before retirement. “If you are on any type of visa, no matter how much you have invested personally and financially in Kuwait, you must expect to leave.” It is not a pessimistic outlook. It is simply an acknowledgement of reality. Retirement from Kuwait, she believes, should not be viewed as a period of withdrawal. “It is a time for new beginnings.” Years spent living between cultures create something few people anticipate – a hybrid identity. Home becomes less about geography than memory. Returning to one's country of birth can feel surprisingly unfamiliar. For some, Kuwait remains emotionally home. For others, neither country feels theirs entirely.

These reflections are echoed across Kuwait's expatriate communities. Indian families wonder whether they can rebuild lives in cities they left three decades earlier. Filipino professionals worry about healthcare and retirement security. Egyptian and Lebanese entrepreneurs face questions about businesses they have spent decades building. Western professionals often return to countries that have changed almost as much as they have. Each community has its own story. Yet they all ask remarkably similar questions. Where do we retire? Who will care for us? Will we recognise the country we once called home?

For entrepreneurs who have spent forty or fifty years building successful businesses in Kuwait, the questions become even more complex. What happens when they retire? Will their children continue the business? Will they sell it? Many have created jobs, contributed to Kuwait's economy and become part of its commercial landscape. Yet they too live with the knowledge that permanence is never guaranteed.

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Kuwait was home to my family, and very many multicultural friends and colleagues.
— Alison
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Not every expatriate experiences retirement with anxiety. For **Kamal Sen**, who spent almost thirty years in Kuwait over two separate periods before returning permanently to Kolkata in 2017, the move back to India was far less difficult than many imagine. “I was mentally fully prepared before coming back,” he says. “There was certainly an emotional moment while leaving a place where I had spent almost thirty years, but once I returned, everything gradually fell into place.” Unlike many long-term expatriates, Kamal never lost touch with India. He visited Kolkata once or twice a year, maintained close friendships and family ties, and continued to invest exclusively in India. “I never invested in Kuwait. It was always India.” Even rebuilding life after retirement proved relatively straightforward. Looking back, Kamal believes preparation was the key. Rather than feeling like a stranger in his hometown, he says, “I only felt that I belonged to Kolkata.”

For businessman and restaurateur **Ravi Kohli**, the question of ageing as an expatriate is perhaps even more complicated. He is not simply someone who came to Kuwait to work. He belongs to the third generation of a family whose association with Kuwait stretches back to the formative years of the Indian community. His grandfather, U.C. Kohli, was one of the pioneers of that community, helping to establish several Indian organisations and playing a role in founding the first Indian school in Kuwait. Ravi followed a very different professional path, building a restaurant business that has experienced both successes and setbacks over the years.

Asked whether he remains connected to India, his answer is an unequivocal “Yes”. But unlike Kamal Sen, who always regarded Kolkata as the place he would eventually return to, Ravi's life appears firmly anchored in Kuwait. He began thinking seriously about retirement only around 2022. His three daughters add another layer to the question. Like many long-term expatriate families, the future of one generation is no longer necessarily tied to the country from which the previous generation came. Would uncertainty about the future make him hesitate to expand his business? “Yes.” That distinction is im-

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There was certainly an emotional moment while leaving a place where I had spent almost thirty years, but once I returned, everything gradually fell into place.
— Kamal
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portant. A businessman may continue to invest, employ people and build enterprises in a country he considers home, while simultaneously knowing that his right to remain there is not permanent.

Ravi's story therefore raises perhaps the most difficult question in this feature: What happens when an expatriate family has been part of Kuwait for three generations? For the first generation, migration may have been about opportunity. For the second, Kuwait became home. By the third, the distinction between “home country” and “host country” becomes considerably harder to define.

Few stories illustrate the extraordinary duration of expatriate life more vividly than that of renowned Lebanese photographer **Romeo Debies**. He arrived in Kuwait on August 22, 1969. More than half a century later, Kuwait has encompassed virtually his entire professional adult life. Yet Romeo has never lost his connection with Lebanon. A large extended family remains there, and frequent visits helped maintain those relationships. Romeo had expected retirement to arrive sooner. COVID-19, followed by wars and regional instability, delayed those plans and imposed financial setbacks. But his attitude towards leaving is strikingly unsentimental. “Let us be real,” he observes. “No client wants an old photographer with all the new tech and young blood.” It is a candid acknowledgement of something rarely discussed in conversations about expatriate retirement: residency is only one form of insecurity. Professional relevance can have an expiry date too. Yet Romeo does not describe returning home in terms of loss. There is “no emotional cost,” he says. Instead, he is looking forward to returning to Lebanon, meeting new people and creating new contacts. After more than fifty years abroad, he does not view retirement as a retreat. He views it as another beginning.

Bulgarian milliner and hair artist **Stanka**, who has lived in Kuwait for

27 years, offers perhaps the least conventional response to the question of belonging. She remains connected to Bulgaria. Her family and old friends are there, while social media and her interests have helped her build new friendships in the country in recent years. Yet, emotionally, she says she feels more connected to Kuwait than to Bulgaria. Does the prospect of rebuilding a life elsewhere worry her? Not particularly. “I am going to do it, never mind where.” Her explanation is simple: “I am a citizen of the world.” Stanka's attitude reflects another form of expatriate identity, one in which belonging is no longer anchored exclusively to a passport or birthplace.

The six experiences could hardly be more different. Their stories challenge the assumption that there is a single expatriate retirement crisis. There isn't. What exists instead is a spectrum. Yet one common thread runs through all three stories. Each had to think about life beyond Kuwait long before retirement arrived. Much of the discussion around expatriate retirement focuses understandably on what the individual loses. But after thirty or forty years, departure can also represent a loss of accumulated knowledge for Kuwait as well. It is also how communities preserve the knowledge, mentorship and relationships they leave behind.

This is not merely a discussion about residency laws. It is about ageing. It is about identity. It is about belonging. It is about people who have spent the best years of their lives helping to build a country while knowing they cannot permanently remain there. As Kuwait continues to modernise and attract international talent, the conversation around ageing expatriates deserves greater attention not necessarily because policies should change, but because the human stories behind those policies are rarely told. Perhaps the greatest irony is this: For many long-term expatriates, leaving Kuwait is not simply moving to another country. It is about leaving home.



Kamal Sen – happy in his retirement in Kolkata, India.

Technology

‘Everyone will soon have invention superpowers’

Zuckerberg’s AI manifesto reveals Meta’s ambitions for superintelligence

WASHINGTON, Aug 11, (AP): Meta Platforms CEO Mark Zuckerberg laid out a vision Monday of what he said artificial intelligence can do for the world, imagining a future where everyone has their own, all-knowing AI agent that strives to improve all aspects of their lives.

Zuckerberg detailed his ambitions for the technology in a 6,500-word essay published online where he also outlined why he favors open-source AI technology, in which developers make key components accessible for anyone to examine, modify and build upon.

In a document derided by critics as fantastical, Zuckerberg said his company is working toward an era where everyone will have the tools to create new businesses, receive Ph.D.-level tutoring and provide personalized lifestyle tips. His 8-year-old daughter, he wrote, can already code her ideas and quickly produce videos. “Everyone will soon have invention superpowers,” Zuckerberg wrote.

Zuckerberg warned of risks if control of advanced AI is concentrated with a select few companies, institutions or governments. On Monday,



Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg speaks during the company’s Connect developer conference Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2025, in Menlo Park, Calif. (AP)

Meta also announced the release a new open-source AI model, Muse Glimmer, which can run on a personal computer, and Zuckerberg said the company would also provide a way for developers to access a more powerful AI model, Muse Spark 1.2. Meta makes AI models, like several other tech companies, and uses

them to power platforms such as Instagram and Facebook. The Menlo Park, California, company also makes them available to developers who can create their own apps and features. Critics said Zuckerberg was not reckoning fully with the risks inherent in AI’s rapid development.

Noting recent incidents where AI models, including Meta’s own, hacked other companies on at least three separate occasions, Anthony Aguirre, president and CEO of the AI safety nonprofit Future of Life Institute, asked “what on Earth makes Meta think they - or anyone - could control something exponentially smarter, faster, and more capable?”

“Meta’s chosen path is ultimately one of human replacement and disempowerment, but there is an alternate, pro-human path -- one that brings about individual flourishing and scientific breakthroughs with controllable AI tools. What’s urgently needed now is for governments to facilitate a pause on advanced AI development and steer us onto the pro-human path - before it’s too late,” Aguirre said.

In his essay, Zuckerberg outlined why he thought open source is a better path for fair development of AI. He warned that if control of AI “superintelligence” is too concentrated, it will lead to less favorable outcomes for everyone else. The key, he wrote, is finding a balance that ensures advanced AI is “broadly

distributed” to empower billions of people equitably.

Meta has long been a proponent of open-sourcing its AI models, but has struggled to keep up with rivals such as OpenAI, Anthropic and Google that have not taken the same approach.

Zuckerberg made what could be a veiled reference to Meta’s rivals without naming specific companies.

“Most other labs are focused on building AI for companies, governments, or other institutions, so if those labs lead, then the balance of power will favor larger institutions over individuals,” he wrote.

Zuckerberg also included policy recommendations for keeping the U.S. ahead of rivals, including China. The United States and its allies need to speed up building energy capacity and infrastructure to stay competitive, he said.

Zuckerberg called for authorities to reconsider their position on “distillation,” which involves training a less capable model on the outputs of a stronger one. The Trump administration has vowed to crack down on Chinese AI companies using distillation to extract technical features

from U.S. AI models. Anthropic earlier this year accused China’s DeepSeek of using distillation.

“Some have tried to frame distillation as harmful, but I think it is important to protect the principle that you can learn from anything you can observe,” Zuckerberg said. “This is how the world works, and the U.S. will not be able to lead if we restrict ourselves on this front.”

Matt Lane, senior policy counsel at the nonprofit digital rights advocacy group Fight for the Future, called Zuckerberg “annoyingly out of touch on his best day,” but said the CEO is right about the importance of open-source AI.

Shared access to open-source AI systems is important for protection in a world where AI can be used to hack into electronic systems, like voting systems and benefits infrastructure, he said.

But he said only Meta will benefit if everyone were to use Meta-designed AI systems, even if they are fully open-source. “Open source AI needs to be supported beyond these corporate interests. We, unlike Zuckerberg, hope for as much competition as possible,” he said.

Music

Album charts genre's journey from Mississippi Delta to today

Freeman keeps blues alive with symphony

NEW YORK, Aug 11, (AP): It happened out of necessity. Academy Award-winner Morgan Freeman was in Clarksdale, Mississippi, 25 years ago when some out-of-towners asked where they could hear blues music. Musicians were abundant; venues were not.

“There was no place where we could guarantee that you could go in and hear it,” he told The Associated Press. “So, we had to establish that.”

Freeman and his business partners, then-Mayor Bill Luckett and Howard Stovall, were inspired to open a juke joint in Clarksdale called Ground Zero Blues Club. Then, much more recently, they created “Morgan Freeman’s Symphonic Blues Experience,” a touring ensemble of blues musicians who marry the beloved Southern genre with classical, symphonic compositions. On Friday, they’ll release an album under the same name.

The legendary actor is a producer and narrator on the release, not a performer. That’s left up to the professionals: all-star acts like Taj Mahal, Keb’ Mo’, Shemekia Copeland, Tiernii Jackson, the Stax Music Academy Choir, the Chineke! Orchestra out of London, and many more.

“I like the blues. I like music. I cannot claim to be an aficionado. That’s not my place,” says Freeman. “I’m an enthusiast, but that’s a necessity.”

Before the album, the “Morgan Freeman’s Symphonic Blues Experience” traveling performances were born out of a simple idea: How could Freeman and his team bring this music to the world?



Morgan Freeman appears at the world premiere of “Now You See Me: Now You Don’t” in New York on Nov. 10, 2025. (AP)

“Blues is an important American story birthed in the Mississippi Delta out of hardship but obviously resonates with people and cultures on a global basis, both for how good it sounds, but also the message underneath it,” said Eric Meier, Freeman’s partner and co-producer on the project who joined the actor’s blues club in 2018. “We conceived of this concept to really take this music to new geographies and new audiences.”

Turning the live performance into an album meant cutting down a nearly two-hour show to around 45 minutes across 12 tracks, while still honoring the format. It includes video vignettes as well as “cinematic narration,” courtesy of Freeman, recorded at the club in Clarksdale.

“We offer a musical story, a 100-

year arc from the 1930s to modern day, so the evolution of blues music,” says Meier.

Freeman’s idiosyncratic voice opens the record, describing the genre with a real poetry, delivered atop a haunting rendition of Blind Willie Johnson’s 1927 gospel blues classic, “Dark Was the Night, Cold Was the Ground.”

“This is music that gave voice to a people, to their pain, their hope and their resilience,” Freeman recites. “Music isn’t just melody, you know. It’s memory, it’s history wrapped in ribbon, the echoes of lives lived and lost, heartache and hope all tangled together. And nowhere is that truer than in the blues.”

The last song on “Morgan Freeman’s Symphonic Blues Experience” sees singer-songwriter Muddy

Waters’ great-nephew Keith Johnson covering Raphael Saadiq and Ludwig Göransson’s “I Lied to You” from the Oscar-winning 2025 film “Sinners.” It brings the 100-year story of blues to its coda, but it also serves as a reminder of the film’s ability to bring the genre into mainstream conversation.

That’s something Freeman hopes to accomplish, too. He wants to make sure blues is not forgotten.

“It is a responsibility that we’ve taken on. And the hope is that it, like everything else that catches on, takes root, as it were. You know, the blues is actually America’s music,” he says. “So, it’s incumbent upon us to water it, nurture it, keep it alive, keep it going.”

Meier adds that their album project predates “Sinners” - he says director Ryan Coogler told him the film’s juke joint was partially inspired by Ground Zero Blues Club; the film is set in Clarksdale after all - but it has been “a wonderful coincidence” that both works have the power to bring the blues to the masses.

And maybe one day, “Morgan Freeman’s Symphonic Blues Experience” will receive the same kind of critical praise given to “Sinners.” The album is eligible for the 2027 Grammy Awards.

“We will be submitting in multiple categories,” says Meier. “You got room on your trophy shelf, Morgan?”

“Yeah, yeah. I want it,” Freeman smiles.

Adding Grammy Award-winner to his Academy Award-winner title? “Sounds pretty good to me.”

Obituary

Rose to fame as Cooter

Jones, ‘Dukes of Hazzard’ star & former congressman, dies

NEW YORK, Aug 11, (AP): Ben Jones, who played the good ol’ boy mechanic in “The Dukes of Hazzard” TV series and parlayed his fame into a political career and two terms in the U.S. House, has died. He was 84.

Jones had a heart attack in his home Sunday in Washington, Virginia, as he was waiting to watch his beloved Atlanta Braves play baseball, his wife, Alma Viator, said on social media. Rappahannock County Sheriff Connie Compton confirmed his death.

Jones’ fame came from his role as Cooter Davenport, the mechanic who got the Duke boys out of jams as they tried to do the right thing and fight the corrupt Boss Hogg in the fictional Hazzard County, Georgia.

After playing Cooter for all seven seasons of the series from 1979 to 1985, Jones turned to politics and was elected to the U.S. House from a district near Atlanta in 1988. The Democrat served two terms before he was redistricted out of the seat.

Jones was born in North Carolina and in college got involved in acting and civil rights, he wrote in his autobiography “Redneck Boy in the Promised Land: The Confessions of ‘Crazy Cooter.’”

Acting took over his life. Jones performed in numerous stage productions and had a few minor TV and movie roles in Atlanta during the 1970s before his life-defining break came on a TV show Jones defended as a modern-day morality tale and a fine example of Southern values.

For seven seasons, Jones was one of a small band of friends and family helping Bo and Luke Duke in “The Dukes of Hazzard.”

The cousins were on probation for running moonshine and were constantly trying to clear their names and stop the crooked and powerful Boss Hogg from stealing or cheating.

The Duke boys drove a modified 1969 Dodge Charger called the General Lee with a Confederate flag on its roof. Cooter owned “Cooter’s Garage” in the town square. Nearly every episode involved a car chase with jumps and stunts and a patrol car badly in need of repairs.

Cooter was often on the CB radio in his pickup truck saying “Breaker one, Breaker one. I might be crazy but I ain’t dumb. Crazy Cooter coming at you.”

“The Dukes of Hazzard” was a hit for CBS and its popularity



Cooter, actor Ben Jones, sits atop one of the 229 hotrods, named the General Lee, used in the show “Dukes of Hazzard” as ecstatic fan, Aliceson Johnson, of Charlottesville, Va., sits in the drivers seat in front of his store in Sperryville, Va., Tuesday, Aug. 10, 1999. (AP)

never waned. It went into syndication and later became a prominent fixture on cable’s The Nashville Network.

Jones also credited the series with pulling him out of a self-destructive, alcoholic lifestyle that led to the failure of several marriages.

“It was like being in a Beatles movie,” Jones said. “Our lives changed.”

Tom Wopat, who played Luke Duke, said Jones was an integral part of making the series work.

“Ben Jones was a fine friend and a fierce advocate of all the best things we can offer in the entertainment business. He will be sorely missed,” Wopat wrote on Instagram.

After “The Dukes of Hazzard,” Jones went into politics. He kept his aw shucks personality, but took the issues seriously. In his four years in Washington, Jones was known as a Democrat who could buck his party. He was liberal on social issues and conservative on economics.

But even in politics, he made a splash. After losing in 1992 in his redrawn district, Jones ran for Congress again in 1994. He lost to Newt Gingrich in the elections that elevated the Republican to the Speaker’s Office.

Jones would file an ethics complaint that Gingrich used tax-deductible donations to fund his partisan college course leading to a House reprimand and Gingrich’s decision to leave the body.

The Conversation

Class, let’s watch a short video: more than 75% of teachers use YouTube in the classroom

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

By Cody Pritchard, University of Tennessee, Jeff Carpenter, Elon University, and Joshua Rosenberg, University of Tennessee

Approximately three-quarters of 393 preschool and K-12 teachers in the U.S. say they use YouTube for instructional purposes, with roughly half using

it on a daily or weekly basis, according to our new nationally representative survey.

Those findings come from our new research, published in June 2026 in Educational Researcher, an academic journal.

Our sample included teachers from all grade levels and subject areas, and from across public, charter and private schools.

Our results revealed that teachers who said they use YouTube as an instructional tool do so for a considerable amount of classroom time, alongside other common teaching methods like lectures and group work.

Of the 76.5% of respondents who said they use YouTube for teaching, an average of 17.9% of their total yearly instructional time was spent showing instructional videos, ranging from 1% to 100% of instructional time.

Rather than allowing students to watch videos on their own devices, most teachers reported showing videos on a big screen to the entire class. This might include showing a classic 20-minute episode of “Bill Nye the Science Guy” or a 5-minute “PragerU Kids” video, made by a conservative media nonprofit.

Respondents said they use both of those video sources, alongside a num-

ber of other content creators featured on YouTube.

In our other study, which is still under review with an academic journal, we saw some small differences in teachers’ use of YouTube across grade levels - with pre-K teachers reporting being slightly less inclined than other teachers to use instructional videos to support their teaching.

But these differences were not statistically significant, suggesting that YouTube is used more or less at the same frequency by pre-K through 12th grade teachers.

There is growing concern among par-

ents about the amount of time their children spend watching YouTube at school, leading some school districts to ban the platform on student devices outright.

While the debate over screen time has primarily focused on students’ personal use, there has been less focus on how teachers are using the platform as part of their lessons.

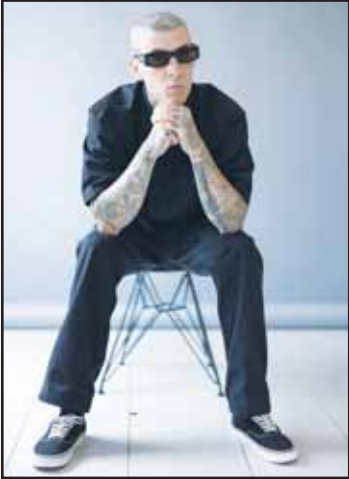
YouTube is not specifically designed for educational purposes, and its algorithm that recommends content tends to prioritize increasing user watch time over providing material that may be best for learning.

There are some teacher-trusted edu-

cational channels hosted on YouTube, such as “Khan Academy” and “Crash Course,” which offer a host of explanatory videos on numerous subjects ranging from math to social studies.

But just about anyone can create and upload content to YouTube.

Prior research indicates that teachers are relying more on digital online resources found on sites like Teachers Pay Teachers and Pinterest than they once did. This work suggests that traditional curricular resources, such as textbooks, are playing a less prominent role determining what information is presented to students. (AP)



Travis Barker poses for a portrait in New York on June 11, 2026. (AP)



Ancient statues are seen during the Perseid meteor shower atop Mount Nemrut in southeastern Turkey on Aug 11, 2024. (AP)

How to spot Perseid meteor shower and summer light show that promises to dazzle

NEW YORK, Aug 11, (AP): The Perseid summer light show is back - and viewing conditions are especially promising for the Northern Hemisphere.

The meteor shower's peak Wednesday night into Thursday morning coincides with a total solar eclipse across Spain, Iceland and Greenland and a six-planet parade - though the best time to view the fireballs will come after totality.

As many as 50 to 100 meteors per hour may be visible under ideal conditions, according to NASA. The American Meteor Society estimates 30 to 50 meteors per hour could be seen from rural regions.

Random meteors are visible in dark skies on any given night. Meteor showers tend to put on dazzling celestial shows and happen at predictable times every year when the Earth plows through trails of debris left behind by comets and, sometimes, asteroids. Those remnants collide with Earth's atmosphere at extremely high speeds, producing streaks of light known as shooting stars.

"Comets typically have orbits that cross the orbit of the Earth. So as they get near the sun and the sun evaporates the ice, a lot of the dirt and crap that's frozen into the comet gets released, and continues in orbit around the sun," astrophysicist Neil DeGrasse Tyson told The Associated Press on Sunday.

The Perseids are debris from comet 109P/Swift-Tuttle,

an icy ball that orbits the sun every 133 years and isn't scheduled for a return visit until 2125. Observations of this meteor shower date back over 2,000 years.

The Perseids are a perennial favorite because they tend to produce brilliant fireballs. Summer temperatures also make this shower popular.

"We don't have to suffer through a cold winter night to get a good view of meteors," said astronomer Zach Vanderbosch with McDonald Observatory in Texas.

The moon will be in its new moon phase during the Perseids' peak, making viewing conditions even better.

"The moon is beautiful, but it's such a diva," said astronomer Aparna Venkatesan with the University of San Francisco. "New moon means we don't have moonlight flooding the sky, and you tend to see way more meteors as a result." To spot the meteors, go outside after dark, away from clouds and city lights. Venkatesan plans to drive to the Sierra Nevada.

The best views will be between midnight and dawn when the constellation Perseus is high in the northern sky. The meteors will appear to radiate from that constellation.

Look up and give your eyes a half hour to adjust to the darkness. Vanderbosch recommends picking a patch of sky to focus on until a quick, bright streak passes by - even in your peripheral vision - and to avoid looking at your phone.

Virus death toll rises to more than 2,000

Congo's fast-moving Ebola outbreak started months before it was declared: WHO

BUNIA, Congo, Aug 11, (AP): The fastest-growing Ebola outbreak on record started in February, months before it was officially declared in mid-May, the World Health Organization said Monday as responders in eastern Congo struggle to catch up.

The WHO regional director for Africa, Dr. Mohamed Yakub Janabi, told a news conference that sequencing indicated the outbreak's start. He said some cases early on were wrongly attributed to other diseases, including malaria and typhoid.

"So we are chasing the virus, the virus is ahead of us," Janabi said.

Dr. Thierno Balde, WHO's incident manager for the Ebola response, said the genetic sequencing was conducted under the leadership of Dr. Steve Ahuka, head of the virology department at Congo's National Institute for Biomedical Research.

At least 2,000 people have died in Congo's Ebola outbreak, the fastest-growing on record, according to the latest data, as health authorities struggle to get help to remote localities due to rebel conflict, bad roads and work stoppages over payment issues.

Government data published

overnight into Tuesday showed the outbreak has recorded a total of 4,381 confirmed cases, including 2,011 deaths. A total of 704 patients are in admission and isolation.

WHO assesses the global risk of spread as low because Ebola does not travel through the air, making it much harder to spread than respiratory viruses. Cases detected outside the affected region have so far been quickly identified and contained without leading to sustained transmission, according to the agency.

The outbreak declared on May 15 is unlike most previous ones for Ebola because the rare Bundibugyo virus responsible for it has no approved vaccines or treatments. Early testing was conducted for the more common type of Ebola, contributing to delays.

The outbreak is unfolding in some of the most challenging conditions imaginable, with strikes by some unpaid health workers, threats by rebel groups, anger from long-traumatized communities and misinformation asserting that Ebola isn't real. Health teams travel remote, unpaved roads and have reported shortages of protective gear, while a vast population of displaced people struggles to find reliable water sources for washing



Health workers in protective gear wave inside an Ebola treatment centre in Bunia, Congo on Aug 10. (AP)

hands.

This Ebola outbreak has killed more people at a quicker rate than any other, including the 2014-2016 outbreak in West Africa that is considered the worst on record with over 11,000 deaths out of at least 28,000 cases. That one took about eight months to reach 1,000 deaths.

Ebola is rare but highly contagious and can be contracted from bodily fluids such as vomit, blood or semen and with contaminated surfaces and materials such as bedding and clothing. The disease it causes is severe and often fatal.

Last week, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesu said Ebola is spreading faster than efforts to fight it. New cases are doubling in some hot spots, Tedros said on X after meeting with officials in the capital, Kinshasa.

Health authorities have said between 60% and 70% of new cases are recorded outside of contacts

being monitored, and that the outbreak is spreading at an "alarming" rate.

Access to healthcare in the region already had been challenged by years of rebel conflict in one of Congo's most remote and vulnerable areas, near the borders of South Sudan, Uganda and Rwanda. Now some pregnant women and others are avoiding health centers for fear of the virus, at risk to their lives.

Aid workers say the outbreak continues to outpace response that's been expanding across the five eastern provinces affected. Many health workers have gone on strike to protest lack of payment for their work since the outbreak was declared. And WHO has said most new cases are still being recorded outside of contacts being monitored, showing that transmission remains out of the control of health workers.

Ebola can be caused by different types of virus. Although the type responsible for the 2014-2016 outbreak is considered the deadliest, government data shows this Bundibugyo outbreak has killed a higher percentage of people as care and support are not getting to patients quickly enough. Many cases are reporting symptoms late or not

at all.

The ongoing outbreak has so far had a case fatality rate of 45.9%, more than the 39.6% rate recorded in the 2014-2016 West Africa outbreak.

"In the absence of an effective vaccine, control (for the outbreak) rests on identifying cases and then nursing them in secure facilities until they recover or sadly perish," said Paul Hunter, a professor in medicine at the University of East Anglia in the UK.

In a remote region like this with an ongoing conflict and interrupted communications, routine surveillance can be very difficult and "identifying cases early enough to prevent spread can be impossible," said Hunter.

The World Health Organization said on Monday that at the onset of the outbreak in one of Congo's most remote and vulnerable areas, some cases were wrongly attributed to malaria and typhoid, and that early testing was conducted for the more common type of Ebola.

The first Ebola virus to be identified was in 1976 near the Ebola River in what is now Congo. The current outbreak is the 17th - and largest - the Central African nation has faced.

Plastic created from sugar an alternative

Traditional plastic forks shed harmful microplastics

WOBURN, Mass., Aug 11, (AP): At a Massachusetts lab, pebble-sized pellets are transformed into forks and films that won't leave persistent microplastics in the environment.

These are bioplastic pellets. CJ Biomaterials ferments sugar to make plant-based polymers that microbes will consume. These alternatives to traditional plastics made of fossil fuels are seen by some as one of many solutions needed to confront global plastic pollution.

At the company's Woburn research facility, lab technicians recently poured pellets into a molding machine to make forks. The test forks were thin enough for home composting, though too bendy for stabbing a steak. Other batches have been rigid, similar to a typical plastic fork. The technicians melted pellets to roll out flexible films for food packaging, like a bag for baby carrots. The film was quite strong but not stretchy like cling wrap.

They are figuring out how their biopolymers can make products with attributes similar to conventional plastics, but that can go in a composting bin instead of a trash can. Forks and films are breaking down in the lab's compost bin. Straws that were added are long gone. A recently tossed-in knife showed pitting on the surface as bacteria colonized it, starting to consume the material.

Plastics have never really fundamentally been disrupted. Now, interest in bioplastics is growing because of concern over microplastics. It's the new "wild card" in this market, said the company's marketing director Leah Ford.

"I've been doing this for a long time and the compostability has always been a really strong driver. But with the greater understanding of microplastics, I think, that's going to change how people think about materials," she said.

Traditional plastics last for decades or even centuries as they fragment into harmful microplastics and even smaller nanoplastics. Microplastics have been found in the ocean and the air, in our food and water, and in a wide range of body tissues. The Trump administration, while rolling back many environmental regulations, says it will address contamination from microplastics.

Bioplastics are biobased, meaning they are made completely or partially from a renewable resource, commonly corn or sugar cane; or they are biodegradable, meaning that they break down completely via a natural process. They can also be both, like the polymers made by CJ Biomaterials. It's a leader in manufacturing polyhydroxyalkanoates, or PHAs, as a polymer that is marine and soil biodegradable.

CJ Biomaterials is trying to replace conventional plastics that are single use or can't be recycled when contaminated with food scraps. Food waste decomposing in landfills emits methane, a potent greenhouse gas that warms the planet. A container made of pellets from CJ Biomaterials with food scraps could be sent to a compostor, unlike a traditional plastic container.

The Woburn lab's shelves display the company's successes: compostable cutlery; straws; coated cups for hot beverages and frozen food pouches used in the United States; sushi trays; ramen containers; and reusable paper towels. Lab employees dine with compostable cutlery, drink from compostable cups and make coffee with compostable pods. These products last on shelves because they are not exposed to microorganisms in water or soil.

CJ Biomaterials feeds sugar to microbes that convert it to PHA for energy. The company collects the PHA and turns it into granules. Pellets of this are then sold to other companies that can melt them down and mold them into products. These same bacteria will consume PHA in a compost pile, breaking it down within six months, Ford said.

CJ Biomaterials is part of the \$32 billion South Korean conglomerate CJ Group. It has been producing PHA at a manufacturing facility in Pasuruan, Indonesia, since 2022.

World Wildlife Fund sees biobased plastics as part of a suite of solutions that are needed. They can reduce the world's dependency on fossil fuels that cause climate change, said Erin Simon, a WWF vice president. She said the world needs to reduce the amount of plastic being produced, then make the rest sustainably.

Nations are trying to confront the spiraling plastic pollution crisis by crafting a landmark treaty. They have yet to agree on any effective methods to stop plastic pollution, though negotiators plan to meet again early next year.

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley has held congressional hearings on plastic pollution, including one exploring alternatives for single-use plastics. He also views bioplastics as one option with potential, among many that are needed. But, he said, more information is needed about how they break down and impact



Compostable straws and a fork, which were made from plastic made from plants, are displayed at CJ Biomaterials on Aug 3, 2026, in Woburn, Mass. (AP)

ecosystems and health.

Environmental groups, including the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives, argue that bioplastics maintain the single-use paradigm and distract from real solutions. Some say farmland shouldn't be used to grow crops for plastic instead of food.

Globally, biobased plastics represent roughly 0.5% of the more than 400 million metric tons (440 million tons) of plastics produced annually, according to the industry group European Bioplastics. Production is projected to double by 2030 due to rising demand and the emergence of more advanced applications and products, it said.

China, Sweden and the United States are major exporters of natural polymers.

Large sports stadiums and major restaurant chains such as McDonald's are experimenting with biobased packaging and utensils. The Tous les Jours bakery, part of the CJ Group, uses PHA straws.

There are obstacles to widespread adoption. Bioplastics typically cost more than conventional plastics. Major cities have municipal composting programs, but they are limited elsewhere. A growing number of composting facilities accept compostable bioplastic products, though some refuse out of concern about degraded soil quality. And because bioplastics and conventional plastics often look and feel identical, they can be mixed up and cause problems for composters.

Thirty minutes from the Woburn research lab, Black Earth Compost accepts certified compostable materials. On Monday, compostable cups, cutlery and bin liners were mixed in with a delivery of food scraps and lobster shells. Accepting bioplastics increases the amount of food scraps they receive because people can put an entire compostable container into an organics bin, instead of scraping food out.

The 5 Gyres Institute tested 22 items made of traditional plastic, biobased and biodegradable materials and other alternatives, such as paper and bamboo. Straws, utensils, thin film and bottles were put in different environments across Florida, California and Maine. By the end of the 64-week study, many of the biodegradable materials were gone, or were pitted and cracked as they fragmented. Traditional fossil fuel-based plastics persisted.

Marcus Eriksen, the institute's co-founder and a researcher, said the synthetic plastic spoon was almost the same as when he first put it in the ocean, but little was left of the spoons made from biodegradable materials.

The California-based nonprofit released the results in 2023. It's currently repeating the study to evaluate end-of-life scenarios for the new generation of packaging.

Eriksen thinks people should use biodegradable options, especially for packaging. Otherwise, he said, "we're going to flood the entire biosphere with micro- and nanoplastics."

Mistakes can result in serious harm

DIY peptide injections risky

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

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By C. Michael White
University of Connecticut

DIY peptide injections, which promise to boost everything from weight loss and muscle-building to longevity and sexual health, are a high-risk wellness fad that keeps on growing.

Health experts have raised major concerns about these products' safety. Because they are not regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or any other health authority, they aren't made to the standards of pharmaceuticals. They could have bacterial, fungal, chemical or heavy metal contamination; their purity could be lower than indicated; and the dose promised may not be what you receive.

In July 2026, the CEO of one peptide company was sentenced to 70 months in prison for selling tainted and substandard products.

However, the dangers don't end there.

I'm a pharmacist and clinical pharmacologist who has been studying the emerging gray market for peptides - where companies use legal loopholes to sell unapproved products to consumers. In addition to the potential harm from these products' possible impurities, people who purchase peptides from this online gray market are likely to make lots of mistakes when injecting them, my colleagues and I found in a new study published in the journal Public Health Reports.

Many of these mistakes can result in serious harm.

Consumers can purchase all sorts of peptides online - such as versions of the weight loss drug semaglutide, compounds like BPC-157 and TB-500 for fitness and muscle recovery, or one called Semax for purportedly sharpening cognition. They can inject them into their bodies, as long as they check a box saying the product will be used "for research purposes."

It is illegal for peptide companies to give consumers any information about how to safely use their products, because if they did, the FDA can say they knew people were not using them for research purposes. This means consumers must purchase any supplies they

need and figure out the proper technique on their own.

To see whether consumers are up to the task, we recruited 10 college students who were in the 20-year-old range, and 10 adults in their 60s, and gave them each a vial of a semaglutide GLP-1 peptide product. We asked them to demonstrate how to correctly dissolve the semaglutide powder, draw it up into a syringe and inject it into a mannequin's arm or belly. Before doing so, they could use the internet or artificial intelligence to do research and take any notes they wanted.

In both groups, on average, people did fewer than half the steps correctly. Some participants chose vials with liquid to dissolve the semaglutide powder that were expired, had floating particles in them or were cloudy. Many people struggled to determine how much liquid to add to dissolve the powder and the correct dose to draw up once it was dissolved. Several struggled to get rid of large air bubbles in the syringe, which can cause injection site irritation and make dosing inaccurate.

Some people injected the peptides into muscle instead of the arm or belly fat, which could alter how quickly the drugs reach the bloodstream. Many people didn't sterilize the vials or the skin before injection. They had trouble deciding how long the products could be used before they expired. Finally, half of the people struggled with how to engage the safety features on the needles and properly dispose of them.

These errors were serious and could increase the risk of infection, bleeding, over- or under-dosing, and needle sticks.

Such user errors are an underappreciated danger of using these substances. What's more, our findings suggest that some users may be overconfident about their ability to inject peptides.

In our study, after participants did their online research, most people in both groups said they were somewhat confident they could do the injections competently. Even after struggling through the injection process, participants in the younger group remained somewhat confident that they could do it right next time. Meanwhile, the older adults' confidence dropped, aligning with previous research showing that older adults are generally better able to gauge their ability to perform complex tasks. (AP)

Ingebrigtsen, Hunt & Fabbri win European gold



Britain's Amy Hunt poses after winning the gold medal in the women's 100 meters final at the European Athletics Championships in Birmingham, England. (AP)



Norway's Jakob Ingebrigtsen crosses the finish line to win the men's 5,000 meters final at the European Athletics Championships in Birmingham, England. (AP)

Schilder claims third consecutive European shot put gold

BIRMINGHAM, England, Aug 11, (AP): Jakob Ingebrigtsen showed plenty of kick on his comeback from injury by winning his fourth consecutive 5,000-meters title at the European championships Monday.

The two-time Olympic champion from Norway hadn't raced since having surgery early this year to clean up scar tissue on the protective sheath around his left Achilles tendon.

Down the stretch, Ingebrigtsen was in third place before accelerating in the final 50 meters to pass Florian Bremm of Germany and cross the line in 13 minutes, 15:29 seconds. Bremm was second followed by France's Etienne Daguinos.

"Coming from the lowest of lows to be European champion again means the world to me," Ingebrigtsen said. "Not even I believed it could happen coming here. Only with 600 meters to go I knew I would win."

"I am starting to feel more like myself," he added. "I doubted myself every day coming in to this and every minute leading up to the last lap today, but I'm always hoping to do my best. I've tried my best, and the last three weeks was very smooth."

The Norwegian's rivals could only marvel at his abilities. Daguinos called him "a legend of our sport."

Bremm said he looked to both sides "and I thought, 'Oh yes I have it for sure,'" before Ingebrigtsen passed him.



Gold medalist Netherlands' Jessica Schilder, silver medalist Netherlands' Jorinde Van Klinken and bronze medalist Germany's Yemisi Mabry pose after the women's shot put final at the European Athletics Championships in Birmingham, England. (AP)

"He proved he's faster than everyone else even after the injury," Bremm said.

Ingebrigtsen is not racing in the 1,500 meters in Birmingham. He's won both the 1,500 and 5,000 at the past three European championships.

The Achilles problem seemed to be a factor in Ingebrigtsen's performance at last September's world championships in Tokyo, where he failed to ad-

vance out of the first round of the 1,500 and finished 10th in the 5,000 final.

Amy Hunt of Britain got just enough separation to win the women's 100 meters in 11 seconds, edging Poland's Ewa Swoboda (11.02) and Belgium's Delphine Nkansa (11.06). Hunt's teammate Dina Asher-Smith (11.10), the defending champion, was fifth.

Hunt won silver in the 100 at the Commonwealth Games two weeks ago. She was also the silver medalist in 200 at the world championships last September.

Netherlands star Jessica Schilder made it three in a row in the shot put, taking gold with a throw of 20.73 meters at Alexander Stadium.

The reigning world champion's teammate Jorinde van Klinken (19.64) won silver, and 2024 Olympic champion Yemisi Mabry (19.50) of Germany was third.

"I will never get tired of this feeling. I will never get bored of winning these medals," Schilder said. "I had the confidence going into this that even though I was competing with an injured finger I was capable of doing well here. It was a little bit about battling and pushing through the pain today."

Schilder is the only woman this decade to surpass 21 meters when she threw 21.09 at the Shanghai Diamond League in May.

Schilder won gold at the past two European championships: 2024 in Rome and 2022 in Munich. She called this one the "easiest" of the three.

"There was quite a gap with the other competitors," she said.

For the men's shot put, Leonardo Fabbri defended his title with a throw of 22.31, and his Italian teammate Zane Weir took silver. Sweden's Victor Petersson was third.

Four drivers hold Chase spots so far

NASCAR drivers Chase spots up for grabs as regular season winds down

NEWTON, Iowa, Aug 11, (AP): Erik Jones knew the reality of his situation heading into the NASCAR Cup Series race at Iowa Speedway.

Jones came into the weekend 18th in the standings, 44 points behind 16th-place Austin Cindric for the final spot in The Chase that determines the series champion. The 350-lap race Sunday was the first of the final four races of the regular season, and Jones was running out of time.

"One more bad week where we lose any ground, and it's going to be pretty insurmountable," Jones said.

Then Jones, who started 10th, got taken out four laps in when Tyler Reddick's car slid into him, sending both cars into the wall and ending the day for both drivers.

Reddick knew the damage he had done.

"If I'm going to take myself out, that's one thing," Reddick said. "But I took out a (Toyota) teammate who needed a good day."

Such is life in the closing stretch of the regular season, where one bad finish or one good finish can change fortunes.

Denny Hamlin leads the standings with 923 points, 103 points ahead of Ty Gibbs, who won Sunday's race just ahead of Joe Gibbs



Ty Gibbs celebrates after winning a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Iowa Speedway in Newton, Iowa. (AP)

Racing teammate Christopher Bell.

Only four drivers have wrapped up Chase spots: Hamlin, Gibbs, Ryan Blaney (813) and Reddick (803).

Cindric has 526 points. Ryan Preece is the first driver below the cutline at 497 points. Ross Chastain jumped three spots after his seventh-place finish at Iowa, moving into 18th place at 479 points. Brad Keselowski is one point behind Chastain.

Other than maybe the last one or two spots, the biggest scramble

now in this final month could be for seeding. Points for the top 16 drivers will reset after the Aug. 29 regular-season finale at Daytona. The regular-season champion will be the top seed and start The Chase with 2,100 points, the second seed will have 2,075 points and the third seed will have 2,065, with a five-point drop for each seed after that.

"You have all these other little battles going on, like the battle from sixth to 11th or 12th right now is really, really tight and that's exciting," said Blaney, who fin-

ished third Sunday. "Those guys are dogging it out right now. That's a lot of points from sixth down to 11th or whatever. So I think it creates a lot of exciting things through the regular season."

Some of the biggest changes in the standings came in that middle group. Chase Briscoe rose three spots to fifth place with 663 points. He's four points ahead of Bell, who climbed four spots with his second-place finish.

A crash ended Kyle Larson's day and he finished 33rd to drop four spots in the standings to 10th.

The crucial jump of the day, though, belonged to Gibbs, who went from fourth to second.

"We've scored a lot of points in the last couple races," Gibbs said. "To be able to finish it off today was awesome. I think the difference between the leader and 16th is 100 points, isn't it, when the playoffs start? So it puts you in a better shot for the title at the end of the year."

Jones' early exit dropped him to 20th place, 50 points behind Cindric and four drivers to climb over to get on the good side of the cut line.

"At this point, we've got three races," Jones said. "We got to just go try to win and run the best we can. It's not over until it's over, but it's a tall mountain."

Storm snaps 11-game losing streak

Howard sets 3-point record as Dream overcomes Tempo

ATLANTA, Aug 11, (AP): Rhyne Howard had six 3-pointers and 22 points, Angel Reese added 20 points and 14 rebounds for her 22nd double-double of the season, and the Atlanta Dream beat the Toronto Tempo 107-95.

Howard became the fastest player in WNBA history to make 100 3-pointers in a season, doing so in 31 games, beating the previous mark of 33 that she shared with Diana Taurasi.

Jordin Canada also scored 20 points and dished out nine assists for Atlanta (20-12). Allisha Gray and Brionna Jones had 15 points apiece. Reese set a franchise record for double-doubles in a season, moving within six of Alyssa Thomas' WNBA record of 28 set in 2023.

Marina Mabrey led Toronto (10-22) with 36 points and seven 3-pointers. Mabrey made seven-plus 3-pointers in a game for the third time this season. Kiki Rice added 18 points off the bench and Nyara Sabally had 12 points and 12 rebounds.

Storm 97, Sky 88

In Seattle, Dominique Malonga had 26 points, 10 rebounds and three blocks, Natisha Hiedeman added 18 points and nine assists, and Seattle napped an 11-game losing streak with a win over the Chicago Sky.

Seattle led by 10 points early in the fourth quarter before Chicago got within 84-82 with just under



Rhyne Howard

three minutes remaining on DiJonai Carrington's steal and fast-break layup. But the Sky turned it over on their next possession and Seattle guard Zia Cooke sank a 3-pointer from the corner for an 89-82 lead.

Seattle led by at least five points the rest of the way for its first victory since beating Los Angeles 82-64 on July 6.

Cooke finished with 16 points off the bench for Seattle (7-28), which led 47-33 at halftime. Hiedeman went 12 of 12 at the free-throw line.

Carrington, in her first game since receiving a Flagrant 2 foul and being ejected against the Indiana Fever on Saturday, made all 10 of her free throws and scored a career-high 26 points for Chicago (12-21). Carrington came off the bench and played 27 minutes.

Wallabies' Amatosero gets 3-week ban

Fourie returns to Boks at 39 after ACL injury

JOHANNESBURG, Aug 11, (AP): Three years after his last cap for South Africa and two years after an ACL injury he thought would end his career, Deon Fourie is back in the Springboks.

Fourie, turning 40 next month, was summoned by South Africa on Monday and set to join the squad on Tuesday in Johannesburg to prepare for the four-match Greatest Rivalry test series against New Zealand starting on Aug. 22.

Springboks coach Rassie Erasmus was swayed to recall Fourie after he rolled back the years for the Stormers in New Zealand's tour opener in Cape Town on Friday.

In his first match in 13 weeks, Fourie scored the Stormers' first try, grabbed two turnovers, and amazed Stormers coach John Dobson with three tackles in 15 seconds. Fourie was replaced after an hour with the score 14-14. The All Blacks prevailed 38-21.

Fourie's value as a hybrid flanker and hooker was "invaluable," SA Rugby said on Monday.

The oldest player to make his Springboks debut at 35 in 2022, Fourie played his 13th and last test in the 2023 Rugby World Cup final against New Zealand in Paris. He replaced hooker Bongi

Mbonambi in the opening minutes, injured his shoulder but feared coming off and making South Africa vulnerable in the front row. They won 12-11.

Since then, he has mainly been rehabbing. The ruptured ACL sidelined him in 2024 from April-December. An ankle issue followed. Last season he was out from October-March with a bicep injury. Then in May, a croc roll tackle sent him into knee surgery.

"Over the last two years I've had terrible luck with injuries, and I didn't know whether I'd be able to play this year," Fourie said in a media conference last week before the All Blacks game.

"I'm definitely raring to go. I've been looking forward to this match since it was announced."

"To represent your club, where I've spent almost my entire career, against a test side like the All Blacks is such a big occasion. To face the haka is something every little boy dreams of when they start playing rugby."

He may get another chance in the next month. Meanwhile, Wallabies lock Miles Amatosero has been banned for three weeks after admitting



In this file photo, South Africa's Deon Fourie is tackled during the Rugby World Cup semifinal match between England and South Africa in Saint-Denis, outside Paris. (AP)

to dangerous play in Australia's 35-32 win over Japan in Osaka last weekend.

Amatosero was shown a red card late in the first half after a video match official ruled that his left shoulder made contact with the head of an opposing player as he attempted a clean out in a maul.

Forest sues Palace over banner

LONDON, Aug 11: Nottingham Forest owner Evangelos Marinakis has taken legal action against Crystal Palace over a banner displayed by Palace supporters depicting the Greek businessman pointing a gun at Forest midfielder Morgan Gibbs-White.

Marinakis' legal representatives filed a defamation lawsuit against Crystal Palace and "persons unknown" at London's High Court on Monday, almost a year after the banner was displayed during a Premier League match between the clubs at Selhurst Park.

The match, played on Aug. 24 last year, ended 1-1. The banner featured an image of Marinakis pointing a gun at Gibbs-White, alongside allegations linking the businessman to blackmail,

match-fixing, drug trafficking and corruption.

Marinakis has consistently denied any involvement in such activities.

The Football Association charged Crystal Palace in November 2025 over its failure to ensure supporters did not engage in improper, offensive, insulting or provocative behavior. The club was subsequently fined £50,000 (\$67,000).

The dispute comes against the backdrop of tensions between the clubs after Forest took Palace's place in the Europa League following Palace's relegation to the Conference League for breaching UEFA's multi-club ownership rules.

Marinakis, 59, is also the owner of Greek club Olympiacos and Portuguese side Rio Ave.

Somali referee Artan takes center stage

PSG seeks second straight UEFA Super Cup against Villa



In this file photo, PSG’s head coach Luis Enrique celebrates after the Champions League final soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Arsenal in Budapest, Hungary. (AP)



In this file photo, Aston Villa’s head coach Unai Emery smiles after the Europa League final soccer match between Freiburg and Aston Villa in Istanbul, Turkey. (AP)



In this file photo, referee Omar Artan, center, of Somalia, is confronted by players after calling a penalty kick during the CAF Champions League final soccer match between AS FAR Rabat and Mamelodi Sundowns, in Rabat, Morocco. (AP)

SALZBURG, Aug 11, (AP): Barely three weeks after the World Cup final, the first trophy of the new European soccer season is up for grabs in the UEFA Super Cup between Paris Saint-Germain and Aston Villa in Salzburg on Wednesday.

The annual match between the most recent winners of the Champions League and Europa League also offers another chance for more grandstanding by UEFA at the expense of FIFA at a time of a growing disconnect between the two powerful soccer governing bodies in light of the recent conduct of Gianni Infantino.

That’s because refereeing the game will be Omar Artan, the Somali referee who was barred by the United States from officiating at the World Cup days before the start of the tournament because of vetting concerns. U.S. officials claimed Artan had connections to terror organizations, though without providing proof. UEFA responded by picking Artan - a referee judged the best in Africa last season - to take charge of the Super Cup, a move that was widely celebrated in the soccer community and also was regarded as a clever political ploy by the European association.

The disharmony between UEFA and FIFA has increased since, with UEFA leading the campaign to oust Infantino from the FIFA presidency over his recent - aborted - plan to sell an interest in the World Cup. And so, the referee taking charge of the match is proving to be as interesting as the players in-

volved, as PSG looks to become the second team in the modern era to retain the Super Cup, after Real Madrid (2016 and 2017).

PSG beat Tottenham in a penalty shootout in last year’s match. PSG’s players came back to preseason training in scattered order over the summer, largely depending on how long they played at the World Cup - or not at all in one noteworthy case. Ballon d’Or winner Ousmane Dembélé, who stood out for France with six goals and two assists, returned on Monday along with international teammates Désiré Doué and Bradley Barcola.

They were joined by Spain’s World Cup-winning midfielder Fabián Ruiz, whose clinical performance was key to the semifinal victory against France. Star winger Khvicha Kvaratskhelia didn’t play at the tournament because Georgia did not qualify, and has been back training for considerably longer. He looks certain to start in his favored position on the left flank, with new signing Maghnes Aklouché possibly on the right wing.

Aklouché’s arrival from Monaco could coincide with Barcola’s departure, with the fleet-footed winger - who scored three goals at the World Cup - heavily linked with a move to Premier League giant Liverpool.

Coach Luis Enrique’s team may also feature former Villa player Lucas Digne. Villa sold Digne to PSG on Sunday for a reported fee of 10 million euros (\$11.6 million), returning the 33-year-old left back to one of his first clubs. Digne was among the first signings when PSG began its new era after

being bought by Qatari investors QSI. He was born in the Paris suburbs and joined PSG in 2013 from Lille.

He then represented Roma and Barcelona before spending eight years in the Premier League with Everton and Villa, where he played 182 games in total and was one of coach Unai Emery’s most consistent players. There’ll be a different look to Villa at the start of its fourth full season under Emery, a former PSG coach. Departing over the summer were key midfielders Morgan Rogers to Chelsea and Youri Tielemans to Manchester United, along with Digne.

Among the new signings are Swiss World Cup star Johan Manzambi and Brazilian midfielder Joao Gomes, who has joined from relegated Wolverhampton. Manzambi is missing because of a knee injury. Villa won the Europa League by beating Freiburg 3-0 and in the final will be in the Champions League for the second time under Emery. Artan, who oversaw the African Champions League final in 2025, is the first non-European to take charge of the Super Cup and said the honor comes after a “very tough period”.

“A lot of people have sympathy for me,” he told UEFA, “because when someone has been working a lot of years and is supposed to do something, and then can’t do it, it’s very challenging. I really appreciate the support I received throughout the world, though. I’m so grateful.” Artan said he had been undertaking lots of research on PSG and Villa for his first match in Europe. “The standard in Europe is fantastic, and the football they play is very, very good,” he said.

UEFA explores rival tournaments

FIFA rift deepens

NYON, Aug 11: UEFA and other major football confederations have begun preliminary discussions about creating international tournaments that could rival FIFA competitions, according to Bloomberg.

People familiar with the talks said UEFA, CONCACAF and the Asian Football Confederation are exploring the possibility of organizing alternative international events. The discussions remain at an early stage and no decisions have been made.

The move would add to the growing pressure on FIFA President Gianni Infantino following the collapse of his controversial plan to separate FIFA’s commercial operations and sell stakes in the organization’s rights to private



Infantino and Ceferin during their days of harmony.

investors.

Rival competitions could pose a significant challenge to FIFA’s lucrative tournament calendar, particularly the World Cup, which generated more than \$9 billion in revenue during its record-breaking 2026 edition.

UEFA, whose members include many of the world’s richest domestic leagues, has emerged as the leading force seeking changes at FIFA and has called for Infantino to leave the presidency.

Despite Infantino abandoning his private-investment proposal,

UEFA is reportedly still considering boycotting the World Cup and other FIFA competitions if he remains in office.

The 2027 Women’s World Cup in Brazil could become the first major FIFA event affected by a potential boycott. Several youth tournaments are also scheduled to take place in the coming months.

According to one person familiar with the discussions, the proposed alternative competitions could provide players with international opportunities during any disruption caused by a boycott.

UEFA, CONCACAF and the Asian Football Confederation recently called for an independent review of Infantino’s World Cup proposal, arguing that FIFA’s president has a responsibility to act in the organization’s best interests.

“When trust is broken through deception, and when an individual places himself above the collective that entrusted him with power, he has abandoned that duty,” the three confederations said in an open letter.

Kuwait handball team steps up Games preparations in Slovenia

LJUBLJANA, Aug 11: Kuwait’s senior national handball team begins its series of friendly matches in Slovenia today when it takes on Austrian champions Jags as part of its preparations for the Asian Games in Japan, which get underway on Aug. 19.

The match marks the first of several tests designed to sharpen the team’s technical and physical readiness as it enters the final phase of its preparations for the Asian Games.

The Blues have been conducting an intensive training camp in Slovenia under Icelandic head coach Aron Kristjansson and his assistant Haini. The coaching staff has focused on improving fitness levels, strengthening team cohesion and working on tactical systems in both defense and attack.

Today’s game will allow the coaching staff to assess the players’ progress and their understanding of the tactical ideas introduced during the camp. It will also help identify areas that need improvement before the team continues its series of friendly matches.

Kuwait is scheduled to play six more friendlies in Slovenia as part of a comprehensive preparation program aimed at taking the team into the Asian Games at its best.

The team will conclude its camp and return to Kuwait on Aug. 13 before continuing preparations for its trip to Japan.

The coaching staff believes the friendly matches will provide valuable exposure against different handball styles while allowing the players to gain experience and test various tactical options ahead of the official competition.

Meanwhile, Kuwait’s junior national handball team ended its friendly series against Bahrain with a narrow 23-22 defeat in the second match held the day before yesterday.

Both teams are preparing for the 11th Asian Junior Handball Championship, which will be held in Jordan from Aug. 20 to 31.



Action from the friendly between Kuwait’s junior handball team and Bahrain.

Araújo calls Liverpool loan an ‘ideal move’ after leaving Barca on pay-cut deal

City closes in on Bouaddi deal as Alvarez furious at Atletico, Barcelona move looms

MANCHESTER, Aug 11, (Agencies): Manchester City is closing in on a deal to sign 18-year-old Moroccan midfielder Ayyoub Bouaddi from French club Lille, with the transfer potentially reaching €100 million.

According to The Guardian, Bouaddi has already agreed personal terms with City, while the Premier League club continues negotiations with Lille to finalize the transfer.

The proposed move comes as City prepare for the possible departure of Spanish midfielder Rodri, who is reportedly close to joining Barcelona.

Bouaddi is viewed as part of City’s plans to reshape their midfield. If the deal is completed, he would join England midfielder Elliot Anderson, who arrived from Nottingham Forest last month in a £116 million move.

City is looking to build a new midfield following the departure of Portugal international Bernardo Silva, with Bouaddi emerging as one of their key targets.

□ □ □



Ayyoub Bouaddi (center) is sandwiched by two players.



A file photo of Julian Alvarez celebrating after scoring a goal.

Atletico Madrid forward Julian Alvarez has reportedly expressed his frustration with coach Diego Simeone after failing to meet with him to discuss his desire to leave the club for Barcelona.

Alvarez returned to Atletico training on Monday for the first time since the 2026 World Cup final and was expected to speak with Simeone about his future. However, the Argentine coach had traveled to Ibiza for a two-day break, according to Spanish newspaper Mundo Deportivo.

The situation reportedly angered Alvarez, who remains determined to pursue a move to Barcelona. He is said to have questioned Simeone’s decision to leave despite knowing that the player wanted to discuss his future with him.

Atletico CEO Miguel Angel Gil Marín was also absent and reportedly did not meet with Alvarez.

□ □ □

Uruguay defender Ronald Araújo believes he has made an “ideal move” to Liverpool after his season-long loan from Barcelona was confirmed on Monday.

The 27-year-old Araújo has taken a pay cut to facilitate the move. Liverpool has an option to buy him for a pre-agreed price - reportedly 47 million pounds (\$63 million) - should the move prove successful.

“It was the ideal move for me at this stage in my career. It was a move that was necessary for me to take,” Araújo told the club website.

“As soon as I heard that interest from Liverpool, everything went into action really, really quickly. I’m super happy to be here and excited to get started.”

Defense was an area which needed strengthening following the departure of Ibrahima Konaté at the conclusion of his contract and the ongoing injury issues at right back.

Liverpool believe Araújo’s experience - he was named Barcelona captain in January - is important and, significantly, he is up to speed having been involved in the Catalans’ preseason preparations and it is understood he will join squad training this week.

Araújo’s arrival gives coach Andoni Iraola greater depth in defense - he can cover right back in addition to his preferred central-defensive position - than predecessor Arne Slot had last season as new arrival Jeremy Jacquet is expected to return to training after a knee injury while Giovanni Leoni is entering the final stages of his rehabilitation following an ACL injury.

Ifaenyi Ndukwe and Mor Ndiaye, both 18, have impressed in preseason but with Joe Gomez not fit for the start of the new Premier League campaign, Iraola needed another senior defender to provide cover. For much of last season, Liverpool had to play Virgil van Dijk and Konaté in virtually every game.

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NEWS



Aston Villa's John McGinn, front, and Matty Cash, center, attend a training session in Birmingham, England. (AP) - See Page 15

Sports

Rain forces Kuwaiti side to train in wet Kolkata conditions

Al-Arabi faces East Bengal with Champions League Two group stage spot at stake

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KOLKATA, India, Aug 11: Al-Arabi faces East Bengal at 4:30 p.m. today at Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata, with a place in the AFC Champions League Two group stage at stake.

The Green, led by Croatian coach Goran Sablic, is targeting victory over the Indian side to secure place in the continent's second-tier club competition. A defeat would send it into the AFC Challenge League for a second successive season.

Sablic, who replaced Nasser Al-Shatti, will take charge of Al-Arabi in his first competitive match as the club's coach and will be looking for a strong start.

Al-Arabi began preparations last month and later held a training camp in Erzurum, Turkey, where they played four friendlies. They lost 3-1 to Egyptian club Pyramids and Turkish side Erzurumspor, drew 1-1 with Vanspor and beat Amedspor's reserve team 4-0.

The Kuwaiti side will rely on a blend of experienced local players, including Bader Tareq, Ali Khalaf, Bandar Al-Salama, Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi, Hamad Al-Harbi, Suleiman Abdulghafour, Ali Aziz, Yousuf Majed and Abdullah Ammar.

Al-Arabi's foreign players include Senegalese forward Jawhar Khadem Rasoul, Brazilians Leonardo Sheldon and Lucas Chalon, Nigerian Anabo Ayoola and Ethiopian Kenan Maleko.

Heavy rain disrupted the team's preparations in Kolkata, with the players forced to train under wet conditions.

East Bengal will be looking to capitalize on home advantage and their strong record in Indian football. The club has won the Indian league three times, the Federation Cup seven times, the Indian Super Cup three times, the Durand Cup 16 times and the Calcutta Football League 32 times. They are also the reigning league champions.

Spanish duo Nacho Montreal Montalves and Dani Ramirez, Australian Chris Ikonomidis, Palestinian Mohammed Rashid and Nigerian Nsungusi Efiang are among East Bengal's key players.



Al-Arabi players train in heavy rain ahead of East Bengal clash in Kolkata.

Nacho Montalves is reportedly carrying an injury and his availability remains uncertain, while Efiang will miss the game after failing to obtain a visa.

The AFC has appointed a Tajikistan refereeing team for the playoff. Gulmurodi Sadullo will referee the match, assisted by Hasan Karimov and Farhod Kuralov, while Nasrullo Kabirov will serve as the fourth official.

Trump backs Infantino as FIFA staff voice growing frustration

US President intervention further underlines close ties with Swiss

WASHINGTON, Aug 11: U.S. President Donald Trump has thrown his support behind FIFA President Gianni Infantino, warning the world governing body against replacing him amid mounting calls from several continental federations for his departure.

Trump wrote on Truth Social that FIFA would be making a "grave mistake" if it considered replacing Infantino, whom he described as "great." He also praised Infantino's leadership of the 2026 World Cup in North America, calling it the most successful edition of the tournament and arguing that its future would not enjoy the same level of success or profitability without him.

Trump's intervention further underlined his close ties with Infantino, who received FIFA's Peace Prize from the U.S. president in December 2025. During



In this file photo, FIFA President and the US president hold the World Cup trophy during a ceremony.

the 2026 World Cup, Trump also asked Infantino to review the red card shown to a U.S. player.

The U.S. president's backing, however, stands in contrast to the position of U.S. Soccer, which has criticized Infantino, along with the Canadian federation and several associations from Central America and the Caribbean.

Meanwhile, dissatisfaction

with Infantino appears to be growing within FIFA itself, with employees reportedly expressing frustration over his management and recent decisions.

Sources inside FIFA told Spanish newspaper El Confidencial that frustration had become widespread, accusing Infantino of pursuing political and commercial interests at the expense of the organization's

day-to-day work.

Infantino is also working to strengthen his position ahead of the 2027 FIFA presidential election, seeking to present a united front with Secretary General Mattias Grafström and the FIFA Council as he prepares to pursue another term.

FIFA operations director Kevin Lamour was particularly critical, telling The Associated Press that employees had been misled over the proposed plan to bring private investment into the World Cup. He described it as a project driven by one individual and said FIFA staff deserved better treatment.

The resignation of Carlos Cordeiro, Infantino's financial adviser and liaison with the White House, has added to the growing unease within FIFA.

Cordeiro, a former Goldman Sachs banker, also pointed to the lack of proper oversight mechanisms surrounding the investment proposal, reinforcing criticism that the initiative had been driven largely by Infantino himself.

Kuwait takes on Bahrain at Arab Junior Volleyball Championship



Kuwait puts up strong fight against Saudi Arabia.

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

MANAMA, Aug 11: Kuwait takes on Bahrain at 7 p.m. today in the third round of the second Arab Junior Volleyball Championship at the Isa bin Rashid Sports Hall in Manama.

The Blues are looking for their first win after opening the tournament with a 3-0 defeat to Egypt. They produced a much-improved display against Saudi Arabia in their second match but narrowly lost 3-2 after a five-set contest.

The coaching staff will look to build on that performance against Bahrain while addressing the weaknesses exposed in the opening two matches, particularly in reception, serving and attack execution.

Kuwait will face Jordan on Friday before wrapping up its preliminary-round campaign against Algeria on Saturday.

The remaining matches are important for the young Kuwait side as they seek to gain valuable international experience, improve their position in the standings and maintain their competitive hopes through the final round.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's men's and women's beach volleyball teams began their participation in the second round of the West Asia Championship in Batroun, northern Lebanon.

In the women's competition, Kuwait B, represented by Dana Bin Salama and Janan Al-Salem, defeated Lebanon 2-0, while Kuwait A, featuring Alaa Al-Bahou and Halima Al-Rashid, suffered a 2-0 loss to the Lebanese team.

Kuwait rhythmic gymnastics team begins training camp in Georgia

TBILISI, Aug 11: The Kuwait women's rhythmic gymnastics national team has arrived in Georgia to begin an overseas training camp running from Aug. 9 to 28, as part of its preparations for upcoming competitions, foremost among them the West Asia Championship in Jordan.

The delegation features gymnasts Layan Hadi, Raya Al-Qassar, Fawzia Al-Abdulkarim and Sarah Al-Bannai, under the guidance of Ukrainian coach Victoria Visbok.

The camp forms part of the Kuwait Gymnastics Federation's ongoing efforts to strengthen the team's technical and physical readiness ahead of the upcoming season. The intensive program



The Kuwait women's rhythmic gymnastics delegation.

is designed to improve the gymnasts' technical skills and over-

all performance while preparing them for the demands of interna-

tional competition.

The West Asia Championship represents a key target for the national team, with the federation aiming for strong performances and top finishes as it seeks to build on the progress made by Kuwaiti rhythmic gymnastics in recent years.

The federation expressed confidence in the gymnasts' abilities, highlighting their commitment and discipline in training. It also stressed the importance of maximizing the benefits of the camp, particularly as the athletes continue to build on their experience from previous competitions, where they produced encouraging performances.

Best of the Rest

Sahel extends First Division League lead: Sahel strengthened its position at the top of the Kuwait First Division League with a 3-0 victory over Al-Shamiya at Nasser Al-Osaimi Stadium in the 18th round.

The win took Sahel to 40 points and marked its second consecutive victory as it continued their push for promotion to the Premier League. Al-Shamiya remains seventh on 10 points and is now out of contention for promotion.

Elsewhere, newcomer Al-Jazeera was held to a 2-2 draw by Khaitan at Jaber Al-Mubarak Stadium.

The result left Al-Jazeera fourth with 35 points and dealt a blow to its hopes of securing one of the two promotion spots. Khaitan remains fifth on 20 points, having already slipped out of the promotion race.

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Sevilla signs Scottish striker Ure: Sevilla said Tuesday it has signed Scottish striker Robbie Ure on a contract until 2031.

The Spanish club did not immediately disclose the financial details for the transfer of the 22-year-old player from Swedish side IK Sirius.

Ure, who has represented Scotland up to the under-21 level, scored 15 goals in 15 appearances in this year's Swedish league which began in April, Sevilla said. He scored 10 goals in his last six games with Sirius.

Sevilla said Ure came through the youth academy at Glasgow Rangers before moving to Belgium, where he joined Anderlecht's youth squads ahead of his move to Sirius.

Sevilla finished 13th in last season's Spanish league, one point above the relegation zone. It makes its debut this season against Rayo Vallecano at home on Saturday. (AP)